

SUB ROSA

THE ARS MAGICA MAGAZINE

ISSUE 18, FEBRUARY 2016



WWW.SUBROSAMAGAZINE.ORG

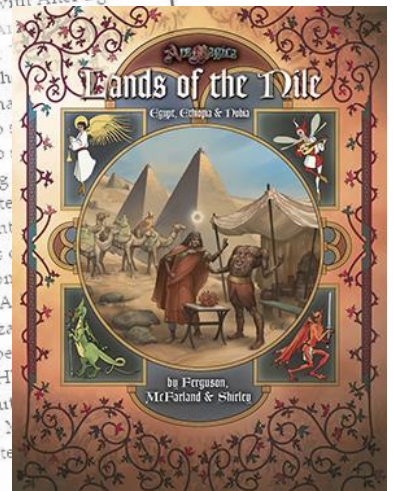
@SUBROSAMAGAZINE

OUT NOW AND COMING SOON



DIES IRAE: A BOOK OF WRATHFUL DAYS

Authors: Mark Lawford, Ben McFarland, Matt Ryan, Mark Shirley
Cover Artist: Christian St. Pierre
Stock Number: AG0314 | **ISBN:** 978-1-58978-162-7 | **MSRP:** \$29.95 US
Format: 144 pages, hardcover
Release Date: April 2016



LANDS OF THE NILE

Authors: Timothy Ferguson, Ben McFarland, Mark Shirley
Cover Artist: Christian St. Pierre
Stock Number: AG0313 | **ISBN:** 978-1-58978-160-3 | **MSRP:** \$29.95 US
Format: 144 pages, hardcover
Release Date: Available Now

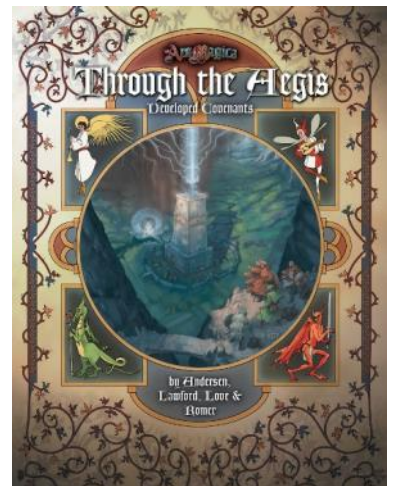


THRICE-TOLD TALES

Authors: Christian Roesenkjaer Andersen, David MacGregor, Christian Jensen Romer, Matt Ryan, Mark Shirley
Cover Artist: Christian St. Pierre
Stock Number: AG0312 | **ISBN:** 1-58978-161-9 | **MSRP:** \$27.95 US
Format: 144 pages, softcover
Release Date: Available Now

THROUGH THE AEGIS: DEVELOPED COVENANTS

Authors: Christian Rosenkjaer Andersen, Mark Lawford, Richard Love, Christian Jensen Romer
Cover Artist: Christian St. Pierre
Stock Number: AG0311 | **ISBN:** 1-58978-154-6 | **MSRP:** \$32.95 US
Format: 160 pages, hardcover
Release Date: Available Now



SUB ROSA

THIS ISSUE

ISSUE 18

FEBRUARY 2016

CONTENTS

UNDER THE ROSE	PAGE 4
THARAGAVVERUG WHO BECOMES SACNOTH.....	PAGE 5
NASR AL-SAGHEER.....	PAGE 9
ERMELINA: THE BEGGAR OF STORIES.....	PAGE 12
ADVANCING THE INTANGIBLE ASSASSIN	PAGE 17
THE RAT KING.....	PAGE 41
PARANDRUS.....	PAGE 44
THE BLACK COCKERAL.....	PAGE 46
TUCHULCHA.....	PAGE 47
THE DEVIL'S TEETH: AN ADVENTURE OF THE GHOST & THE FLAME....	PAGE 49
SEABHAG: THE HAWK OF ACHILL.....	PAGE 58
SAINT ATTRACTA'S CREATURE	PAGE 62
THE REVOLVING BEAST.....	PAGE 65
BELAGOG.....	PAGE 69
DISCOVERING NEW SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES.....	PAGE 73
THE BEAST MASTERS OF HIBERNIA	PAGE 74
THE WICKER MAN.....	PAGE 82
THE FALSE GOLEM.....	PAGE 86
THE SHAMBLING MOUND	PAGE 90
THE SPRIGGAN	PAGE 93
CREATURES: NATURAL ANIMALS.....	PAGE 96
CARPENTER FISH.....	PAGE 113
THE DEVILFISH	PAGE 115
THE GIANT SEAHORSE.....	PAGE 118
THE OILLIPHÉIST	PAGE 121
THE SHAMIR	PAGE 124
MAPPA MUNDI.....	PAGE 127

CONTRIBUTORS

Publisher: Distant Lands Publishing

Contributors: David Agnew, Christian R Andersen, Norman Ashby, Robin Bland, Berengar Drexel, Mark Faulkner, Timothy Ferguson, Andrew Judd, Pelle Kofod, Mark Lawford, Guy Leopold, Paula Moore, Philippe Saner, Mark Shirley, Jason Tondro, Gerald Wylie

Cover Art: Jeff Menges

Interior Artists: Patrick Demo, Jeff Menges, Beth Porter, Angela Taylor, Jason Tseng

Art Coordinator: Ben McFarland

Editors: Ben McFarland, Mark Lawford

Design/Layout: Mark Lawford

CONTACT SUB ROSA

Email: subrosa@distantlandspublishing.com

Web: <http://www.subrosamagazine.org>

Twitter: @subrosamagazine

LEGAL DISCLAIMER

Sub Rosa is an independent publication not affiliated with Atlas Games or White Wolf Gaming Studios. Distant Lands Publishing is not affiliated with Atlas Games or White Wolf.

Ars Magica is © Trident Inc. d/b/a Atlas Games. **Ars Magica**, Mythic Europe, Covenants and Charting new Realms of the Imagination are trademarks of Trident Inc.

Order of Hermes, Tremere and Doissetep are trademarks of White Wolf Gaming Studios. **Ars Magica** was created by Jonathan Tweet and Mark Rein•Hagen.

The intellectual content of **Sub Rosa** is © and held by the authors. All rights reserved. Reproduction of any issue of **Sub Rosa** for commercial use by any means without written permission from the Publisher, except short excerpts for the purpose of reviews, is expressly prohibited.

References to any Trademarks, Registered Trademarks or Copyrights held by any company or individual in **Sub Rosa** is for promotional and recreational use. Use of these terms should not be construed a challenge to their ownership.



SUBSCRIPTION

Individual Single Issue: US\$4.50

Individual Subscription – 4 issues: US\$16.00

Troupe Single Issue: US\$13.00

Troupe Subscription – 4 issues: US\$35.00

Here be dragons. Well... Not dragons so much, but certainly monsters. So... Here be monsters. And beasts. And some creatures.

UNDER THE ROSE

Welcome to another issue of **Sub Rosa**.

As you will no doubt be aware, and as if the incredible cover image by Jeff Menges wasn't enough, this issue is themed around a Bestiary of Uncommon Creatures.

Monsters in stories often represent the strange and the other. They are typically foes to be vanquished by the heroes and obstacles that stand between those heroes and their ultimate destinies. The best monsters, of course, have their personality and their own motivations and are thus able to teach the hero a little about themselves. The hero grows through the encounter and takes this newly-acquired wisdom with them.

We're blessed in the Mythic Europe of **Ars Magica** that we have a vast resource of folk tales, legends, and myths to draw upon when populating our **Ars Magica** stories with strange and wondrous creatures. We're doubly blessed that **Ars Magica** is a game in which the value of each creature is *not* counted in something as base as experience points but in the storytelling value we derive from them. More important still, all these creatures have their own stories, their own reason for being, and their own motivations, wants, and needs.

That's really important as **Ars Magica** is a game that thrives on posing moral and intellectual challenges to the players and their characters. In other games, it might

be a simple affair to slay the ogre guarding access to a series of underground tunnels, but how do the magi of **Ars Magica** feel about destroying that same ogre once they learn he has been compelled to stay there against his will?

Most of the creatures you'll find in this issue provide full stats, allowing you to drop them into the action, but also a discussion on where best to find them, what motivates them, and what service or use they may be to a magus or covenant. Again, this sets **Ars Magica** apart from some other games; keeping a creature alive, protecting it, can ultimately be more valuable than destroying it. Well, unless you're looking for a particular Shape and Material bonus for your next project, that is.

Okay, so what can you find in this issue? We have around twenty new creatures, of varying realm alignments and power levels, for you to use. These range from a not-so-humble cockerel to an ancient divine worm by way of Wicker Men and False Golems. All of these come from a range of contributors, including some familiar names. If you've been following us on Twitter you'll have seen a few of these available for download already.

Beyond these, we have some fantastic keystone articles. We have a further exploration of the Intangible Assassin, this time taking us beyond simply designing the base character and into the effects of advancing them through twenty-five years. Players planning on such

characters will find the article invaluable.

We have some original fiction too in which magi, pirates, and sea hags collide.

The Beast-Masters of Hibernia are explored at long last. That they were missing from *The Contested Isle* is a function of there only being so many pages available in a published book, but we're particularly pleased that someone has taken the time to provide a very well thought-out treatment. If you're running a game in Hibernia you could get a lot of utility out of this one.

Last of the big articles for this issue is a ground-up restructuring of the rules for designing mundane animals. Written by Mark Shirley, this article takes rules published across a number of books and distills them down to a single consistent set. It does a great job of plugging some important gaps.

You might notice that we have no notes from the line editor this issue. We'll look to fill that gap in future issues as we start to look at the wider worlds of **Ars Magica** and what it has to offer.

So we hope, within these pages, you'll find monsters to fuel many, many stories to come.

THARAGAVVERUG

WHO BECOMES SACNOTH

By TIMOTHY FERGUSON

In a story by Lord Dunsany, a village is tormented by evil dreams that feed on the souls of men. The magician of the village casts his greatest spell, to control the dreams. When it fails, he consults the Book of Magicians. He discovers that a comet returns to Earth every 230 years, and riding the comet is the great wizard Gaznak. While Gaznak feeds, his evil dreams manifest a castle, called the The Fortress Unvanquishable, Save for

Sacnoth, from which the story takes its name. Gaznak can only be defeated with the sword Sacnoth, but none may attain it to use against him, for it is guarded by Tharagavverug.

CREATURE

Then said Leothric: "Who is Tharagavverug, and where may he be encountered?"

And the magician of Allathurion answered: "He is the dragon-crocodile who haunts the Northern marshes and ravages the homesteads by their marge. And the hide of his back is of steel, and his under parts are of iron; but along the midst of his back, over his spine, there lies a narrow strip of unearthly steel. This strip of steel is Sacnoth, and it may be neither cleft nor molten, and there is



nothing in the world that may avail to break it, nor even leave a scratch upon its surface. It is of the length of a good sword, and of the breadth thereof. Shouldst thou prevail against Tharagavverug, his hide may be melted away from Sacnoth in a furnace; but there is only one thing that may sharpen Sacnoth's edge, and this is one of Tharagavverug's own steel eyes; and the other eye thou must fasten to Sacnoth's hilt, and it will watch for thee. But it is a hard task to vanquish Tharagavverug, for no sword can pierce his hide; his back cannot be broken, and he can neither burn nor drown. In one way only can Tharagavverug die, and that is by starving."

Then sorrow fell upon Leothric, but the magician spoke on:

"If a man drive Tharagavverug away from his food with a stick for three days, he will starve on the third day at sunset. And though he is not vulnerable, yet in one spot he may take hurt, for his nose is only of lead. A sword would merely lay bare the uncleavable bronze beneath, but if his nose be smitten constantly with a stick he will always recoil from the pain, and thus may Tharagavverug, to left and right, be driven away from his food."

Then Leothric said: "What is Tharagavverug's food?"

And the magician of Allathurion said: "His food is men."

HABITAT

Tharagavverug dwells in the northern marshes, and hunts among the villagers who live on the shores. When his approach is heralded by the sound of his heart, the people come out to

meet him, and he selects his victims. Some have tried to flee Tharagavverug, but none have ever escaped him. He is implacable, and does terrible damage, however incidentally, when chasing his chosen prey to ground.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

In its role as the dragon-crocodile, the faerie that is playing Tharagavverug represents the fear of the marsh, and the fear of death. It lives to hunt and eat. Once defeated, it takes the role of Sacnoth, binding itself to the story of a royal family.

STORY SEED

Due to flaws in the design of the combat system, the most dangerous warrior in **Ars Magica Fourth Edition** was a naked man with a stick. Reading *The Fortress Unvanquishable, Save for Sacnoth* by Lord Dunsany, I noticed that here was a monster where the best strategy really was to be unarmoured, and carry a light, long stick. Tharagavverug's weak point is his nose, and deep damage removes this vulnerability. His other weak point, if it can be so termed, is that he dies of fatigue after three days, so a person fighting him had best wear the lightest clothes.

In the original story, Tharagavverug is defeated by the prince making a series of called shots to the monster's face, wearing him down, and keeping him from eating the villagers who are his usual prey. The prince, himself, remains awake for three days, eating only while the monster regains its breath, finally

DUNSANY: OVERUSER OF SUPERLATIVES

This creature and Gaznak are described in absolutely awesome terms, because that's the sort of thing Dunsany likes writing. For the purposes of this article, the various actors are scaled to Mythic European stories. This is necessary because, as roleplaying material, the destiny of Sacnoth's wielder is boring.

The prophecy gives him no latitude in his actions. In this article, the steps the man must follow are made clear, but magi can obviously circumvent them. This has the effect, from a story design perspective, of making it less important that the creature be unbeatable except by precisely following a script, and so it can still be a credible threat while being weaker than Dunsany describes.

falling into a deep slumber by Tharagavverug when its heartbeat goes quiet. Magi are unlikely to use this method of defeating the creature.

Tharagavverug is a mighty faerie, and so the characters, if they use magic, need to defeat him at least three times. Each defeat costs Tharagavverug a day, and the third day costs him his life. For example, if the player characters drop Tharagavverug's in a pit, he can eventually tunnel out, which will cost him a day. If the player character respond by jacking the sides of the pit with metal, then he will gouge hand and foot holds for himself with his mighty claws, but that also will cost him a day. To meet the requirement that he be defeated thrice, the Storyguide may wish

to give Tharagavverug extra powers, for example the ability to call wild animals to thrown themselves in the pit (unless stopped by magi).

When Tharagavverug is defeated, the faerie changes form, and becomes the weapon of the liberator, and ancestral heirloom of a line of kings.

ITEM

When Tharagavverug is killed, the faerie swaps role, and becomes the weapon of a popular messiah. No combat statistics are provided for Sacnoth, because it will not be faced alone: it instead augments the powers of its owner.

SACNOTH: FAERIE SWORD

...a tall, broad man, who was smith of Allathurion, made a great furnace, and melted Tharagavverug away till only Sacnoth was left, gleaming among the ashes. Then he took one of the small eyes that had been chiselled out, and filed an edge on Sacnoth, and gradually the steel eye wore away facet by facet, but ere it was quite gone it had sharpened redoubtably Sacnoth. But the other eye they set in the butt of the hilt, and it gleamed there bluey.

SACNOTH'S POWERS

Sacnoth does not have a full set of statistics, because it is basically immobile, but it has the following important properties.

Faerie Might :30

Powers and Virtues:

Destroys other swords and equipment: Sacnoth destroys equipment he is used against. Swords become serrated then snap. Shields split. This happens if a defender against Sacnoth makes any stressed Defense roll of 0. This is treated as a non-magical

property.

Grant Major Virtue (Destiny - To Slay Gaznak, to its rightful wielder.)

Grant Major Virtue (Magic Resistance): Then the magicians played a deathspell on their strings, and there arose a humming along the blade of Sacnoth as he turned the spell aside.

Grant Puissance in Marshes Lore: 2 points, Init -2, Corpus. This is the area where Tharagavverug lived, and lies adjacent of the castle of Gaznak.

Grant Puissance in Single Weapon (Sword) Lore: 2 points, Init -2, Corpus: The sword throbs in the hand when it desires battle, and parries fatal strikes with a skill beyond that of its owner.

Independent movement: Sacnoth can move slightly. It does this to communicate with its owner.

Indestructible: Sacnoth retains Tharagavverug's Might, and his resistance to damage.

THARAGAVVERUG

Faerie Might: 30

Characteristics: Cun +1, Per 0, Pre -2, Com -5, Str +8, Sta 0, Dex +1, Qik -1

Size: +7

Virtues and Flaws: Faerie Beast, Huge, Immune to (Fire, Drowning, Weapons, Suffocation), Faerie Sight*, Feast of the Dead (regains all lost fatigue when it consumes food), Improved Damage (x3), Lesser Powers (x2). Monstrous Appearance, Role Requires Suffering (can suffer fatigue, suffers pain, dies if he cannot feed), Audible Heartbeat**, Incognizant,

* "His eyes of steel could see as well by night as by day".

** Cannot act as an ambush predator, like other crocodiles, because its heartbeat gives away his location. Tharagavverug's heartbeat also acts as a sort of life meter, allowing its foe to know how tired Tharagavverug is.

Combat:

Bite: Init +2*, Attack +18, Defense +15, Damage +31**

** Includes a +3 bonus for Crushing Jaws, a trait of crocodiles. Also includes +15 due to lesser power.

Soak: +25 (essentially a living statue made of faerie iron)

Fatigue Levels: OK, -1, --1, 1,--1, -3, --3,-3, --5, -5, Unconscious (Has many extra fatigue levels because of his role.)

Wound Penalties: -1, (1-12), -3 (13-24), -5 (25-36) Incapacitated (37+)

Pretenses: Area Lore 5 (home marshes), Awareness 4 (food), Brawl 7 (bite), Hunt 4 (humans), Stealth 4 (stalking prey), Survival 5 (river), Swim 3 (rivers)

Powers:

Enthralling sound: 3 points, Init -3, Mentem , RoP:F p.59 30 spell levels.

Personality trait roll against an Ease factor of 9 to avoid fleeing when first striking T on the nose. Although T makes his cry each time he is struck, he does not lose Might, and no new Personality roll is required, unless the combat changes substantially.

...And Leothric...smote him on the nose, and the blow of the stick made a dint in the soft lead. And Tharagavverug swung clumsily away, uttering one fearful cry like the sound of a great church bell that had become possessed of a soul that fluttered upward from the tombs at night--an evil soul, giving the bell a voice.

Hound: 2 points, Init -2, Corpus , RoP:F p.59 20 spell levels.

...none dared to flee, for in the days when the villagers fled from Tharagavverug, he, having chosen his victim, would track

him tirelessly, like a doom. Nothing availed them against Tharagavverug.

Sharp Hide: 0 points, Terram.

Tharagavverug is covered with sharp protrusions, which he can use to abrade away chains, bars, and even trees.

...Once they climbed the trees when he came, but Tharagavverug went up to one, arching his back and leaning over slightly, and rasped against the trunk until it fell.

Vis: 10 pawns, Terram. Tharagavverug's vis is kept in Sacnoth, on his back, which is virtually indestructible.

Appearance: A vast and monstrous crocodile made of living steel, whose heartbeat booms from his mouth.



NASR AL-SAGHEER

By PELLE KOFOD

Nasr al-Sagheer is a Jinn and not overly interested in humans. As such, he is most likely to be encountered as the summoned minion of a sahir, though hermetic magi might also be able to

summon him and bind him into service, should they become aware of him.

HABITAT

Nasr al-Sagheer is a jinni of the air, who spends his time soaring among the peaks of the al-Hajar Mountains of 'Uman. This is a solitary existence, which suits Nasr just fine. These solitary peaks also form the terrain feature that is Nasr's Locus. In practical terms, Nasr al-Sagheer is more likely to be encountered high in the sky, scouting or spying for whichever sahir has called him from his solitude.

As an immaterial spirit unwilling to land, Nasr al-Sagheer leave few if any signs of its passing.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

In his natural habitat, Nasr al-Sagheer is unlikely to interact with the player characters unless they sport large amounts of Vis while seeming unable to defend said Vis. And even then Nasr al-Sagheer is likely to ignore them. When summoned (usually by a sahir) Nasr al-Sagheer takes orders though usually unenthusiastically. Unless his orders specify otherwise, Nasr will still remain aloft and probably immaterial



STORY

Look, Up in the Sky: Why are the magi's expedition being trailed by a bird? And why does one of the grogs insist that sometimes the bird looks a bit like a man flying? Who's following the magi and what are their intentions?

Nasr al-Sagheer is unlikely to initiate stories on his own and so is most likely to play the role of pawn. But cornering him and forcing him to speak could well reveal that someone else is interested in the magi and their doings, someone willing and able to summon a Jinn purely for information.

SERVICE

Sahirs shouldn't call Nasr al-Sagheer if they want a chatty, helpful servant, but he with his combination of Awareness, Keen Vision and Second Sight, he's an excellent scout or lookout. He is also an excellent shadow, if you need to keep track of someone's commings and goings. Few things will remain hidden from Nasr al-Sagheer, and with his ability to fly whether material or immaterial, he can cover huge areas very quickly. Just don't ask him to fight for you, or to like you.



NASR AL-SAGHEER

Magic Might: 11 (Auram)

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

Size: 0

Season: Summer

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Spirit, Jinn, Keen Vision (Sight: +3), Voice of the Air, Ways of the Mountains, Shapeshifter (Eagle, Hawk, Vulture)*, Second Sight*, Magical Air*, Greater Malediction (bound to the terms of the bargain), Reclusive, Noncombatant

Qualities and Inferiorities: Greater Power × 2, Major Virtue (Shapeshifter), Minor Virtue (Second Sight), Personal Power

Personality Traits: Contempt for Humanity +1, Reclusive +3, Restless +1

Combat:

Dodge: Init +1, Atk N/A, Def +1, Dam N/A

Soak: 0

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

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

Abilities: Arabic 5 (Classical), Area Lore: 'Uman 4 (geography), Athletics 5 (grace), Awareness 5 (searching), Magic Lore 1 (creatures), Persian 4, Second Sight 5 (invisible things), Shapeshifter 3, Stealth 1 (natural areas), Theology: Islam 1 (debates)

Equipment: None

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Powers:

Donning the Corporeal Veil (Greater: 40), Points: 0, Initiative: Qik-2, Form: Corpus, Range: Touch, +1, Duration: Sun, +2, Target: Ind, +0, Level: CrCo25, Requisite: Rego, Design: 25 levels, Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 requisite, -3 Might cost

Presence (Greater: 45), Points: 0, Initiative: Qik-3, Form: Imaginem, Range: Arc, +4, Duration: Sun, +2, Target: Ind, +0, Level: InIm30, Design: 30 levels, Base 2, +4 Arc, +2 Sun, +1 constant effect, +1 non-Hermetic effects, -3 Might cost

Flight of the Hummingbird (Personal: 25), Points: 0, Initiative: Qik-1, Form: Auram, Range: Per, +0, Duration: Sun, +2, Target: Ind, +0, Level: ReAu15, Design: 15 levels, Base 4, +2 Sun, +1 constant, -2 Might cost

Stench of the Twenty Corpses (Greater: 15), Points: 0, Initiative: Qik-1, Form: Auram, Range: Voice, +2, Duration: Diam, +1, Target: Ind, +0, Level: CrAu10, Design: 10 levels, Base 3, +2 Voice, +1 Diam, -1 Might cost

Appearance: Nasr al-Sagheer appears as a thin almost dried-up arabic man, with a distinct nose like a vulture's beak. In physical form, he can take the shape of a vulture, an eagle or a saqr falcon.

ERMELINA: THE BEGGAR OF STORIES

BY BERENGAR DREXEL

Ermelina is a highly cognizant courtly faerie (see *Realms of Power: Faerie*, pages 82 to 86). She interacts with humans to collect stories about women in influential positions, who led a dramatic life and caused strong emotional responses in her fellow men - like Waldrada and Eleanor of Aquitaine. Then she plays them like an actress, for effect.

HABITAT

Ermelina first fed off the vitality of Romans excited by the many stories of the ancient leaders who once lived on Palatine hill. There she found, that most people were easier to impress with more recent stories, and around 1000 AD began to play at being Marozia, the lover, mother and ancestress of popes. Emulating her, with some demonic help Ermelina married into the family of the Counts of Tusculum, became the mother of Pope Benedict IX and the ancestress of the further counts. See for this **Sub Rosa** issue 16 Strange Alliances. Her stats below - but for her many Area Lores acquired in the meantime - can be used in this saga, too.

Since then Ermelina took her show to the road, and hunts for stories in Western and central Europe. In the form of a darkly dressed waif with large, expressive and hungry eyes she now frequents the seedier parts of towns, wayside inns, fair grounds and the well

travelled roads between them: like the Champagne fairs, the Via Romea, the network of the Camino de Santiago, even the pilgrims' roads to Canterbury. If she hears good stories about her favorite topic, she will follow their source around and beg for more. While this looks weird, many feel flattered or will oblige her out of pity. Others might Obey the Lady or answer a Question of the Lady (see below).

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Once Ermelina has identified a suitable woman, living, dead, or fictional, in the stories she was told, she may adopt this woman as her new role. She then begins to emulate her among those humans who respond strongest to the similarity: e. g. her descendants and heirs, former husband and lovers, or



artists who immortalized her. She draws her sustenance from their emotions, thereby striving to become more and more like her adopted role model, and even drawing more faeries into her game to form a court. Local faerie courts are usually too sluggish to react in time and prevent faeries from joining Ermelina's game – so she often can quickly assemble a fitting troupe from local talent.

She will attempt to marry into the family of her role model, seduce her lover, or become the next inspiration of the artist's works. Once she achieved this, she will continue in her role model's footsteps and act as she was famed to, always causing more emotions and growing her court. With sufficient emotions consumed, Ermelina can bear children just as her role model.

This might go on for decades, or quickly spiral into a most dramatic catastrophe. If everybody loses control, Ermelina is just fine. If the family or community she stirred up is destroyed, Ermelina moves on with all the energy she has garnered. But if she is offered payment for emulating her role model, she feels not appreciated properly, and departs at once. Her next role may wait just around the corner.

Her essence is in her silver hand mirror, which each morning bestows Venus' Blessing for the day to the first person looking into it. As long as this mirror is intact, she cannot be truly destroyed. Sometimes she withdraws into it to reconstruct her body between adopting roles.

YOUNG LORD BALDWIN

Around 1220, the House of Courtenay (see [Literature](#)) is well-respected all over Mythic Europe, with exponents in England, France, Lorraine, the Latin Empire and the Holy Land. Some noble neighbor of the player characters' covenant holds his blood relation with this house in high esteem.

When a rumor appears in their Tribunal that Baldwin, the nine year old son and heir of this neighbor, is Gifted, it falls upon the player characters to investigate – unless they wish to have foreign magi churn up their backyard.

However they approach the boy – for example, at some reception of their neighbor, or while he travels overland with a cavalcade – they might find out that:

- Baldwin really is Gifted (by the instinct of a magus searching for an apprentice, or by appropriate magic)
- Is apparently in an early stage of leprosy (by *Medicine + Perception + Stress* die versus 9, or by appropriate magic)
- Has very Strong Court Faerie Blood (Faerie Sight or Faerie Lore + *Perception + Stress* die versus 12)
- And is a faerie's prop (by automatic Faerie Sight, or by magic detecting and analyzing Arcane Connections).

This should tell the player characters to be very careful, and to expect Jerbitons, Tytali and Merinitae to contend for the boy as soon as this information spreads.

Anybody – player character or foreign magus - attempting to abduct

the boy by stealth or force sooner or later gets to know his very formidable mother: Ermelina emulating Agnes of Courtenay (see [Literature](#)), who really feels disturbed and provoked in her act as caring, worldly and steadfast mother of the leper king, and expertly marshals the resources of her husband, his relatives and her faerie court against the abductors.

Finding out about Baldwin's family requires Local Area Lore, or successful socializing with other noble neighbors in the know. To evaluate the obtained information later, you can use the rules for library research from *Covenants*, pages 98 and 99, and for encyclopedias from *Art & Academe*, page 26. See the nearby table.

Contacting 'Anne' and her husband openly about an apprenticeship for young Baldwin requires a lot of tact and finesse. Some resistance against Ermelina's power helps as well, if the talks don't go all smoothly.

Player characters may find out, that:

- Baldwin's Gift and condition seriously disturb his father.
- Ermelina/Anne will not let Baldwin out of her custody.
- Provided it is sufficiently embellished to fit a noble scion, both would not object to an Hermetic apprenticeship for Baldwin.
- Ermelina/Anne has indeed a lot of respect for the Order's power, which she tries very hard to conceal.

This means, that any would-be-parens had to move to Baldwin's home, where Ermelina would constantly breathe down his neck. Doesn't this sound like a nearly ideal situation for an

Int +	Result
Local Area Lore vs. 3	Baldwin's mother is named Anne. She is known for her assertiveness, worldly wisdom, and exemplary care for her children.
Local Area Lore vs. 6	Anne married into her husband's family 12 years ago, bore him Sybil 11 years ago and Baldwin 9 years ago.
Local Area Lore vs. 6	There is no known faerie blood in the family of Baldwin's father.
Local Area Lore vs. 9	Anne's lineage is unknown, but her husband received her as high nobility.
Local Area Lore vs. 9	There were no known cases of leprosy among nobility, gentlemen and knights in the area over the last 50 years.
Local Area Lore vs. 12 or own experience	Her husband is very impressed by Anne, and compares her care for Baldwin to that of Agnes of Courtenay for king Baldwin of Jerusalem.
Holy Land Lore or Church Lore vs. 6 (no books)	Wasn't there a king in the Holy Land who was a leper? Wasn't he called Baldwin?
Holy Land Lore vs. 6 (with books)	The leper king Baldwin IV of Jerusalem lived from 1161 to 1185. He had a sister called Sybil, who lived from about 1159 to 1190. The mother of both was Agnes of Courtenay and lived from about 1136 to 1185.
Faerie Lore vs. 12 or Order of Hermes Lore vs. 12 (no books)	Wasn't there a faerie in Rome, who had married into a noble family?
Order of Hermes Lore vs. 12 (with books)	In 1048 the Order founded a covenant in Rome to protect the Pope from assassins. These assassins turned out to be sent by a faerie called Ermelina, who had married into the family of the Counts of Tusculum and taken control of it.

enterprising Tylalus Leper Magus (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, pages 93 and 94), or a Merinita versed in Story Magic (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 98)?

If the player characters have sorted this out, and under this conditions none of them wishes to become Baldwin's parens, they might inconspicuously approach and screen other candidates, and finally present a fitting one to Ermelina and her husband. Their reward as go-betweens then depends on their bargaining skills, but might at least include continuing peace around their covenant.

MORE STORIES

A scholar reads and explains Marie de France's Chaitivel (see *Literature*) to

the beggar of stories. She decides to emulate its heroine and to find among those appreciating Marie's *lais* four chivalrous knights to love her equally and at the same time. She might inspire more than one Don Quijote before the time, also from the magi of the Knights of the Green Stone (*The Mysteries Revised Edition*, pages 131 and 132).

In a saga running for some time, a female character with the Virtue Supernatural Beauty or the Flaw Envied Beauty (see *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, pages 56 and 57) might attract the interest of Ermelina. Such a character might find an 'abandoned' silver hand mirror, which miraculously improves her love life further. While Ermelina with yet unformed body watches and bides her time from its other side.

Ermelina has snuck into the initiation of the Virtue Story Magic by the Keepers of a Thousand Tales of House Merinita (see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, pages 81 and 82). She knows the Faerie regio, which candidates enter on midsummer day to recite their new poem, and sometimes usurps the role of the lady of the house there. If she deems a candidate interesting, she gifts him with her hand mirror. Thus she will be present when he and his Mystagogue later tell stories in intoxicated state – both to hear unfiltered gossip of magi and to retrieve her mirror.

ADDITIONAL LITERATURE

The House of Courtenay, and the story upon which Ermelina acts, are in the internet under:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Courtenay

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnes_of_Courtenay

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haute_Cour_of_Jerusalem

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baldwin_IV_of_Jerusalem

The Chaitivel of Marie de France is on the internet under:

[http://fr.wikisource.org/w/index.php?](http://fr.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Lais_de_Marie_de_France)

[title=Lais_de_Marie_de_France](http://fr.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Lais_de_Marie_de_France)

A retelling in prose is The Lay of the Dolorous Knight:

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/11417/11417-h/11417-h.htm>

ERMELINA - THE BEGGAR

OF STORIES

Faerie Might: 40 (Mentem)

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

Size: 0

Virtues and Flaws: External Vis (Anchor: silver hand mirror – 8 Mentem vis), Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, 4x Greater Power, Highly Cognizant, Humanoid Faerie, Ostentatious, Passes for Human, Personal Power, Reputation as Confidence, Ritual Power, Ability Block (Martial), Ambitious, Greedy, Susceptible to Deprivation, Traditional Ward (Payment)

Personality Traits: Ambitious +3, Greedy +3, Manipulative +3, Uncaring +2

Reputations: change with her success, and can be very high

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +2, Damage n/a

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

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

Soak: +2

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

Pretenses: Athletics 1 (Hiking), Awareness 6 (Alertness) – with Faerie Sight, Bargain 6 (Begging), Brawl 1 (Dodge), Carouse 3 (Drinking songs), Charm 6 (First impressions), Church Lore 3 (Clergy), Etiquette 6 (Courtly), Faerie Lore 6 (Court Faeries), Folk Ken 3 (Lovers), Guile 6 (Acting), Hunt 1 (Tracking), Intrigue 3 (Gossip), Leadership 6 (Inspiration), Music 3 (Singing), Order of Hermes Lore 1 (Gossip), Penetration 6 (with Arcane Connection), Ride 1 (Travel), Swim 1 (Rivers), Any Living Language 5 (Courtly), Many Area Lores

Powers:

Allure, Points: 1, Initiative: -1, Form: Mentem, Range: Eye, +1, Duration: Sun, +2, Target: Individual, 0, Level: ReMe10, Design: 10 levels, Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, 0 Individual

Extended Glamour, Points: 0, constant, Form: Mentem (as Ermelina has no domain while searching for her next role model, at that time she cannot use this power)

From Beyond the Mirror, Points: 0, Initiative: -3, Form: Imaginem, Range: Personal, 0, Duration: Conc, +1, Target: Vision, +4, Level: InIm 25, Design: 25 levels, Base 4, 0 Personal, +1 Conc, +4 nearly Vision (not quite Hermetic. If withdrawn into her Anchor, Ermelina can use her normal senses of sight, hearing, smell and touch from it, even when she cannot use her Extended Glamour.)

Grant Flaw (Weak-Willed), Points: 5, Initiative: -10, Form:

Vim, Range: Touch, +1, Duration: Mom, 0, Target: Individual, 0, Ritual, no Hermetic equivalent

Illusionary Home, Points: 4, Initiative: -4, Form: Illusion, Range: Touch, +1, Duration: Sun, +2, Constant, +1, Target: Structure, +3, Level: MuIm 40, Design: 40 levels, Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 Constant, +3 Structure (used in the Dominion, or when she has not yet set up a suitable domain)

Illusionary Servant, Points: 2, Initiative: -4, Form: Illusion, Range: Touch, +1, Duration: Sun, +2, Target: Individual, 0, Intricacy, +1, Mentem requisite, +6, Level: CrIm(Me) 40, Design: 40 levels, Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, , 0 Individual, +1 Intricacy, +6 Mentem requisite (The Shadow of Human Life [page 144] used to make credible illusionary servants, especially when travelling and while she has not yet attracted other faeries.)

Obey the Lady, Points: 0, Initiative: -2, Form: Mentem, Range: Eye, +1, Duration: Sun, +2, Target: Individual, 0, Level: ReArM5 Me20, Design: 20 levels, Base 5, +1 Eye, +2 Sun, 0 Individual (Aura of Rightful Authority [ArM5 page 151] to keep annoyances away.)

Question of the Lady, Points: 0, Initiative: -2, Form: Mentem, Range: Eye, +1, Duration: Momentary, 0, Target: Individual, 0, Level: InMe20, Design: 20 levels, Base 15, +1 Eye, 0 Momentary, 0 Individual (Posing the Silent Question [ArM5 page 149] to keep informed.)

NOTE: Ermelina emulates humans. She uses her powers and those of her faerie court to set her stage and to deal with disruptions, not to make it any easier for her role. When the Emperor sent German popes and magi, these messed with her performance as Marozia. Against them she used everything at hand: even poison and assassins. But if Benedict IX imprisoned his mother, she would play the Marozia dying in prison for all the sobs in it – and then take her mirror to the road.

YOUNG LORD BALDWIN

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

Size: -2

Age: 9 (9)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift; Gentleman, Faerie Sight, Focus Power × 1, Privileged Upbringing, Strong Court Faerie Blood (Physical Quirk: Blue blood); Greater Malediction (Leprosy), Fragile Constitution (Healing: -3), Proud

Personality Traits: Guileful +1, Inquisitive +1, Proud +3, Retiring +2

Reputations: Guarded 1, Gentleman 1

Combat:

Dodge: Init -3, Attack n/a, Defense -2, Damage n/a

Fist: Init -3, Attack -2, Defense -2, Damage -4

Kick: Init -4, Attack -2, Defense -3, Damage -1

Dagger: Init -3, Attack +1, Defense -1, Damage -1

Soak: -3

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 1 (Grammar), Awareness 1 (Alertness), Brawl 1 (Dagger), Charm 1 (Being Witty), Church Lore 1 (Hierarchy), Faerie Sight 3 (See Arcane Connection), Folk Ken 3 (Mother), Guile 1 (Hide Condition), Latin 3 (Ecclesiastical), Local Area Lore 2 (Nobility), Native Language 5 (Courtly), Ride 1 (Travel), Single Weapon 2 (Sword, Short), Stealth 1 (Indoors)

Powers:

Purification of the Festering Body (Focus: 25), Fatigue Cost: 1, Initiative: -8, Form: Corpus, Range: Touch, +1, Duration: Moon, +3, Target: Ind, +0, Level: CrCo25, Design: 25 levels, Base 5, +1 Touch, +3 Moon – The effect gives the touched being +12 to Recovery rolls from all injuries and diseases for its duration.

NOTE: Faerie Sight shows the boy to belong to Ermelina as a prop (see Realms of Power: Faerie page 50). Once Baldwin ceases to be Ermelina's prop, he is cured of his leprosy, too.

ADVANCING THE INTANGIBLE ASSASSIN

As a follow up for the article Intangible Assassin from **Sub Rosa** issue 15 we discuss how to proceed from a fresh out of Gauntlet magus concept, using the two example magi –

Octavianus of House Guernicus and Ragna of House Bjornaer – and advance them as if through play.

To tie this article into the theme of this **Sub Rosa** we include towards the

BY CHRISTIAN R ANDERSEN
AND PELLE KOFOD

end a short section on how Intangible Assassins fare against victims other than Hermetic magi.



IDENTIFYING THE END GOAL

Being a less well-defined and more open-ended idea that the basic design of the magi, advancing them further is more of an ongoing process. The goal of this article is to show how recently Gauntleted Assassin could proceed, in an attempt to keep up with the power curve.

METHOD AND CONDITIONS

Advancing the two sample magi is done in five year increments, after which their advanced stats are presented, along a brief description of their actions, an approach similar to Magi of Hermes. This project simulates an ongoing saga as closely as possible, in order for the progression to look like actual play. So we mix up seasons of study, lab work, and situations which in an actual saga would have been stories. This means we can take advantage of those Virtues (and Flaws) which

mechanically affect study and advancement like they would during actual play. Using Metacreator greatly eases the advancement process, provided we do our preparations in advance and in the right way.

Just as our example magi are young, so we aim for a younger covenant. Whether or not the bulk of people's actual sagas are about freshly Gauntleted magi in young covenants we can only guess at, but if nothing else this decision helps to underline the fact that just like it does not require old and experienced magi to excel as Intangible Assassins (although they do need to be specialized) nor does it take an old and powerful covenant to support their growth.

Our aim is mid to late Summer to ensure that the basic resources and relations are well established. After all, we are showcasing Intangible Assassins not covenant builders. For simplicity we use a static covenant and don't apply any changes or developments during the process. To cover the span of 25 years the covenant resources may be a little on the powerful side to begin with but may eventually seem weak. A minor trade-off for keeping it simple. We use the same covenant file for both of the sample magi, although they are not intended to be part of the same covenant. This article does not go into detail with library stats, however a Metacreator file is available for download. The covenant is not designed in full detail only the library needs full stats in order to advance our sample magi, and this only focuses on useful texts. The budget is around 1600 BP, with 1136 of them spent on the library alone. So the covenant has a strong

library but is relatively weak on vis, specialists, and devices. If the sample magi spend seasons being taught or trained by someone then this is listed specifically. The covenant from this point on is referred to as Foedus.

With reference to *Covenants*, page 93-95 Foedus' library boasts roots in all 15 arts, as well as sound branches in select arts. All of them at the high end of the classification 'sound', meaning summae with Level + Quality of 27. In addition to this there are tractatus ranging from vain (Quality 7) to slightly above sound (Quality 11). The magi are presumed to have full access to the library. For availability of vis we assume a flat income of 8 pawns Form vis annually for each of the magi, to simulate the average amount from stories, hunting, and covenant salary. We assume a fair spread between the Forms, and may occasionally reduce the size of remaining stash due to cost of trading to other Arts. Basic labs are also freely available, if the sample magi choose to improve and personalize them this is part of their advancement activities.

Since time is the most valuable currency for magi we make a few assumptions here. Foedus does not require the magi to spend a set amount of time performing covenant services. Being active magi our Intangible Assassins do spend at least one season per year on activities we call Stories, for collecting Arcane Connections, spying, or fighting Wizard's Wars. These seasons merit between 5 Story Experience - for smaller, personal stories and simple spying - and up to 15 for stories with more impact - like Wizard's Wars or major political events.

Major events are limited to once per 5 years.

Labs are assumed to already exist. They are either taken over from previous occupants or - more likely - have been set up during apprenticeship. These are initially basic labs of size 0. Being a Summer covenant a moderate Upkeep is no problem.

Confidence is yet another one of those concepts which we will be glossing over, a detail level our simulation of play does not include. Had we really been playing these magi Confidence would freely be used and gained, but the examples all omit this.

DISCUSSION AND ASSESSMENT

As with the design of the magi there are general considerations and thoughts which we will examine and analyze before deciding on the course of action for Octavianus and Ragna in each period of advancement time. The aim is to advance the magi 5 years at a time, and present the altered stat blocks at these points in time, over a period of 25 years. Each of these are accompanied by a quick run down of the activities pursued and an assessment of how the period's plans and goals have gone.

OCTAVIANUS +5 YEARS

Like many young magi right out of Gauntlet, Octavianus is somewhat unfocussed and is really just trying to find somewhere to go and something to do with his new found freedom. However, his obsession with Justice

drags him into a few situations that could and perhaps should have been avoided. Still, his “opponents” take little notice of him and indeed the only one to truly notice (Sibilus of Tylus) seems to think it is merely the mark of a healthy young man.

OCTAVIANUS’ ACTIVITIES

Octavianus has spent most of his time studying. A single spell has been invented. Five seasons have been spent on stories, usually motivated by his house affiliation. In Theory 40 pawns of Vis could have been accumulated, minus the two pawns used for study, but at the end of the five-year period, most of these pawns have been spent on bribes gifts and to improvise certain effects during stories. Thus only 15 pawns remain on hand.

RAGNA +5 YEARS

Ragna’s plans for the first period focus on both strengthening her defenses and improving her abilities to procure Arcane Connections. She studies Parma Magica in addition to spending entire seasons in raven form in order to Practice or accumulate Story Experience, most importantly in Stealth. As shown in the examples in the previous article her Penetration Total is already impressive due to her design. Grinding Arts means more progress for this, however only on a 1:1 ratio. The most potential is from raising Penetration Ability and Mastery Score since these are greatly increased by the Penetration Multiplier in the final Penetration Total.

RAGNA’S ACTIVITIES

During these 20 seasons Ragna has spent ten seasons studying books, five seasons adventuring (all of them primarily in Raven form for the Experience), three seasons practicing spell mastery, one season receiving teaching, and one season training a sept member. She has learned no new abilities or spells, but increased Casting Totals and Mastery for several key spells. During this time she has carved for herself a reputation among magi as a fierce fighter, which is likely to be increased during the time to come. Her vis stash accumulates from eight pawns Form vis annually, it is reduced slightly to account for vis spent fixing Arcane Connections, bribes, gifts etc. No serious vis use has yet been required.

EXEMPLI GRATIA: ATTACKED IN THE FIELD

Considering Ragna’s actions and her very way of doing things it is not unreasonable to assume an enemy manages to jump her in the field and unprepared. With reference to the previous article in **Sub Rosa** issue 15 a close friend of the deceased Flambeau magus whom Ragna burnt to a crisp is gunning for revenge. This is William of Flambeau, five years out of Gauntlet following the School of the Founder. He is not as prepared nor as devious as Ragna usually is, so he attacks using the most commonly known methods: Rush in, shoot first, and leave quickly to avoid any questions.

William has Creo 12, Ignem 12+3, a Major Focus with flames, Penetration 3 (Ignem), Parma Magica 2 (Mentem), Ball of Abysmal Flame Mastery 1

(penetration), and Pilum of Fire Mastery 4 (penetration, multi-casting, resistance, imperturbable).

Being hot-headed, he starts out his ambush with the most dangerous tool he has – Ball of Abysmal Flame. Of course, the concept of ‘most deadly’ is up to debate since Penetration is more important than how much damage you (potentially) inflict. Assuming an average roll of 5 his Casting Total is 50, making his Penetration Total $50-35+1x(3+1+1) = 20$. In comparison with what we say Ragna racked up earlier this might seem pathetic, but mind you this *is* for a high level spell. Still, having no Penetration Multipliers really has an impact. Ragna shrugs this off; her Resistance is $5x4+7 = 27$. Ragna retreats, realizing she can’t plausibly harm him without preparation, flying away as a raven.

Good thing William did not attack tactically with Pilum of Fire, here his Penetration would have been $50-20+1x(3+1+4) = 38$ – more than enough to toast this poor Bjornaer maga for +15 damage...and this is just for one of his 5 copies of the spell.

OCTAVIANUS +10 YEARS

At first, nothing indicates that anything should be different in these five years. But it was not to be. Octavianus’ very first investigation in this period turns out to be rather more complicated. And this investigation is just the beginning. While Octavianus has found time to study his arts, no time has been found for an apprentice, a talisman or a familiar. An Arcane

Connection has been fixed and an old opponent has been re-discovered.

EXEMPLI GRATIA: CONFRONTING THE GARGOYLE'S MASTER

Near the end of this half-decade, Octavianus finds himself asked to investigate the apparent sightings of a demon. This turns out to be something very different – it was a magical construct, made by one Alexandrus of Verditius. This led to a rather sad situation. Alexandrus found an intruder in his sanctum and decided to capture him alive. He pulled out a Wand, enchanted as a charged device with the Call to Slumber, penetration 45, which is usually enough. But Octavianus has a Mentem resistance of 47, and devices do not add a die roll to penetration. So nothing happened. Octavianus realized that he didn't have an arcane connection to Alexandrus, meaning he could barely do anything either, as all of his useful spells were Range: Touch.

Octavianus fled the scene inelegantly through a window, while Alexandrus tried a Wand with Pilum of Fire, Penetration 41 – for no effect.

RAGNA +10 YEARS

Her plans for the following period includes learning the Teaching Ability in order to pass on her skills to several young sept members at the same time, rather than continue to do one on one training. This saves her precious time for other activities while still retaining the services of all the sept's apprentices, however this number rarely exceeds two at any given time. Although it is a great



synergy effect to have an apprentice to task with fixing Arcane Connections it is hardly decisive for her success.

Increasing her knowledge of the Order's magi, the Code itself, as well as local geography is also a priority in order to be best prepared for Wizard's War. Increasing her Raven form's Stealth is also vital for her operations. She has no active plans for new spells, but there is still room for improvement in Arts and Mastery of her most commonly used spells, most of which

only require small amounts of experience to increase.

RAGNA'S ACTIVITIES

In this period Ragna suffers for the first time the ravages of time. Her 35th winter in 1229 must be a particularly grueling and bitterly cold time. All the time she spends as a small bird cooped up in a hiding place, skulking for Arcane Connections has done nothing for her already unimpressive physique – hence her Strength suffers.

Her activities in these 20 seasons include: six seasons of book study, five seasons of adventuring, five seasons of practicing, two seasons of teaching sept members, and two seasons of receiving teaching herself. Adventure experience has been divided up between her raven form's abilities and Spell Mastery. Given her active take on Wizard's War her Reputation receives one experience point per season adventuring. But still not enough to raise the value of it. Still no heavy use of vis, the accumulating continues with a reduction for slight use.

OCTAVIANUS +15 YEARS

Octavianus starts out this half-decade by covering what he sees as holes in his repertoire of spells. This is especially true in the light of his humiliating encounter with Alexandrus (see the example above). There is no rest for neither the wicked nor the righteous however, and soon Octavianus is off to Ireland. Here he encounters Dalton Ballaugh and the school of Raghallach. And what he sees terrifies him. Thus Octavianus spends several seasons to invent certain spells and master them for resistance, to make sure that they are unlikely to be successfully used against him. So wrapped up in this is he, that he almost doesn't realize that old age is creeping up on him – and when he does, his understanding of Magic Theory turns out to be insufficient to handle the Vis he needs. This is not really surprising – with the low levels of spells needed, Magic Theory has not been a priority,

and so Octavianus has fallen behind. He takes steps to remedy this, but still not in time to create a Longevity Ritual until he is 37 and has made a few aging rolls already. It is pure luck that old age hasn't gotten to him yet. The end of these 5 years see a re-surfacing of an old opponent, and a renewed interest in Magic Theory.

RAGNA +15 YEARS

As the yoke of time starts to weigh her down, Ragna decides it is time to seek out a Longevity specialist within her House and pay for such services. Until now she has used only small amounts of the vis she procures and has a whopping 60 pawns accumulated at the start of this period, which is more than enough for a good Longevity Ritual. We assume a ninth-magnitude Longevity Ritual, which requires the usage of 7 pawns of vis for her age of 36 years. Using standard price-setting, she pays twice the amount required as fee to the inventor, thus reducing her stash by half by rounding up to account for vis trading expenses.

Seeing her Raven form's most important mundane abilities almost peaked and plausibly high enough more effort while adventuring will be channeled towards Penetration. By starting out recently Gauntleted with a whopping score of 5 there really is not much progress to be had. Still, Story and Practice Experience is the staple of the maga with Independent Study, so we continue in however small steps the harsh reality dictates us.

Increasing Arts is a continuing focus, at least until the covenant's Branches are exhausted. And then there are the

Tractatus. Ragna will finally enter her lab, in order to expand her killing power by inventing more deadly versions of her combat spells. Eventually this also means starting up the new, steep slope of Mastering these as well. However this maga's built is designed to optimize this through the choices of Virtues.

RAGNA'S ACTIVITIES

In this period Ragna spends her 20 seasons as follows: six seasons studying Arts from books, five seasons of adventuring, four seasons in lab (one for Longevity, three inventing new spells), three practicing spell mastery, one season teaching, and one being taught herself. Her continued activities adds to her reputation, raising it to score of 2 during this period. Thanks to Flawless Magic she immediately masters her new version of The Minute of Reckoning. By using the Adaptive Casting Mastery it becomes as efficient as her other versions with minimal effort.

EXEMPLI GRATIA: THE COUNTERATTACK

Ragna is plotting to take out William of Flambeau, who is so sure of his own offensive powers (or lack any way of rapidly increasing them) that he works diligently on his defenses. Inspired by the pragmatism and ruthless efficiency many of his House are known for he finds some facts about Ragna's capabilities: namely both her attacking Forms. William manages to raise his Parma Magica to 3, invents a low-level Range: Touch Ignem spell merely for learning Resistance Mastery, and finally hits the best books on Aquam he can find, raising his score to 7. However,

before he manages to procure a R:Touch acid spell, Ragna has her game ready. She has managed to procure an Arcane Connection; otherwise trivial but which once again has been fixed by an underling, for a multiplier of +4. Her thieving has also given her a scrap of parchment with William's signature on, stolen from an inattentive Redcap for another +1.

Her final Penetration multiplier is now $1+(4+1) = 6$, her Penetration Ability is effectively $6+2$ and Mastery $3 = 11$ (12 for Vim due to specialty). So, before Arts and dice she is looking at Penetration 66-72.

Holed up in their respective sanctums the battle begins. For simplicity we assume equal auras and equal, average dice rolls to keep these factors out of the equation. William's Vim Resistance against the initial Minute of Reckoning level 15 is Parma $(3) \times 5 + \text{Vim } (5) = 20$. That's quite pathetic, maybe he needs to work on this. Or not? Since he may not even survive this!

As Ragna attacks first with her best Ignem spell, just to see if she can best him, her Penetration with Incinerating Touch is Casting Score (36) - Spell level (15) = 21 plus the 66 from the modified Penetration = 87. William has Parma $(3) \times 5 + \text{Ignem } (12+3)$ all $\times 2$ due to Resistance Mastery = 60. Oh, not quite enough it seems...that's a shame! He is now being burnt for +15 damage per round, per copy of the spell. However, this could take a while with his +3 Form bonus and most likely a positive Stamina.

Switching to her newest Aquam spell Corrosive Touch her Penetration Total is still $21+66 = 87$. William couldn't

even have been close to this had he managed to Master a similar spell for Resistance. The damage is only +10 here, and Form bonus to Soak still amounts to a +2, so this is in fact not any more efficient. So, strictly speaking William may survive since Ragna can only kill him in a time consuming way. The process may be interrupted by botches (although Mastery offsets this risk a great deal) or William or any onrushing sodales who could close the tunnel or ward him against acid and fire. So for the sake of argument we decide that he lives, although grievously injured and somewhat disillusioned by his own ability in a fight.

OCTAVIANUS +20 YEARS

EXEMPLA GRATIA: AURAE

Octavianus has recently acquired an Arcane Connection to Sibellius. He broods over this for a while. What he wants to do is against the code, but he knows how to conceal his actions.

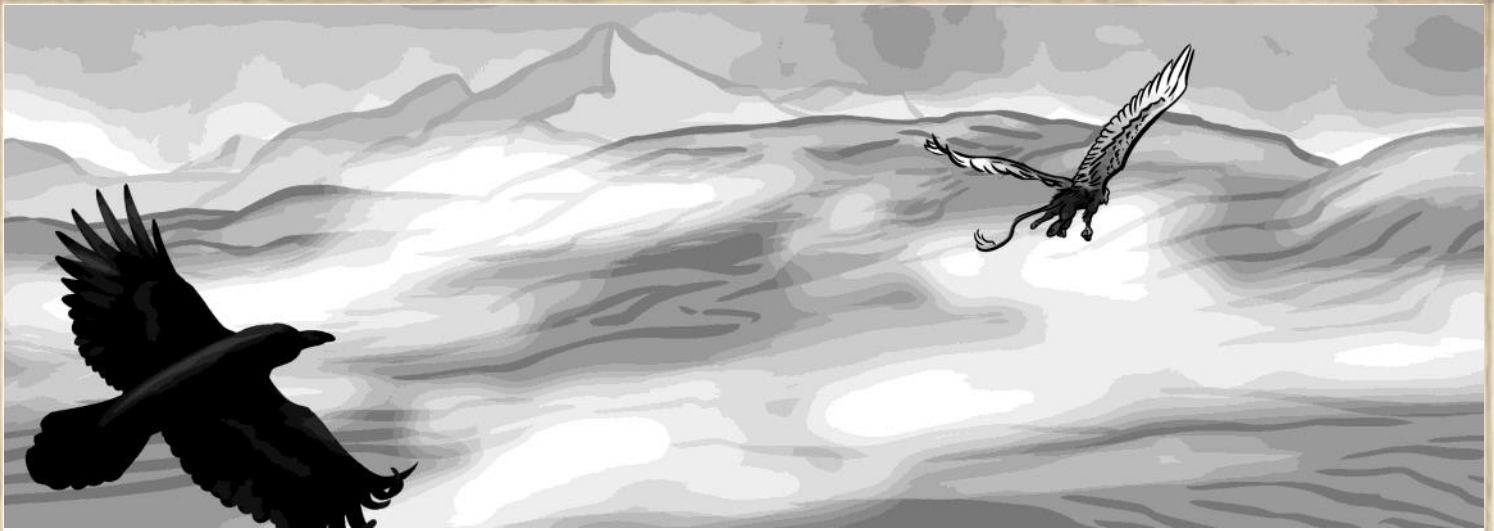
Is eliminating Sibellius worth tainting himself for? In the end, Octavianus decides that it is.

Deciding there is no time like the present, Octavianus strikes straight away! His effects covered via Shroud Magic to give off a false Sigil, he started by opening an Intangible Tunnel.

Sibellius has a Parma Magica of 5 and a Vim score of 16, granting him a Vim resistance of 41. Sibellius knows Opening the Intangible Tunnel, ReVi at level 5, for which he has achieved Magic Resistance Mastery (**ArM5**, page 87) via practice, for a total resistance of 82 against Opening the Intangible Tunnel

and similar spells. Octavianus has a single strand of hair from Sibellius, which is an Arcane Connection with a duration of 'months', meaning is has a penetration multiplier of '+2'. As well, Octavianus creates a simple horoscope (not nativity) for Sibellius, for a further '+1' multiplier. Looking at Octavianus' sheet, this is a total penetration of 64+ the value of the die on the casting roll. Octavianus casts from his lab, with a magic aura of 3, while Sibellius happen to be at his own lab at the time, with a magic aura of 4. Octavianus rolls a 6, for a total penetration of 73, against Sibellius Magic Resistance of 86 (82+aura). The spell fails to penetrate. Sibellius detects a spell failing to penetrate his Parma Magica, but fails to determine it's nature or caster. And obviously Octavianus has no idea by how much (or little) he failed.

So Octavianus takes to keeping track of Sibellius. Not only where he is and what he's doing, but also where he's to be going and what he will do there. And collecting Vis, just to be sure. And a few days later, the perfect opportunity presents itself. Sibellius finds himself forced to visit a church. With a divine aura of 4, meaning a penalty of 12 to all totals associated with the Magic Realm, including resistance. And of course this is when Octavianus decides to strike, casting The Evil Eye (ReVi 5, Sibellius is visible within the church). A simple horoscope is easy enough to make. A roll of 4, four pawns of Vis and no relevant aura, that's a penetration of 76, against Sibellius' resistance of 70 (82-3*4 for the divine aura). Easily penetrated. Sibellius notices nothing. So Octavianus swallows all pride and violates his best principles. He casts



Break the Shield (*Hermetic Projects*, page 85), hoping that (25+stress die) exceeds Sibellius' Parma Magica score time 5, which obviously it does. And Penetration is not a big issue, as Sibellius doesn't know this spell and so doesn't have it mastered for Magic Resistance. Perfect, Sibellius is still not alerted to the attack. Octavianus then drops the initial The Evil Eye, and casts a new The Evil Eye, but this time at level 20. Penetration has ceased to be an issue, since Sibellius' resistance has dropped dramatically, being now limited to Form scores. Even against spells he has mastered for resistance, this is insufficient. From here on it's just killing. When the priest sees his "guest" suddenly manifesting wounds and bursting into flames at the altar, his reaction is predictable, especially since he would still be bothered by Sibellius' Gift.

RAGNA +20 YEARS

As Ragna's fame rises due to her exploits she is bound to make new enemies based on her very personality and (to some) dishonorable tactics. An enemy much more clever and discreet

that her previous Flambeau victims. Enter on stage Xenia of Tremere, in the shadows and still unknown to Ragna. Xenia observes from hiding and investigates quietly. She ruthlessly uses the broken William to probe Ragna's abilities further, and as a smoke screen to lure Ragna into preparing from the wrong kind of threat.

Meanwhile Ragna has come to realize that given the quality of the Arcane Connections she now regularly procures, through hard work and years of training, she should employ more powerful spells. Since Penetration is for the better part taken care of with Penetration modifier, her Ability, and Spell Mastery, the amount by which her Casting Total exceeds Spell Level is less important. Ragna now goes for much improved Aquam acid spell, plus the necessary Minute of Reckoning. Even though the damage is lower the risk of victims having an immunity or ward is less. Spells to unravel wards might be a good idea though, utilizing the Unravelling mastery, although she is unlikely to find much time for this in this period.

Finally Ragna spends time befriending a magical raven living in an

area in the vicinity of the forest she protects. She and the raven shares much along the lines of personality as well as in appearance. She does not yet realizing the usefulness in future schemes of having an extra set of eyes around and an animal which could be mistaken for her.

RAGNA'S ACTIVITIES

During the years 16 to 20 Ragna spends her time with six seasons study, five adventure, five lab, two practice, one teaching, and one receiving teaching.

Ragna manages to find time to invent Suppressing the Fabric of Aquam, in order to counter anyone using wards against Aquam to avoid her acid spells as well as spells to remove, change, or wash away the acid. Her Perdo Deficiency means both her Lab and Casting Total for an Unraveling spell are abysmal. Luckily she can manage a comparable effect with Rego Vim guidelines for suppressing magic. This method may even prove to be more useful and versatile, by effectively preventing her target casting any Aquam spells below a certain level for the duration of the Suppressing spell, rather

then momentarily dispelling the effects. However it is a bit more difficult to pull off.

A ward against liquids is Base 20, a personal version is a minimum of level 30 for D: Diameter or Concentration. The spell "Suppress the Fabric of [Form]" is a General effect which (adjusted for Range and Duration) can affect spells up to the Base level. So Ragna's level 15 can affect Aquam spells cast by others up to level 15. Choosing Rebuttal as spell mastery adds 3x Mastery score to the effective level, so Ragna needs Mastery score of 5 in order to suppress a personal ward against liquids. She does not have time to further practice mastery so the spell is unlikely to even Penetrate, which a must for a personal wards. In line with her scheming nature she keeps this new tool a deep secret.

EXEMPLI GRATIA: THE PROBING ATTACKS

Led unwittingly onwards by the scheming Xenia of Tremere the disillusioned William continues to harass Ragna and vandalize various wilderness locations believed to be of interest to her. Guided by the dedicated and borderline paranoid Tremere maga William takes great pains to avoid leaving Arcane Connections around. All the while Xenia scribes upon William and runs the risk of being caught in a Hermetic Crime. The point is to discover Ragna's strengths and weaknesses and locate her most valued locations and resources.

By being almost as clever and scheming as Ragna, Xenia manages to pilfer the already fixed Arcane Connection Ragna has to William. And

more importantly, by using agents she manages to remain unidentified by the quite irate Ragna.

So once Ragna attacks William in order to kill him she has no Arcane Connection but uses her new-found friendship with the magical raven to lure William away from her real resources and into an old infernal sacrificial site to further her odds by difference in Auras. Ragna attacks from her Magic aura of 6 while William is in the Infernal aura of 2. She now wishes she had the skills needed to cast a horoscope.

William has, since their last great showdown, managed to invent a Touch range acid spell and master it for Resistance. His Parma Magica remains at 3, his Aquam at 8 and Vim at 5 are unchanged as well. William's Magic Resistance for Vim is $Parma(3) \times 5 + Vim(5) - Aura(2) = 18$. Still rather pathetic! Against Aquam for acid spells it is $2 \times (Parma(3) \times 5 + Aquam(8) - Aura(2)) = 42$. Quite respectable actually.

Ragna attacks first with her strongest acid spell. Penetration for the Tunnel, assuming all dice rolls of 5, is $Casting Total(32+6 \text{ for Aura}) - 25 + Penetration(6+2+1) = 17$. Not even close! What a difference the lack of AC and sympathetic connection makes! And what a difference the Resistance Mastery did for William.

So, the well-prepared enemy is not killed easily with her new weapons! Ragna is now left to use her lesser versions or alternatively scavenge for new Arcane Connections. To cut a long story short she can kill him if she wants to. And for the sake of argument let's say she does, even under the legal confines of Wizard's War. The point was for Xenia to research her enemy,

regardless of collateral damage, and in this she succeeded.

OCTAVIANUS +25 YEARS

OCTAVIANUS' ACTIVITIES

These years are mostly spent polishing existing abilities and spell. And expanding his repertoire of Intelligo spells. Also, his fellow members of house Guernicus have started suggesting it might be time for him to take an apprentice. Octavianus still tries to put this off but realizes that having an apprentice might not be a bad idea politically, as it is one of the three signs of power, along with a familiar and a Talisman. Perhaps soon it will be time to acquire each of these?

RAGNA +25 YEARS

By now Ragna has come to realize her future enemies are likely to know of her tricks and capabilities and therefore have probably trained to resist her magic. Or in even worse situations take extreme care to deny Ragna Arcane Connections and are prepared to strike back (or even pre-emptively).

Without an Arcane Connection her spells are not only a lot weaker in Penetration, they are also useless beyond Touch range. Ragna intends to work on a few tricks here. This involves study in order to produce her own Sympathetic Connections, when Arcane Connections are denied her. And it involves lab work in order to develop alternative conduits for her magic, for use when a true intangible tunnel is not possible.

The practice of spells for mastery is – as always – a focal point of Ragna’s preparations. She also continues her relations with her sept and magical raven.

RAGNA’S ACTIVITIES

In the years 21 to 25 which have just passed Ragna spent six seasons in Practice (all in spell mastery), five adventuring, four seasons studying books, three seasons teaching sept members, one season being taught, and one season in lab. Her new conduit for attacks spells Evil Eye does not require Arcane Connections and is well mastered. After hitting the books on Artes Liberales she now has a fair chance of casting horoscopes. Study of Arts seems to have stagnated. Her adventuring experience has been spent with extreme care to optimize, and hence both Parma Magica and Penetration have increased a level each.

During this same period of time, Xenia of Tremere – Ragna’s as of now unknown nemesis – has spent her time in dedicated study and research to circumvent Ragna’s methods and deny her the very tools of her trade. Xenia has kept to the shadows and risked no further use of agents to lure and probe at Ragna. However Xenia’s single-mindedness has left her blind to all other circumstances than what she expects Ragna is doing, based on her history.

In effect, by Ragna’s branching out in areas of interest, and spending a lot of time during the decade past in a magical area of some interest, Xenia does not focus on Ragna and her sept’s most secret and important ancestral site. And Ragna’s friendship with a raven

much alike herself in appearance (to an outsider, at least) turns out to be surprisingly useful.

EXEMPLI GRATIA: XENIA DECLARES WIZARD’S WAR

In the beginning of Ragna’s year 26 post Gauntlet she receives a letter declaring Wizard’s War against her. This is not the first time, and not likely the last either. However this one is a bit of a surprise. Prior to Xenia’s dedicated enmity she was known to be a focused and well-prepared wizard, the few people who have seen her during the last decade hint at her growing paranoia.

During her month of preparation Ragna chose not to waste time and energy in procuring Arcane Connections as this was likely to be fruitless. But she does orchestrate tricks and subterfuge to keep Xenia on her toes. Using her raven friend and mundane birds the raven can command she keeps Xenia’s known bases under surveillance and has them make it look as they are lurking for an Arcane Connection. And all the time Ragna allows Xenia or her agents to follow the birds back to the new area of interest, in order to eventually lure Xenia to the cursed infernal sacrificial site. Ragna is careful to not leave Arcane Connections of her own behind, if she can help it.

As the Wizard’s War starts Ragna retreats to the deep woods, and Xenia follows. Unfortunately Ragna’s bird form drops a feather which Xenia picks up, luckily she has no time to fix it – however it is still good for a +2 multiplier. Ragna casts both a nativity and a daily horoscope for Xenia. This requires two separate Int + Artes Liberales (astronomy) stress rolls of 9,

Ragna has a total of 8 before the die roll, so only a Botch would ruin it for her – but she is successful. Ragna also has Xenia’s signature on a note she carelessly forgot to ensure the Redcap destroyed before delivering the declaration of war which most certainly did not contain such information. Ragna now has no Arcane Connections but sympathetic representation good for a +3 multiplier. Ragna has timed it so the sacrificial site has an Infernal aura temporarily as high as 4 at this time, while she herself hides at the Tether giving rise to the Magical aura of 4, hidden but with clear line of sight to the Infernal area.

Xenia has Parma Magica 5 (Mentem), Penetration 5 (Vim), she attacks with a cloud of poisonous gas using CreAu. Key Arts are: Creo 12, Rego 14, Auram 8, Aquam 7, Vim 14. Stamina and Soak are both +0, she is a Method Caster. She masters Corrosive Touch (CrAq15/+23) for Resistance, Cloud of Noxious Fumes (CrAu15/+23) for Penetration, and Minute of Reckoning (ReVi15/+33) for both. She starts her attack with a Minute of Reckoning against Ragna, her Casting Total is 33 (as per the spell)-4 (aura)+5 (die roll)=34. Penetration is Casting Total (34)-Spell Level (15) + (1+ Multiplier bonus for Arcane Connection (2)) x (Penetration (5+1)+Mastery (2)) or 19 + (3)x(8)=43. Ragna’s Resistance is Parma Magica (6)x5 + Vim (13) +Aura (4) = 47 – doubled to 94 for Resistance Mastery. Even without the Mastery and Aura Ragna’s excessively trained Parma Magica was about enough for this. Xenia may have been well-prepared, but against an equally prepared enemy she would have needed



even more focus to succeed. Like the way Ragna fixes Arcane Connections and adds in other multiplier bonuses as well.

Ragna strikes back herself in kind, Ragna's Evil Eye racks up a Penetration of Casting Total $(32+5+4)$ -Spell Level (20) + (1+ Multiplier bonus for sympathetic connections (3)) x (Penetration $(7+2+1)$ +Mastery (5)) or $21 + (4) \times (15) = 81$. Xenia's Resistance is Parma Magica $(5) \times 5 + \text{Vim} (14) - \text{Aura}$

$(4) = 35$ – doubled to 70 for Resistance Mastery. Take that, you Tremere witch!

Xenia does not know how far from Ragna's Resistance her tunnel's Penetration is, so she tries again – this time using both Confidence and vis to boost the roll – but is likely to still fail. Ragna uses her new spell Suppressing the Fabric of Aquam the effects of which aren't tangible yet, so Xenia is not alerted to it. Penetration is Casting Total $(32+5+4)$ -Spell Level (15) + (1+ Multiplier bonus for sympathetic

connections (3)) x (Penetration $(7+2+1)$ +Mastery (5)) or $26 + (4) \times (15) = 86$. Xenia's Resistance versus Vim is still 35, no doubling since she is unprepared for this.

Smelling a rat Xenia uses a Ward against Aquam to try and avoid the acid attack she suspects is imminent, however this fails due to Ragna's preparations. Ragna now starts her attacks, using Gush of the Lindwurm's Blood. Penetration is Casting Total $(39+5+4)$ -Spell Level (25) + (1+ Multiplier bonus for sympathetic connections (3)) x (Penetration $(7+2+1)$ +Mastery (3)) or $23 + (4) \times (12) = 71$. Xenia's Resistance is Parma Magica $(5) \times 5 + \text{Aquam} (8) - \text{Aura} (4) = 29$ – doubled to 58 for Resistance Mastery. Oh no! Not quite enough, is it?

So Xenia is now the unlucky recipient of +15 damage versus a Soak roll of +0. Even if the Infernal aura is not the nasty kind which affects Soak negatively she receives on average a Heavy wound from this. But Ragna's Multi-Cast Mastery allows an additional 3 copies to be cast per round. Xenia tries other defensive Aquam spells to avoid the damage, but Ragna's Suppressing spell circumvents this – also it becomes increasingly difficult to cast these spontaneously, what with Wound Penalties and all. Xenia is likely to leave behind only stories about her growing paranoia, her dedicated enmity against Ragna, plus a stain on a stone altar.

CONCLUSION

So, what – if anything – can be learned from this little experiment?

XENIA VERSUS RAGNA

In this little setup we see that a dedicated and well-prepared enemy can pose a threat to even a highly focused and optimized Intangible Assassin. However there are many factors to consider. Xenia planned well, her first and best line of defense was trying to refuse Ragna access to Arcane Connections especially in the long run so she could not find time to fix any she might procure. The second line of defence was versus Vim effects, specifically focused on Intangible Tunnel effects. If the assassin can't Penetrate with the Tunnel, the rest doesn't matter.

So, what went wrong? Xenia failed to Penetrate, why? First off she was misled by Ragna's subterfuge, and could not stack the odds in her favor with choice of locations for the two of them. In the very first example with Ragna, in the previous article, she attacked a foe known to move in ecclesiastical circles from the safety and comfort of her own magical aura. Xenia failed to take advantage of aura modifiers. Secondly, she was behind Ragna in several key values. Namely the Penetration versus Parma Magica race, but also Mastery. The Penetration modifier for the Arcane Connection was ok, but it would need to be great to affect a maga with a defense tailored against dedicated Assassin attacks, so stacking Arcane Connections with Sympathetic Connections is vital. With a lot of these

values multiplied by each other a small difference several places quickly adds up. And this is where the bulk of the Penetration needs to come from, Art scores are secondary.

By having Ragna branch out and train for alternatives to the basic Intangible Tunnel, which positively requires an Arcane Connection, she adds weapons to her arsenal. Evil Eye needs only line of sight, and the ability to produce Sympathetic Connections furthers this flexibility. In the initial design Ragna deliberately was not intended to rely heavily on horoscopes or symbolic representations. But in time her progress within her chosen field stagnates, and thus adding secondary methods becomes viable.

IN CONTRAST - OCTAVIANUS

In comparison with Ragna, Octavianus was perhaps more focused on Sympathetic Connections from the beginning, though he ultimately barely used any but horoscopes, partially due to the high difficulty of creating good artwork.

In the end though, his methods ends up very similar to Ragna's: low-level spells, a high penetration score and a strong (cumulative) penetration multiplier.

IN GENERAL

Knowledge of the Assassin's attack spell can help you tailor your Magic Resistance with the help of Resistance Mastery. Support spells like wards, spells to remove or change the damaging element etc. can also help a lot. In theory, that is. Because the cunning Assassin studies her victim, or

at least prepares for contingencies. Such spells can be circumvented using Perdo or – in Ragna's case – Rego Vim.

Obviously, this also means that the cunning Assassin will vary her methods, both so as to avoid the strengths of a particular enemy, but also to get around any preparations said enemy might have. Similarly, a dedicated Assassin should seek to keep her enemies in the dark about her most valuable resources, most important allies and hiding places by not limiting herself to just one. Ragna was willing to cut her losses if her raven friend was killed or the new magical location vandalized.

Clearly, the conclusion must be that a dedicated Intangible Assassin is a dangerous opponent which can be hard to handle if one does not equally dedicate oneself to the study of countermeasures.

At the same time, these are only five -year intervals and a total of only 25 years for each magus. While the magi presented are clearly focused, clearly neither can exactly be called a lab-rat, with both Penetration and Parma Magica each exceeding Magic Theory fairly early on and going forth. And yet they invent the spells in the lab that they need with little difficulty.

In conclusion, to combat a dedicated Intangible Assassin you may need to dedicate yourself strongly to this endeavor. It is hard if not impossible to come out ahead of the Assassin on the power curve, at least on the short term. Even focused study and training for attacks against the Assassin and defenses against any counterattacks are useless if you keep being behind. Should you start out ahead, your odds are likely to be better, but the Intangible Assassin

is one approach where young magi might well be able to successfully combat older, less focused magi.

INTANGIBLE ASSASSINS VS. NON-HERMETICS

This article has been focused on using these methods against other hermetic magi. But obviously your fellow members of the Order are not the only entities that can be targeted with these methods. Indeed they are some of the hardest and most dangerous targets for this sort of approach.

Can this method of Intangible Tunnels be used against beast, mundane or associated with of the Realms of Power? Or for hedge wizards or mystics associated with either Realm? Certainly. And they generally can't even use the Tunnel to return the attention, as explained *Hermetic Projects*, page 79.

WHAT TO CAST DEPENDS ON WHO YOU FIGHT

Obviously almost any spell can be cast through an Intangible Tunnel. And just as obviously, it's wasteful to cast any spell with Range: Arcane through the tunnel. So, what makes sense to cast through the Tunnel?

As always, that depends a lot on the target, and the intentions of the magus, but obvious choices include *Intelligo* spells to track the targets, and some form of attack spells to bring down prey. As always, *Creo* spells creating

dangerous substances are generally more flexible for this that straight *Perdo* spells. These are less discriminating regarding the Form of the target as well as size, although nasty innate powers like immunities, large Soak or Wound Ranges can pose problems. Using *Mentem* to lull the target to sleep is fairly easy, but note that unintelligent beings (those with *Cunning*) are unaffected and need a specific Animal version of the spell. Although this does not in itself kill the beast or hedge, a conveniently lurking grog with an axe can quickly end matters with the defenseless being.

Beings with a *Might* score pose the same kinds of challenges regarding *Penetration* as Hermetic magi. Hedge wizards or mystics generally never have general magic resistance (*True Faith* and *Guardian Angel* are a notable exceptions), however they may have limited resistance as defined in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*. But the common denominator is that none are protected by the Code so the Assassin needs to waste no time with formal declarations of Wizard's War, waiting periods etc.

COLLECTING ARCANES CONNECTIONS

How do you go about gathering Arcane Connections to non-humans? Referring back to issue 15, we presented a number of approaches to collecting Arcane Connections. Of these, the social approaches (*By Charm* and *By Social Pressure*) are obviously less useful against non-sentient beasts, while the method of physical Force might not be

all that useful against powerful entities like dragons. Method by *Stealth* can be more difficult due to the improved senses of many animals.

But beasts and non-Hermetic magi may be less knowledgeable about Arcane Connections and less careful about leaving them behind. As you need to *Penetration* to affect hedge wizards having Arcane Connections merely allows the Assassin to use her favorite spells otherwise employed in fighting Hermetics, perhaps even from the comfort of a prepared casting space with high aura.

Another complication is that some entities might be naturally immaterial spirits, like i.e. the Jinn **Nasr al-Sagheer**. Collecting Arcane Connections to immaterial entities is always more complicated and in some cases, the only possible Arcane Connection is the being's True Name, which significantly complicates matters.

In short though, the usual approaches exist, but may not all be as relevant for any given entity.

OCTAVIANUS

Focused as he is on the Art of *Vim*, Octavianus will have few options if his target is non-Hermetic in nature. When forced to oppose a supernatural being, he would probably end up having to rely on spells like *Demon's Eternal Oblivion/Dreadful Bane of the Fay/Sap the Griffin's Strength* to destroy entities by destroying their *Might* scores, even though that tends to also destroy the *Vis* left behind.

RAGNA

Focused on conjuring harmful substances, specialized in procuring

Arcane Connections by stealth as well as already attuned to nature, Ragna can be highly effective against non-Hermetics. If she were to pursue this avenue she would need higher level spells of her chosen attack Forms. Referring to the combat examples her damage done is quite modest, and in fighting beast with huge Soaks and Wound Ranges her overwhelming number of weak spells would do nothing. She needs higher level spells! However this would pose little problems for her to invent these new spells because of similar spell bonus. Sadly conjuring fire and acid is not 'General' in nature so Adaptive Casting Mastery does not help her. If fighting beasts with Might Penetration Mastery is still helpful, as is Multicast. She has no need for Resistance Mastery. As for the Vim conduit she would need higher level versions, but again with similar spell bonus and Lab Mastery this is easily attained. And with Adaptive Casting gaining the relevant Masteries takes no effort. However she need not worry about Resistance nor Fast Casting to defend against spells cast back at her.

Being a raven she is unlikely to have sept comrades with dangerous predators as Heartbeast. Otherwise studying Mentem (and perhaps Animal) in order to lull her quarry to sleep, then having her sept comrades go in for the kill, would have been highly efficient. But using some kind of agents - mundane, magical, or sept comrades - to chase the quarry into places of aura detrimental to its Resistance could be useful.

If Ragna decides to fight hedge wizards, with no Resistance nor very tough, she would quickly reduce them to smoke and ash. Sure, lots of combar

wizards could do this. But killing from the safety of home reduces the risk for injury. Many hedge wizards are quite powerful and dangerous, but if they have nothing to attack. In conclusion, fighting beasts with Might is a lot like fighting Hermetics. Fighting mundane animals, mundane humans or even hedges is easier.

APPENDIX: SPELLS

Most of the spells used by these two characters are fairly standard, taken from either the **Ars Magica Fifth Edition** core rulebook, or from *Hermetic Projects*.

OTHER SPELLS

Some spells are found in other publications, these are:

Closing the Campfire (PeIg 5) *Apprentices*, page 46, Impression of the Faded Sigil and Odor of Lingering Magic both (InVi 30) *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 75, Dreadful Bane of the Fae and Sap the Griffin's Strength both (PeVi gen) *Gaurdians of the Forests*, page 60, Revoke the Protection of Bonisagus and Revoke the Protection of (Form) both (PeVi gen) *The Contested Isle*, page 62.

NEW SPELLS

Certain of these spells (Acid Touch, Scorching Touch, Incinerating Touch) create dangerous substances at R: Touch. As mentioned in the Searing Touch (*Hermetic Projects*, page 84), should these be cast without the Intangible Tunnel, these substances will be created in contact with the caster, and as such

will damage the caster as well, assuming they penetrate.

AQUAM

Acid Touch

CrAq 5

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

A small amount of acid is created somewhere the caster touches, leaving an acid scar the shape of which may well bear clues to the Sigil of the caster. The acid causes +4 damage. (Base 4, +1 Touch)

Barrel of False Water

CrAq 5

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Individual

Fills a container with water, up to the volume of a single cubic yard. This will fill any normal barrel. The water is magical and as such would be kept out by magic resistance.

(Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun).

Corrosive Touch

CrAq 15

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

An amount of acid is created somewhere the caster touches, leaving an acid scar the shape of which will likely bear clues to the Sigil of the caster. The acid causes +10 damage. (Base 10, +1 Touch)

Gush of the Lindwurm's Blood

CrAq 25

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

A significant amount of strong acid is created somewhere the caster touches, leaving an acid scar the shape of which will almost certainly bear clues to the Sigil of the caster. The acid causes +20 damage.

(Base 20, +1 Touch)

IGNEM

Scorching Touch

CrIg 10

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

The caster's touch catches fire, burning whatever is touched, leaving a mark of the caster's hand. The fire causes +10 damage.

(Base 5, +1 Touch)

Incinerating Touch

CrAq 15

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

Hot flames erupt at the caster's touch, causing +15 damage, leaving a mark of the caster's hand. (Base 15, +1 touch)

VIM

Shrouding a Multitude of Spells

MuVi Gen

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Group

Hides the Sigil of a group of spells cast together, via multicasting. None of the affected spells may be of a level higher than (level of this spell-2 magnitudes)x2. Thus a level 20 version of Shrouding a Multitude of Spells will affect the caster sigil with no more than 10 spells, each of no higher than 20 level, while a level 30 version would do the same with a group of spells up to level 40 each.

(Base General, +1 Touch, +2 Group)

Break the Weak Shield

PeVi 5

R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Individual

This is a lower level version of Break the Shield, from *Hermetic Projects*, page 85, which will break a Parma Magica, if 5 times the Parma Magica of the target

is no greater than (20 + stress die). This spell would not have been necessary if Break the Shield had been designed as a General spell, which we would have preferred. (Base 4, +1 Touch)

Minute of Arcane Sealing

ReVi gen

R: Touch, D: Diameter, T: Individual

Inspired by the Arcane Seal (*Hermetic Projects*, page 81), this spell takes advantage of the short expected duration of Tunnel spells. Affects spells no higher than 2 magnitudes higher than this spell as would the Arcane Seal, but only for a diameter worth of time. (Base Gen, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter)

Suppress the Fabric of (Form)

ReVi gen

R: Touch, D: Diameter, T: Individual

The target of this spell cannot cast Hermetic spells of the designated Form with a level equal to or less than the level of this spell. (Base Gen, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter) (Guideline is found in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, box on top of page 129 and should be compared to Quiet the Cursing Tongue on the same page).

OCTAVIANUS +5 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 30 (30)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Affinity with Parma Magica, Affinity with Penetration, Flawless Magic, Affinity with Vim, Puissant Vim, Puissant Parma Magica, Puissant Penetration, Skilled Parens, Hermetic Magus, Hermetic Prestige*, Restriction (Cannot cast on a boat), Missing Eye, Susceptibility to Divine Power, Obsessed (Bringing Justice to the Guilty), Enemies (Briganus of Ex Miscellanea), Lame

Personality Traits: Obsessed +3, Devious +2, Outgoing -2

Reputations: Quaesitor 3 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

Kick: Init -1, Attack -2, Defense -1, Damage +2

Soak: +1

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

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

Abilities: Artes Liberales 4 (Astrology), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Code of Hermes 2 (wizards' marches), Concentration 3 (spell concentration), Finesse 1 (casting speed), Folk Ken 3 (magi) (5), Guile 2 (lying to authority) (7), Intrigue 1 (plotting) (5), Latin 4 (hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (magi), Living Language 5, Magic Theory 3 (inventing spells), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Parma Magica 4+2 (Mentem), Penetration 5+2 (Vim), Scribe 1 (copy lab text), Sculpting 2

Arts: Cr 7, In 7, Mu 0, Pe 7, Re 9, An 0, Aq 0, Au 0, Co 1, He 0, Ig 6, Im 0, Me 7, Te 7, Vi 12+3

Equipment:

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Appearance: Octavianus is an unassuming, somewhat boring looking man of 25. At home or among magi he tends to dress in simple robes, usually grey. venturing outside, his outfit includes a simple tailed hood. His hair and beard are dark, and he is already losing the hair at the top of his head, while still not able to grow much of a beard. Octavianus' most distinguishing feature is his missing right eye. He does not have a false eye and usually does not cover the empty socket. He wears a small amulet depicting a scale (symbol of House

Guernicus) on a string around his neck, but this is usually worn under his clothes.

Spells Known:

Sense of the Lodestone (InCo 5) +10, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Searing Touch (CrIg 5) +15, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (InMe 20) +16, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Fading Star of Evening (CrVi 15) +24, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Flesh Crawls at the Intangible Touch (InVi 30) +24, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Odor of Lingering Magic (InVi 30) +24, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Shroud Magic (MuVi 15) +17, Mastery 1 (disguised casting)

Break the Weak Shield (PeVi 5) +24, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Demon's Eternal Oblivion (PeVi 5) +24, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim (PeVi 15) +24, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Opening the Intangible Tunnel (ReVi 5) +26, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Minute of Reckoning (ReVi 15) +26, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

RAGNA +5 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 30 (30)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Hermetic Magus, Flawless Magic, Apt Student, Heartbeast (Raven)*, Independent Study, Inoffensive to Mundane Animals, Minor Magical Focus (Create Acid & Fire Burns), Puissant Penetration, Puissant Stealth, Puissant Awareness, Chaotic Magic, Deficient Technique (Perdo), Servant of the Forest, Hatred (Defilers of the natural areas)

Personality Traits: Hateful +3 Patient +3, Raven +3, Forgiving -3

Reputations: Fierce fighter 1 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

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

Soak: +3

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

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

Abilities: Area Lore: Area A 3 (geography), Area Lore: Area B 2 (geography), Artes Liberales 1 (rhetoric), Concentration 1 (spells), Heartbeast 1 (resist change), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Living Language 5 (common), Magic Theory 3 (invent spells), Organization Lore: Bjornaer Cult Lore 1 (initiations), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 2 (2) (personalities), Parma Magica 4 (20) (Corpus), Penetration 5+2 (2) (Vim)

Arts: Cr 7 (2), In 0, Mu 0, Pe 0, Re 9 (6), An 0, Aq 7 (4), Au 0, Co 0, He 0, Ig 7 (4), Im 0, Me 2, Te 0, Vi 9 (6)

Equipment: 30 pawns of various Form vis

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Spells Known:

Acid Touch CrAq 5/+27F, Mastery 3 (13) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance)

Creeping Oil CrAq 15/+18, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Comfort of the Drenched Traveler PeAq 5/+6, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Cloak of the Duck's Feathers ReAq 5/+20, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Searing Touch CrIg 5/+26F, Mastery 2 (penetration, multiple casting)

Scorching Touch CrIg 10/+27F, Mastery 3 (13) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance)

Pilum of Fire CrIg 20/+25F, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Tremulous Vault of the Torch's Flame ReIg 5/+20, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Touch of Falling Feathers ReMe 10/+15, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim PeVi 10/+7, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 5/+24, Mastery 1 (adaptive casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 10/+24, Mastery 3 (13) (penetration, magic resistance, adaptive casting)

Minute of Arcane Sealing ReVi 15/+22, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

F meaning Focus

RAGNA'S RAVEN FORM

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre -2, Com +1, Str -7, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +5

Size: -4

Virtues and Flaws: Keen Vision

Combat:

Dodge: Init +5, Attack n/a, Defense +8, Damage n/a

Soak: +3

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

Abilities: Awareness 4+2 (17) (ACs), Athletics 3 (flying), Brawl 2 (5) (dodging), Hunt 1 (3) (voles), Survival 3 (woodlands), Stealth 3+2 (sneaking)

OCTAVIANUS +10 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 35 (35)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Affinity with Parma Magica, Affinity with Penetration, Flawless Magic, Affinity with Vim, Puissant Vim, Puissant Parma Magica, Puissant Penetration, Skilled Parens, Hermetic Magus, Hermetic Prestige*, Restriction (Cannot cast on a boat), Missing Eye, Susceptibility to Divine Power, Obsessed (Bringing Justice to the Guilty), Enemies (Briganus of Ex Miscellanea), Lame

Personality Traits: Obsessed +3, Devious +2, Outgoing -2

Reputations: Quaesitor 3 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

Kick: Init -1, Attack -2, Defense -1, Damage +2

Soak: +1

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

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

Abilities: Artes Liberales 4 (Astrology), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Code of Hermes 2 (wizards' marches), Concentration 3 (spell concentration), Finesse 1 (casting speed), Folk Ken 3 (magi) (9), Guile 2 (lying to authority) (7), Intrigue 2 (plotting), Latin 4 (hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (magi), Living Language 5, Magic Theory 3 (inventing spells) (2), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Parma Magica 5+2 (Mentem), Penetration 5+2 (Vim), Scribe 1 (copy lab text), Sculpting 2, Stealth 1 (sneak)

Arts: Cr 7, In 7, Mu 0, Pe 10, Re 12, An 0, Aq 0, Au 0, Co 3, He 6, Ig 8, Im 0, Me 8, Te 8, Vi 15+3

Equipment: None of note

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Appearance: Octavianus is an unassuming, somewhat boring looking man of 25. At home or among magi he tends to dress in simple robes, usually grey. venturing outside, his outfit includes a simple tailed hood. His hair and beard are dark, and he is already losing the hair at the top of his head, while still not able to grow much of a beard. Octavianus' most distinguishing feature is his missing right eye. He does not have a false eye and usually does not cover the empty socket. He wears a small amulet depicting a scale (symbol of House

Guernicus) on a string around his neck, but this is usually worn under his clothes.

Spells Known:

Sense of the Lodestone (InCo 5) +12, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Searing Touch (CrIg 5) +17, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Chill Touch of Exposure (PeIg 5) +22, Mastery 3 (penetration, magic resistance, multiple casting)

Closing the Campfire (PeIg 5) +20, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (InMe 20) +17, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Fading Star of Evening (CrVi 15) +27, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Flesh Crawls at the Intangible Touch (InVi 30) +27, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Odor of Lingering Magic (InVi 30) +27, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Shroud Magic (MuVi 15) +20, Mastery 1 (disguised casting)

Break the Weak Shield (PeVi 5) +30, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Demon's Eternal Oblivion (PeVi 5) +30, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim (PeVi 15) +30, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Opening the Intangible Tunnel (ReVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Minute of Reckoning (ReVi 15) +32, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

RAGNA +10 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 35 (35)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Hermetic Magus, Flawless Magic, Apt Student, Heartbeast (Raven)*, Independent Study, Inoffensive to Mundane Animals, Minor Magical Focus (Create Acid & Fire Burns), Puissant Penetration, Puissant Stealth, Puissant Awareness, Chaotic Magic, Deficient Technique (Perdo), Servant of the Forest, Hatred (Defilers of the natural areas)

Personality Traits: Hateful +3 Patient +3, Raven +3, Forgiving -3

Reputations: Fierce fighter 1 (5) (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

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

Soak: +3

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

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

Abilities: Area Lore: Area A 3 (10) (geography), Area Lore: Area B 2 (10) (geography), Artes Liberales 1 (rhetoric), Concentration 2 (2) (spells), Code of Hermes 2 (9) (Marches), Heartbeast 1 (6) (resist change), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Living Language 5 (common), Magic Theory 3 (invent spells), Organization Lore: Bjornaer Cult Lore 1 (initiations), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 3 (personalities), Parma Magica 4 (20) (Corpus), Penetration 5+2 (13) (Vim), Teaching 4 (Bjornaer magi)

Arts: Cr 7 (2), In 0, Mu 0, Pe 0, Re 9 (6), An 0, Aq 7 (4), Au 0, Co 0, He 0, Ig 7 (4), Im 0, Me 2, Te 0, Vi 12

Equipment: 60 pawns of various Form vis

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Appearance: A short woman, with sinewy arms and legs. She has piercing eyes, a rather prominent, beak-like nose, a weak chin and wild ruffled curly black hair. She is tanned and often dirty. Her posture is often slightly bent forwards and her arms gesture wildly - much like the wings of a bird. When she is not speaking but observing she tends to turn one side of her face towards whoever speaks and look at them sideways, alternating between being motionless and moving her head in

jerking motions She wears a simple and well-worn dress in earth tones and almost always walks barefoot.

Spells Known:

Acid Touch CrAq 5/+28F, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Creeping Oil CrAq 15/+18, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Comfort of the Drenched Traveler PeAq 5/+6, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Cloak of the Duck's Feathers ReAq 5/+20, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Searing Touch CrIg 5/+26F, Mastery 2 (13) (penetration, multiple casting)

Scorching Touch CrIg 10/+28F, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Pilum of Fire CrIg 20/+25F, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Tremulous Vault of the Torch's Flame ReIg 5/+20, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Touch of Falling Feathers ReMe 10/+15, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim PeVi 10/+7, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 5/+24, Mastery 1 (adaptive casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 10/+28, Mastery 4 (1) (penetration, magic resistance, adaptive casting), lab mastery)

Minute of Arcane Sealing ReVi 15/+22, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

F meaning Focus

RAGNA'S RAVEN FORM

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre -2, Com +1, Str -7, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +5

Size: -4

Virtues and Flaws: Keen Vision

Combat:

Dodge: Init +5, Attack n/a, Defense +8, Damage n/a

Soak: +3

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

Abilities: Awareness 4+2 (22) (ACs), Athletics 3 (flying), Brawl 2 (10) (dodging), Hunt 1 (6) (voles), Survival 3 (woodlands), Stealth 4+2 (4) (sneaking)

OCTAVIANUS +15 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 40 (38)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (2¼)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Affinity with Parma Magica, Affinity with Penetration, Flawless Magic, Affinity with Vim, Puissant Vim, Puissant Parma Magica, Puissant Penetration, Skilled Parens, Hermetic Magus, Hermetic Prestige*, Restriction (Cannot cast on a boat), Missing Eye, Susceptibility to Divine Power, Obsessed (Bringing Justice to the Guilty), Enemies (Briganus of Ex Miscellanea), Lame

Personality Traits: Obsessed +3, Devious +2, Outgoing -2

Reputations: Quaesitor 3 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

Kick: Init -1, Attack -2, Defense -1, Damage +2

Soak: +1

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

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

Abilities: Artes Liberales 4 (Astrology), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Code of Hermes 2 (wizards' marches), Concentration 3 (spell concentration), Finesse 1 (casting speed), Folk Ken 4 (magi), Guile 3 (lying to authority), Intrigue 2 (plotting), Latin 4 (hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (magi), Living Language 5, Magic Theory 5 (inventing spells), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Parma Magica 5+2 (Mentem), Penetration 5+2 (Vim), Scribe 1 (copy lab text), Sculpting 2, Stealth 1 (sneak)

Arts: Cr 7, In 7, Mu 0, Pe 10, Re 12, An 0, Aq 8, Au 6, Co 7, He 6, Ig 9, Im 4, Me 8, Te 8, Vi 16+3

Equipment: None of note

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Appearance: Octavianus is an unassuming, somewhat boring looking man of 25. At home or among magi he tends to dress in simple robes, usually grey. venturing outside, his outfit includes a simple tailed hood. His hair and beard are dark, and he is already losing the hair at the top of his head, while still not able to grow much of a beard. Octavianus' most distinguishing feature is his missing right eye. He does not have a false eye and usually does not cover the empty socket. He wears a small amulet depicting a scale (symbol of House

Guernicus) on a string around his neck, but this is usually worn under his clothes.

Spells Known:

Acid Touch (CrAq 5) +18, Mastery 2 (magic resistance, penetration). Create a corrosive substance doing + (Level) damage

Barrel of False Water (CrAq 5) +17, Mastery 1 (quiet casting). Fill a container with water

Sense of the Lodestone (InCo 5) +16, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Searing Touch (CrIg 5) +18, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Pilum of Fire (CrIg 20) +18, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Chill Touch of Exposure (PeIg 5) +23, Mastery 3 (penetration, magic resistance, multiple casting)

Closing the Campfire (PeIg 5) +21, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (InMe 20) +17, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

The Call to Slumber (ReMe 10) +22, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Fading Star of Evening (CrVi 15) +28, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Flesh Crawls at the Intangible Touch (InVi 30) +28, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Odor of Lingering Magic (InVi 30) +28, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Shroud Magic (MuVi 15) +21, Mastery 1 (disguised casting)

Break the Weak Shield (PeVi 5) +31, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Demon's Eternal Oblivion (PeVi 5) +31, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Dreadful Bane of the Fae (PeVi 5) +31, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Revoke the Protection of Bonisagus (PeVi 5) +31, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Revoke the Protection of Ignem (PeVi 5) +31, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Revoke the Protection of Vim (PeVi 5) +31, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Sap the Griffin's Strength (PeVi 5) +31, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Break the Shield (PeVi 10) +31, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim (PeVi 15) +31, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Opening the Intangible Tunnel (ReVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Minute of Reckoning (ReVi 15) +33, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 15) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Aegis of the Hearth (ReVi 20) +37, Mastery 1 (penetration)

RAGNA +15 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 40 (36) Longevity since age 35 (level 45)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Hermetic Magus, Flawless Magic, Apt Student, Heartbeast (Raven)*, Independent Study, Inoffensive to Mundane Animals, Minor Magical Focus (Create Acid & Fire Burns), Puissant Penetration, Puissant Stealth, Puissant Awareness, Chaotic Magic, Deficient Technique (Perdo), Servant of the Forest, Hatred (Defilers of the natural areas)

Personality Traits: Hateful +3 Patient +3, Raven +3, Forgiving -3

Reputations: Fierce fighter 1 (10) (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

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

Soak: +3

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

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

Abilities: Area Lore: Area A 3 (40) (geography), Area Lore: Area B 2 (25) (geography), Artes Liberales 1 (rhetoric), Concentration 2 (2) (spells), Code of Hermes 2 (9) (Marches), Heartbeast 3 (4) (resist change), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Living Language 5 (common), Magic Theory 3 (8) (invent spells), Organization Lore: Bjornaer Cult Lore 1 (initiations), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 3 (personalities), Parma Magica 5 (12) (Corpus), Penetration 6+2 (Vim), Teaching 4 (Bjornaer magi)

Arts: Cr 10, In 0, Mu 0, Pe 0, Re 9 (6), An 0, Aq 10, Au 0, Co 0, He 0, Ig 10, Im 0, Me 2, Te 0, Vi 12

Equipment: None of note

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Appearance: A short woman, with sinewy arms and legs. She has piercing eyes, a rather prominent, beak-like nose, a weak chin and wild ruffled curly black hair. She is tanned and often dirty. Her posture is often slightly bent forwards and her arms gesture wildly - much like the wings of a bird. When she is not speaking but observing she tends to turn one side of her face towards whoever speaks and look at them sideways, alternating between being motionless and moving her head in

jerking motions She wears a simple and well-worn dress in earth tones and almost always walks barefoot.

Spells Known:

Acid Touch CrAq 5/+37F, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Corrosive Touch CrAq 15/+36F, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Creeping Oil CrAq 15/+24, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Comfort of the Drenched Traveler PeAq 5/+7, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Cloak of the Duck's Feathers ReAq 5/+23, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Searing Touch CrIg 5/+36, Mastery 2 (13) (penetration, multiple casting)

Scorching Touch CrIg 10/+37, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Incinerating Touch CrIg15/+36, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Pilum of Fire CrIg 20/+36, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, magic resistance)

Tremulous Vault of the Torch's Flame ReIg 5/+23, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Touch of Falling Feathers ReMe 10/+15, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim PeVi 10/+8, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 5/+25, Mastery (adaptive casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 10/+28, Mastery 4 (1) (penetration, magic resistance, adaptive casting), lab mastery)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 15/+25, Mastery 1 (adaptive casting)

Minute of Arcane Sealing ReVi 15/+22, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

RAGNA'S RAVEN FORM

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre -2, Com +1, Str -7, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +5

Size: -4

Virtues and Flaws: Keen Vision

Combat:

Dodge: Init +5, Attack n/a, Defense +8, Damage n/a

Soak: +3

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

Abilities: Awareness 5+2 (ACs), Athletics 3 (flying), Brawl 2 (10) (dodging), Hunt 2 (voles), Survival 3 (woodlands), Stealth 5+2 (sneaking)

OCTAVIANUS +20 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 45 (42)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 1 (2¼)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Affinity with Parma Magica, Affinity with Penetration, Flawless Magic, Affinity with Vim, Puissant Vim, Puissant Parma Magica, Puissant Penetration, Skilled Parens, Hermetic Magus, Hermetic Prestige*, Restriction (Cannot cast on a boat), Missing Eye, Susceptibility to Divine Power, Obsessed (Bringing Justice to the Guilty), Enemies (Briganus of Ex Miscellanea), Lame

Personality Traits: Obsessed +3, Devious +2, Outgoing -2

Reputations: Quaesitor 3 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

Kick: Init -1, Attack -2, Defense -1, Damage +2

Soak: +1

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

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

Abilities: Artes Liberales 4 (Astrology), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Code of Hermes 2 (wizards' marches), Concentration 3 (spell concentration) (5), Finesse 1 (casting speed), Folk Ken 4 (magi), Guile 3 (lying to authority), Intrigue 2 (plotting), Latin 4 (hermetic usage), Leadership 2 (magi), Living Language 5, Magic Theory 5 (inventing spells), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Parma Magica 6+2 (Mentem), Penetration 5+2 (Vim), Scribe 1 (copy lab text), Sculpting 2, Stealth 1 (sneak)

Arts: Cr 12, In 8, Mu 0, Pe 11, Re 12, An 0, Aq 8, Au 6, Co 8, He 6, Ig 9, Im 4, Me 8, Te 8, Vi 16+3

Equipment: None of note

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Spells Known:

Acid Touch (CrAq 5) +23, Mastery 2 (magic resistance, penetration). Create a corrosive substance doing + (Level) damage

Barrel of False Water (CrAq 5) +22, Mastery 1 (quiet casting). Fill a container with water

Sense of the Lodestone (InCo 5) +18, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Claw of the Gladiator (PeCo 10) +21, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Fist of Crippling (PeCo 20) +22, Mastery 2 (penetration, multiple casting)

Kiss of Aging (PeCo 20) +22, Mastery 2 (magic resistance, multiple casting)

Searing Touch (CrIg 5) +23, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Pilum of Fire (CrIg 20) +23, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Chill Touch of Exposure (PeIg 5) +24, Mastery 3 (penetration, magic resistance, multiple casting)

Closing the Campfire (PeIg 5) +22, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (InMe 20) +18, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

The Call to Slumber (ReMe 10) +22, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Fading Star of Evening (CrVi 15) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Flesh Crawls at the Intangible Touch (InVi 30) +29, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Odor of Lingering Magic (InVi 30) +29, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

The Invisible Eye Revealed (InVi 30) +29, Mastery 1 (imperturbable casting)

Shroud Magic (MuVi 15) +21, Mastery 1 (disguised casting)

Break the Weak Shield (PeVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Demon's Eternal Oblivion (PeVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Dreadful Bane of the Fae (PeVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Revoke the Protection of Bonisagus (PeVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Revoke the Protection of Ignem (PeVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Revoke the Protection of Vim (PeVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Sap the Griffin's Strength (PeVi 5) +32, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Break the Shield (PeVi 10) +32, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim (PeVi 15) +32, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Opening the Intangible Tunnel (ReVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Minute of Reckoning (ReVi 15) +33, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 15) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Aegis of the Hearth (ReVi 20) +37, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 20) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

RAGNA +20 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 45 (36) Longevity since age 35 (level 45)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Hermetic Magus, Flawless Magic, Apt Student, Heartbeast (Raven)*, Independent Study, Inoffensive to Mundane Animals, Minor Magical Focus (Create Acid & Fire Burns), Puissant Penetration, Puissant Stealth, Puissant Awareness, Chaotic Magic, Deficient Technique (Perdo), Servant of the Forest, Hatred (Defilers of the natural areas)

Personality Traits: Hateful +3 Patient +3, Raven +3, Forgiving -3

Reputations: Fierce fighter 2 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

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

Soak: +3

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

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

Abilities: Area Lore: Area A 3 (40) (geography), Area Lore: Area B 2 (25) (geography), Artes Liberales 1 (rhetoric), Concentration 3 (11) (spells), Code of Hermes 2 (9) (Marches), Heartbeast 3 (4) (resist change), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Living Language 5 (common), Magic Theory 5 (3) (invent spells), Organization Lore: Bjornaer Cult Lore 1 (initiations), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 3 (personalities), Parma Magica 5 (12) (Corpus), Penetration 6+2 (16) (Vim), Teaching 4 (Bjornaer magi)

Arts: Cr 11 (9), In 0, Mu 0, Pe 8 (2), Re 11, An 0, Aq 11, Au 0, Co 0, He 0, Ig 10, Im 0, Me 2, Te 0, Vi 12

Equipment: None of note

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Spells Known:

Acid Touch CrAq 5/+40F, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Corrosive Touch CrAq 15/+39F, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Creeping Oil CrAq 15/+26, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Gush of the Lindwurm's Blood CrAq 25/+39F, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Comfort of the Drenched Traveler PeAq 5/+12, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Cloak of the Duck's Feathers ReAq 5/+26, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Searing Touch CrIg 5/+37, Mastery 2 (13) (penetration, multiple casting)

Scorching Touch CrIg 10/+38, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Incinerating Touch CrIg15/+37, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Pilum of Fire CrIg 20/+37, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, magic resistance)

Tremulous Vault of the Torch's Flame ReIg 5/+25, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Touch of Falling Feathers ReMe 10/+17, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim PeVi 10/+13, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Suppressing the Fabric of Aquam ReVi 15/+27, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 5/+27, Mastery (adaptive casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 10/+30, Mastery 4 (1) (penetration, magic resistance, adaptive casting), lab mastery)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 15/+27, Mastery 1 (adaptive casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 25/+27, Mastery (adaptive casting)

Minute of Arcane Sealing ReVi 15/+27, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

RAGNA'S RAVEN FORM

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre -2, Com +1, Str -7, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +5

Size: -4

Virtues and Flaws: Keen Vision

Combat:

Dodge: Init +5, Attack n/a, Defense +8, Damage n/a

Soak: +3

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

Abilities: Awareness 5+2 (ACs), Athletics 3 (flying), Brawl 2 (10) (dodging), Hunt 2 (voles), Survival 3 (woodlands), Stealth 5+2 (sneaking)

OCTAVIANUS +25 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 50 (44)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 1 (7¼)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Affinity with Parma Magica, Affinity with Penetration, Flawless Magic, Affinity with Vim, Puissant Vim, Puissant Parma Magica, Puissant Penetration, Skilled Parents, Hermetic Magus, Hermetic Prestige*, Restriction (Cannot cast on a boat), Missing Eye, Susceptibility to Divine Power, Obsessed (Bringing Justice to the Guilty), Enemies (Briganus of Ex Miscellanea), Lamé

Personality Traits: Obsessed +3, Devious +2, Outgoing -2

Reputations: Quaesitor 3 (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

Kick: Init -1, Attack -2, Defense -1, Damage +2

Soak: +1

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

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

Abilities: Artes Liberales 4 (Astrology), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Code of Hermes 2 (wizards' marches) (5), Concentration 4 (spell concentration) (1), Finesse 2 (casting speed), Folk Ken 4 (magi), Guile 3 (lying to authority), Intrigue 3 (plotting), Latin 4 (hermetic usage), Leadership 2 (magi), Living Language 5, Magic Theory 5 (inventing spells), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Parma Magica 6+2 (Mentem), Penetration 5+2 (Vim), Scribe 1 (copy lab text), Sculpting 2 (5), Stealth 1 (sneak)

Arts: Cr 12, In 9, Mu 8, Pe 11, Re 12, An 6, Aq 8, Au 6, Co 8, He 6, Ig 9, Im 5, Me 8, Te 8, Vi 17+3

Equipment: Mirror of the Frozen Scene x2 (Creator: Octavianus +25 years; Created: Autumn 1242; Vis Capacity: 2; Total Pawns Invested: 1; Total Effect Level: 8; Lesser Device; Effect Name: Mirror of the Frozen Scene; Effect Level: 8; Effect Details: R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind, Frequency: 24/day; Arts: CrIm 3; Design: Base 1, +2 Sun)

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Spells Known:

Acid Touch (CrAq 5) +23, Mastery 2 (magic resistance, penetration). Create a corrosive substance doing +4 damage

Barrel of False Water (CrAq 5) +22, Mastery 1 (quiet casting). Fill a container with water

Sense of the Lodestone (InCo 5) +19, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Whispers Through the Black Gate (InCo(Me) 15) +19, Mastery 1 (imperturbable casting)

Claw of the Gladiator (PeCo 10) +21, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Fist of Crippling (PeCo 20) +22, Mastery 2 (penetration, multiple casting)

Kiss of Aging (PeCo 20) +22, Mastery 2 (magic resistance, multiple casting)

Searing Touch (CrIg 5) +23, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Pilum of Fire (CrIg 20) +24, Mastery 2 (magic resistance, multiple casting)

Chill Touch of Exposure (PeIg 5) +24, Mastery 3 (penetration, magic resistance, multiple casting)

Closing the Campfire (PeIg 5) +22, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Perception of the Conflicting Motives (InMe 15) +19, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (InMe 20) +19, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

The Call to Slumber (ReMe 10) +22, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Fading Star of Evening (CrVi 15) +34, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Flesh Crawls at the Intangible Touch (InVi 30) +31, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Impression of the Faded Sigil (InVi 30) +31, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

Odor of Lingering Magic (InVi 30) +31, Mastery 1 (acute sense)

The Invisible Eye Revealed (InVi 30) +31, Mastery 1 (imperturbable casting)

Shroud Magic (MuVi 15) +30, Mastery 1 (disguised casting)

Shrouding a Multitude of Spells (MuVi 20) +30, Mastery 1 (disguised casting). Affects a Group of spells, each no higher than 20th level, as per Shroud Magic.

Break the Weak Shield (PeVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Demon's Eternal Oblivion (PeVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Dreadful Bane of the Fae (PeVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Revoke the Protection of Bonisagus (PeVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Revoke the Protection of Ignem (PeVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Revoke the Protection of Vim (PeVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Sap the Griffin's Strength (PeVi 5) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Break the Shield (PeVi 10) +33, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Ignem (PeVi 20) +33, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim (PeVi 15) +33, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Wind of Mundane Silence (PeVi 20) +33, Mastery 1 (unraveling)

Opening the Intangible Tunnel (ReVi 5) +34, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 5) +34, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 15) +34, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Minute of Reckoning (ReVi 15) +34, Mastery 1 (magic resistance)

Aegis of the Hearth (ReVi 20) +38, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Circular Ward Against Demons (ReVi 20) +34, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Evil Eye (ReVi 20) +34, Mastery 1 (penetration)

The Minute of Reckoning (ReVi 20) +34, Mastery 1 (penetration)

RAGNA +25 YEARS

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

Size: 0

Age: 50 (36) Longevity since age 35 (level 45)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: The Gift, Hermetic Magus, Flawless Magic, Apt Student, Heartbeat (Raven)*, Independent Study, Inoffensive to Mundane Animals, Minor Magical Focus (Create Acid & Fire Burns), Puissant Penetration, Puissant Stealth, Puissant Awareness, Chaotic Magic, Deficient Technique (Perdo), Servant of the Forest, Hatred (Defilers of the natural areas)

Personality Traits: Hateful +3 Patient +3, Raven +3, Forgiving -3

Reputations: Fierce fighter 2 (5) (Hermetic)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +0, Attack n/a, Defense +0, Damage n/a

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

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

Soak: +3

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

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

Abilities: Area Lore: Area A 3 (40) (geography), Area Lore: Area B 2 (25) (geography), Artes Liberales 5 (astronomy), Concentration 3 (11) (spells), Code of Hermes 2 (9) (Marches), Heartbeat 3 (4) (resist change), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Living Language 5 (common), Magic Theory 5 (3) (invent spells), Organization Lore: Bjornaer Cult Lore 1 (initiations), Organization Lore: Order of Hermes 3 (personalities), Parma Magica 6 (Corpus), Penetration 7+2 (Vim), Teaching 4 (6) (Bjornaer magi)

Arts: Cr 11 (9), In 0, Mu 0, Pe 8 (2), Re 11, An 0, Aq 11, Au 0, Co 0, He 0, Ig 10, Im 0, Me 2, Te 0, Vi 13

Equipment: None of note

Encumbrance: 0 (0)

Spells Known:

Acid Touch CrAq 5/+40F, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Corrosive Touch CrAq 15/+39F, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Creeping Oil CrAq 15/+26, Mastery 1 (multiple casting)

Gush of the Lindwurm's Blood CrAq 25/+39F, Mastery 3 (3)

(penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Comfort of the Drenched Traveler PeAq 5/+12, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Cloak of the Duck's Feathers ReAq 5/+26, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Searing Touch CrIg 5/+37, Mastery 2 (13) (penetration, multiple casting)

Scorching Touch CrIg 10/+38, Mastery 4 (1) (multiple casting, penetration, magic resistance, lab mastery)

Incinerating Touch CrIg15/+37, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, imperturbable casting)

Pilum of Fire CrIg 20/+37, Mastery 3 (3) (penetration, multiple casting, magic resistance)

Tremulous Vault of the Torch's Flame ReIg 5/+25, Mastery 1 (quiet casting)

Touch of Falling Feathers ReMe 10/+17, Mastery 1 (penetration)

Unravelling the Fabric of Vim PeVi 10/+14, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

Suppressing the Fabric of Aquam ReVi 15/+27, Mastery 5 (14) (penetration, rebuttal, imperturbable casting, lab mastery, adaptive casting)

Evil Eye ReVi 20/+32, Mastery 5 (14) (penetration, imperturbable casting, adaptive casting, lab mastery, quick casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 5/+28, Mastery (adaptive casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 10/+31, Mastery 4 (1) (penetration, magic resistance, adaptive casting, lab mastery)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 15/+28, Mastery 1 (adaptive casting)

Minute of Reckoning ReVi 25/+28, Mastery (adaptive casting)

Minute of Arcane Sealing ReVi 15/+28, Mastery 1 (fast casting)

RAGNA'S RAVEN FORM

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +3, Pre -2, Com +1, Str -7, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +5

Size: -4

Virtues and Flaws: Keen Vision

Combat:

Dodge: Init +5, Attack n/a, Defense +8, Damage n/a

Soak: +3

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

Abilities: Awareness 5+2 (ACs), Athletics 3 (flying), Brawl 2 (10) (dodging), Hunt 2 (voles), Survival 3 (woodlands), Stealth 5+2 (sneaking)

THE RAT KING

By PHILIPPE SANER

A rat king is the rightful sovereign of a rat kingdom, also known as a city. Its body consists of a number of rats tied together by their knotted tails.

A rat king sits on a throne made from the hair and tails of its subjects, attended to and fed by its faithful servants. It is in many ways an excellent king, but only to vermin.

To humans, a rat king is a scourge. Although rat kings are not particularly powerful or evil, their presence brings enormous suffering. A city cursed (or from a rodent perspective, blessed) by a rat king is a miserable and unhealthy

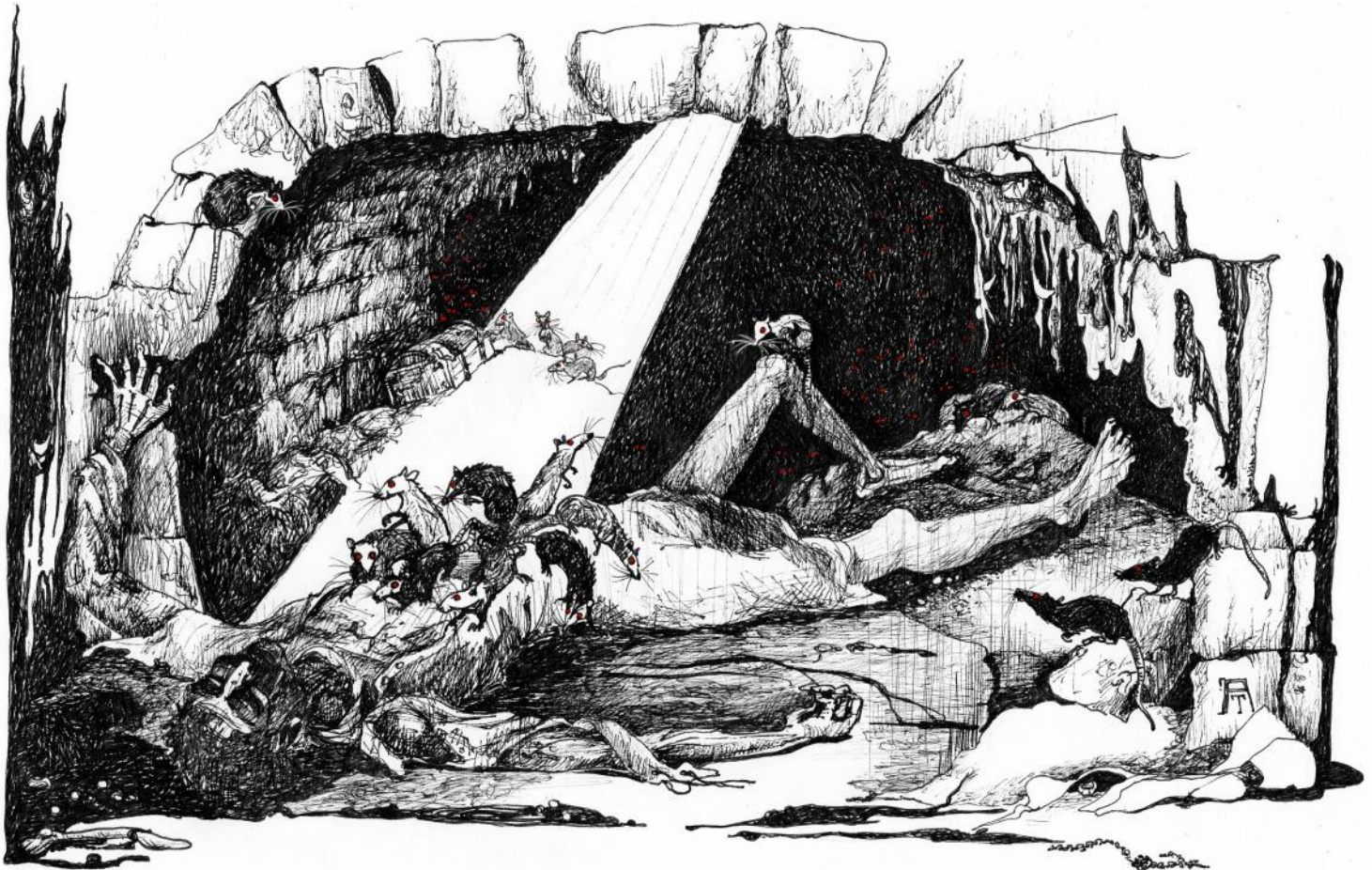
place for humans to live, filled with disease and dirt and vermin everywhere.

A rat king is a natural antagonist for magi who care about normal humans, but in some sagas one could be an ally or simply part of a city's background. It's even possible for a rat king to be a player character, though that would be quite unusual.

HABITAT

Rat kings are city animals. But since they are creatures of Magic, they strongly dislike the Divine auras that fill

most cities. So they look for small Magic auras to live in. If there are multiple Magic auras to choose from within a city, a rat king will usually choose the dirtiest and least human-friendly one as its home. So the best defenses against a rat king are faith and cleanliness, both of which can prevent a rat king from emerging in your city in the first place.



MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Rat kings are proud, gluttonous, and ruthlessly clever. Although they spend most of their time eating their subjects' food, they care very deeply about their kingdoms. When they do something other than eating and admiring themselves, it's almost always for the benefit of those who serve them.

A rat king will generally ignore humans unless those humans seek to harm its kingdom. But if it perceives a threat to the rodent population of its city, it will use every ounce of its considerable cunning to destroy that threat. Although useless in a fight, a rat king is adept at hiding itself and acting from afar.

STORY

Magi can easily ignore rat kings. They're city animals, after all, and magi tend to avoid cities. So if the nearest town is filthy and vermin-infested, it's possible for a covenant to never realize that a rat king is responsible.

A town or city with a rat king in it is always dirty, and its rats will always be shockingly bold. Sometimes the rat king will send its heralds to spy on human affairs, and on occasion a swarm of rats may attack and kill a sleeping person who the rat king considers a threat. Once the unusual rat behavior and the town's unnatural dirtiness have been noticed, an Ease Factor 12 Magic Lore roll will reveal the source of the problem.

Public-spirited or vis-hungry magi may seek to kill a rat king. This will be easy for any magus who can find the thing. If the rat king becomes aware of magi looking to kill it, it will respond by moving to the best hiding place it knows. It will then spy on the magi and send a swarm to kill them when they look vulnerable. If that fails, the rat king will try to harass the magi until they

leave town. Rats will interrupt their sleep, chew up their possessions, and spread filth on everything they seem likely to touch.

If all else fails, or if discovery seems imminent, the rat king will call for help. It may be able to make deals with other magical beings, with faeries, with demons, or with humans who have Animal Ken. Whatever it can talk to, it will try to use. Depending on the circumstances, it may or may not succeed in acquiring help. But no matter what, the rat king won't abandon its subjects.

Of course, conflict isn't inevitable. Like many magical beings, rat kings are not bothered by the Gift. So a magus who can talk to animals might be able to befriend one. Rat kings are proud and easily offended, like most kings, but they respond well to people who treat them with respect. It's possible to make a treaty with a rat king, having it restrain the activities of its kingdom and perhaps withhold its curse in exchange for some sort of payment (mostly likely in food).

THE RAT KING AS A PLAYER CHARACTER

A player who enjoys a challenge might find it fun to play a rat king. Since the rat king has human intelligence and was built as a Beast of Virtue with a base Magic Might of 15, this is possible with the guidelines in *Realms of Power: Magic*. Those guidelines indicate that it's appropriate as a companion-level character in a high-power saga, but since its most impressive ability (its curse) is not very useful to most player groups it may also be appropriate as a companion in a medium-power saga.

A rat king poses a number of unusual challenges for a person interested in playing as one. For one thing, it can't speak any human

language. Although it has some of the social skills it would need to function in a noble court, it has no way of using them on humans. For another thing, its powers are potent but narrow. So in some situations, it simply won't have anything to offer. Still, those challenges might be part of the appeal.

ITEM OF VIRTUE/ SERVICE

A rat king's tail-knot may be enriched by feeding it to a group of seven rats and then tying the tails of those rats together. If all seven rats are still alive and still tied together after a season has passed, their tail-knot can be cut off and used to provide its carrier with a Lesser Immunity to "rats and diseases spread by rats".

A magus who befriends a rat king might be able to bind it as a familiar. This requires a lab total of 20, probably using Rego Animal. A magus who binds a rat king will become responsible for its kingdom, and will likely have to find some way to accommodate a massive horde of rats at their covenant. On the bright side, those rats might be a useful tool for the covenant with the rat king there to control them.

THE RAT KING

Magic Might: 20 (Animal)

Characteristics: Int +1, Per +2, Str -10, Sta +0, Pre +2, Com +1, Dex +1, Qik +5

Size: -5

Season: Summer

Confidence: 2 (5)

Virtues & Flaws: Magical Animal, Magical Champion, Ways of the Town, Minor Essential Virtue: Rat; Proud (Major), Greedy (Minor), Slow Power (Herald of the Rat King), Monstrous Appearance

Magical Qualities & Inferiorities: Greater Power (Herald of the Rat King), Greater Power (King of Rats), Ritual Power x3 (Rat King's Curse), Improved Confidence, Improved Powers x3; Major Flaw (Monstrous Appearance) Susceptible To Deprivation

Mundane Qualities: Keen Sense of Smell

Personality Traits: Rat* +3, Proud +5, Gluttonous +3, Kingly +2

Reputations: Filthy 3 (local)

Combat:

Teeth: Init +5, Attack +6, Defence +8, Damage -9

Soak: +0

Wound Penalties: -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5)

Abilities: Animal Handling 5 (other rats), Home City Lore 5 (dirty parts), Awareness 4 (smell), Bargain 1 (magical beings), Brawl 1 (teeth), Etiquette 1 (nobility), Intrigue 1 (nobility), Leadership 4 (rats), Stealth 4 (urban areas), Survival 4 (urban areas)

Powers:

Herald of the Rat King, 4 points, Init +1, Animal

R: Touch D: Sun T: Ind

With a touch, the rat king makes a rat into its herald. Until the Power's duration ends, the rat king can control its herald completely, see through its eyes, hear through its ears, and generally use its herald as an extension of itself.

Re(In)An 40 (Base 15, +2 complex Intellego requisite, +1 Touch, +2 Sun): Greater Power (40 levels, 10 levels towards King of Rats)

King of Rats, 1 point, Init -1, Animal

R: Arc D: Sun T: Group

The rat king gives a command, and every rat in its kingdom is strongly inclined to obey. Even a rat who is nowhere near the king becomes aware of the command instantly if the king has an arcane connection to it, and the rat king habitually collects

hair from its subjects.

ReAn 60 (Base 5, +4 Arc, +2 Sun, +2 Group, +3 Size to affect millions of rats): Greater Power (50 levels, plus 10 levels left over from Herald of the Rat King), Improved Powers (-5 Might cost)

Rat King's Curse, 5 points, Init -25, Terram, Herbam, Corpus

R: Touch D: Year T: Boundary

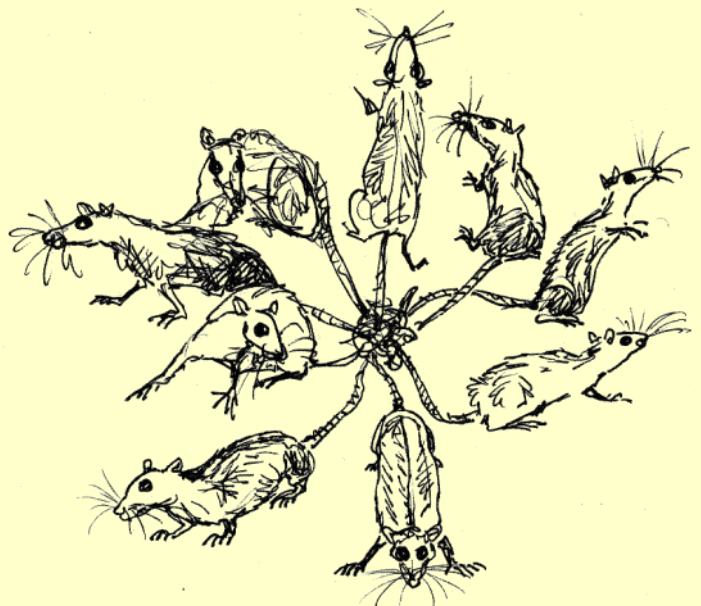
The rat king spits on the ground of a city, and the city becomes a place for rats. Dirt accumulates, food waste gets everywhere, and disease spreads among the human population. People in the city take a -1 penalty to aging rolls and disease recovery rolls. The rats of the city, meanwhile, enjoy plentiful food and good health. Their fertility improves, and their population grows.

MuTe 75 (Base 5, +1 Touch, +4 Year, +4 Boundary, +5 Size, non-Hermetic): 3x Ritual Power (75 levels), 2x Improved Powers (-10 Might cost)

Natural Weapons: The rat king's teeth are initiative +0, attack +3, defence +1, damage +1.

Vis: 4 pawns of Animal, in the tail-knot.

Appearance: A group of rats, about ten of them, tied together by their knotted tails. Filth encrusts the tail-knot, but the creature's many eyes sparkle with intelligence.



PARANDRUS

By ANDREW JUDD



MOTIVATION & BEHAVIOR

A gentle creature, the parandrus squirrels away food and shiny object alike, guarding its treasure through its powers of misdirection. The parandrus is attracted to unattended nobility, and instinctively obey their commands if found by said noble.

STORY

One of the covenant's members on harvest duty can't find the vis source, the parandrus having surreptitiously chosen to begin feeding from the source and keeping others from finding it.

A bastard child to an otherwise childless noble has befriended several parandrus after being abandoned by his mother, and has since grown to a hermit of obvious noble bearing that steals from local farmers to feed himself and his adopted family.

OBJECT OF VIRTUE

If the antler of a Parandrus is both kept from being exposed to any light or directly seen by any eyes as part of an enrichment ritual. So long as the antler is touching the enriched antlers, they gain Puissant Stealth.

SUB ROSA

PARANDRUS

Magic Might: 8 (Imaginem)

Characteristics: Cun -2, Per +2, Pre -2, Com -3, Str +5, Sta +4, Dex +2, Qik +1

Size: +2

Season: Spring

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Animal; Perfect Balance, Tough Qualities and Inferiorities Great Stamina, Improved Abilities (x2), Lesser Power, Personal Power; Susceptible to Deprivation

Personality Traits: Horder +3, Reindeer +3*, Timid +2

Reputations: Loyal to the Crown 1

Combat:

Antlers: Init +3, Attack +7, Defense +6, Damage +8

Hooves: Init +3, Attack +6, Defense +6, Damage +6

Soak: +7

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

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

Abilities: Brawl 2 (dodging), Survival 3 (home terrain), Awareness 5 (predators), Athletics 4 (running), Stealth 4 (hiding)

Powers:

Shrouded Path, 3 points, Init -7, Imaginem

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Road

Whether it be a road or an animal trail, the path's presence is made to look like untraveled terrain.

(Base 3 + 1 Touch + 2 Sun + 2 Road): Lesser Power (20 levels, -1 Might cost)

Follow Own Trail, 2 points, Init -1, Imaginem

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Vision

As per Discern Own Illusions, **ArM5** page 145.

(Base 1, +2 Sun, +4 Vision): Personal Power (15 levels)

Camouflage, 0 points, Init 0, Imaginem

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind

The parandrus reshapes its visage into a collection of rocks, foliage, and similar components appropriate to its locale in disguise. It remains able to be heard, smelled, or touched.

(Base 1 + 1 Concentration): Personal Power (2 levels, -1 Might cost)

Vis: 2 Imaginem, in the antlers

Appearance: Other than a thicker body, green coloration, and a shaggy coat, this appears as a regular reindeer.



THE BLACK COCKEREL

By ANDREW JUDD

THE BLACK COCKEREL

Characteristics: Cun +0, Pre +1, Per +2, Com +1; Str -6, Sta +0, Dex +3, Qui +4

Size: -3

Warping Score: 5 (0)

Confidence Score: 0

Virtues/Flaws: Ferocity (battles for dominance), Piercing Gaze, Strong-Willed; Evil Eye, Fragile Constitution, Mentem Monstrosity, Reckless

Qualities: Aggressive, Domesticated, Vocal

Personality Traits: Proud +4, Reckless +3

Reputation: Spirit Annoyance 3

Combat:

Spurs: Init +3, Attack +11, Defense +13, Damage -4

Beak: Init +4, Attack +11, Defense +11, Damage -5

Soak: +0

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-2), -3 (3-4), -5 (5-6), Incapacitated (7-8), Dead (9+)

Abilities: Brawl (spurs) 5, Awareness (invisible spirits) 4, Athletics (balancing) 3, Music (crowing) 3

Vis: 1 pawn Mentem in eyes

Appearance: Barely breaking a foot in height, while otherwise quite healthy, every component of the creature down to the comb and blood is solid black. The eyes possess a disquieting intensity, giving off an obvious glow under Second Sight.



Attracted to magi covenants, this cockerel crows with both the breaking of dawn and in the presence of invisible spirits, the latter of which it dislikes. Other than the usual behavior of a rooster, its history of extensive experimentation by its former magi owner has left it with a preference of resting in laboratories.

STORY SEED

The black cockerel was found within the covenant of a recently Marched magus who specialized in Mentem magic. When the rooster waltzes, it does so in a way that draws out random Hermetic symbols and similar runes. Intellego magic will reveal that there is a trove of lore within the mind of a beast unable to act on such knowledge. Are there entire texts of significant or even forbidden value? How many others know of what's stored within its mind, and can they access it through dreams or direct Intellego Animal magic?

Several spirits near the covenant are being woken from their slumber by the crowing of the black cockerel. Because the rooster is protected by the covenant's aegis, they are taking their frustration on those they can reach.

TUCHULCHA

By ANDREW JUDD

Originally an Etruscan god aligned with the Faerie realm, the forces of Hell had corrupted Tuchulcha to join its ranks, and now he works at entrapping mortal souls. He prefers to look for victims nearing death at the hands of an aging crisis or poison, offering them a chance to survive if they win at a board game, their soul or life of another given up as collateral in the event of losing the game.

STORY SEED

A vindictive and cruel lord is on death's door, but his kind and caring eldest son is desperate to save him. He agrees to meet with Tuchulcha at a crossroads at midnight on the night of the coming new moon, bringing his father along to play against and planning to throw the game.



TUCHULCHA

Order: False Gods

Infernal Might: 30

Characteristics: Int +2, Per +0, Pre +2, Com +1, Str +2, Sta +3, Dex +3, Qik +5

Size: +0

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues & Flaws: Premonitions; Reckless

Personality Traits: Overconfidence +6, Spiteful +3, Reckless +3

Reputations: Master of Gambling 3 (Infernal), Accountant of Orcus 1 (Local)

Hierarchy: 3

Combat:

Snakes: Init +6, Atk +7, Def +7, Dam +4

Soak: +3

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

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

Abilities: Athletics 3 (flying), Bargain 6 (betting), Brawl 5 (snakes), Carouse 4 (games of chance), Concentration 4 (games of skill), Guile 5 (encouraging fatalistic outcomes), Premonitions 7 (aging crisis)

Powers:

Coagulation, 3 points, Init -1, Corpus: As per RoP:tI, page 31.

Emissioning, 1 or 5 points, Init 0, Mentem: As per RoP:tI, page 32.

Obsession, 1 to 3 points, Init -5, Vim: Overconfidence, Avarice, Desperate. As per RoP:tI, page 31.

Shroud the Stench of the Pit, variable points, Init +3, Vim: As per RoP:tI, page 37.

The Wealth of Nations., 3 points, Init 0, Terram: As per RoP:tI, page 37.

His Master's Voice, variable points, Init +1, Vim: As per RoP:tI, page 37.

Lowest Stakes, 15 points, Init 0, Corpus: This power is only used in response to the outcome of a game played either against Tuchulcha or one where she referees. The loser gains a point of Decrepitude from the winner, as well as any current aging crisis. This effect has Forsaken duration. As Tuchulcha is unaffected by the passage of time, she suffers no ill were she to lose at a game when this power is used.

Forestall the Serpent's Venom, 2 points, Init +1, Aquam: By inflicting a wound with one of Tuchulcha's snakes, she permanently neutralize any poison in the victim's system.

Venomous Bite, 0 points, Init 0, Aquam: When Tuchulcha attacks with its snakes, compare its Attack Advantage to the victim's armor Protection (not his Soak). If Tuchulcha's advantage is higher, the victim suffers the effects of adder venom as listed in the Poison Table on page 180 of **ArM5**, regardless of whether the bite inflicts an actual wound.

Weakness: Abhorrent Circumstance (wreaths)

Vis: 6 pawns of animal vis, in its snakes.

Natural Weapons: Adders Init +1, Atk +4, Def +2, Dam +2

Appearance: An androgynous woman in a simple tunic with the head of a vulture, ears of a donkey, and a mane of snakes. Entwined along his arms are two adders.

THE DEVIL'S TEETH:

AN ADVENTURE OF THE GHOST AND THE FLAME

By MARK D FAULKNER

Roberto pointed his sword at the surrendered pirate's chest, the blade crackling with flame, and spoke his ultimatum. "You have two choices my friend. Join us or Die." There was anger in his scowl, determination in his eyes, yet he had a mirthful grin.

As a giant, Wirth rose up from the water next to the ship and grabbed the mast, adding "I think you better listen to the man".

Captain Johan acquiesced, surrendering his ship and pledging his service to the two magi. Wirth shrunk down to normal size as he climbed aboard and Roberto extinguished the flame of his sword.

"How do we know we can trust him?" Wirth asked, and Roberto mulled it over.

"Take from him a lock of hair and have him swear a blood oath. We can use this as an Arcane Connection, and he will take the oath serious. Especially after we show him the money." Roberto replied in Latin so that the Dutch pirate wouldn't understand. But Johan knew French, the language Wirth was initially speaking when he asked his question.

"Tis the code of the sea and the law of pirates, both unwritten yet known to mariners since ancient days. You have victory and I will swear my oath! I am no coward and no traitor." Johan's voice was bold and full of confidence. Neither magus could tell that he was secretly terrified and harbored terrible thoughts against these wizards. The one was a flaming butcher born from hell, the other a shape-shifting spirit from the grave. Whatever they were, they were not men, and they had the upper hand. The first law of morality being

survival, he had chosen to play along with their scheme.

For now.

Wirth stepped forward and stared down Johan with his glaring eyes, piercing him with his gaze. "I want to know I can trust you first before anything. Only then will you know our intention." He drew forth a knife and sliced his palm, then handed it to the kneeling captain. "Here, clasp hands in blood oath with me, and cut for me a lock of your hair. And your earring. Give me your earring."

Captain Johan accepted the knife, cutting his own palm and took Wirth's hand, then handed it back. He took his own dagger, hidden in his boot, and used it to cut a lock of hair. "Here. But you can't have the earring. It was a gift from my wife Betty. You'll have to fistfight me to take it."

Wirth chuckled. There were so many other options if he just wanted to take it. Six different spells came to mind, but it didn't matter. He admired the pirate's courage and devotion to his wife. He would probably react the same if someone wanted the ring given to him by his wife Clara.

"Keep it then. Instead you must agree to let me put my spell of protection on you. Then we will discuss business." Johan agreed, allowing Wirth to bestow his Parma Magica upon him, protecting him from magic and shielding from the effects of the Gift.

Roberto followed up by dropping a bag of silver coins before him. "Distribute this fairly between you and your crew. We would enlist you on a dangerous adventure, and will pay you twice as much again whence we return

home. Plus we will give you an equal share of whatever fortunes we gather on the way."

He wasn't sure if it was the charm the wizard placed on him, or if it was the big bag of money before him. But Johan saw these two wizards in a new light. They weren't devils or spirits. They were men of adventure, not unlike himself, and they were ready to do business.

But he had a few questions first. Standing up, he asked "Who are the two of you anyway, and why did you attack my ship?" Johan gave a hard glare back at the magi, lips clenched, awaiting an answer.

Roberto looked at Wirth, who shrugged and came forth with a reply. "You are a pirate, no? You hit the wrong ship, one carrying supplies we needed. We knew of your activities, but paid no mind until then. And we have had our eye on you. The harbor town you use as your haven, there are some old ruins nearby. That is the gateway to our sanctuary, where we keep enclave with other wizards. And we have decided it would be in everyone's best interest if we put you to work for us." Wirth was speaking of the Covenant of Novus Mane, located in a restored Roman Temple hidden in a Regio. These concepts are familiar to those that know the Ars Magica, but Wirth didn't want to overload the man with explanations. Though indeed, he wondered what Johan did know, considering what he had learned about him.

He continued. "I am Wirth, filius Huges. This is Roberto Rodriguez. We

are Hermetic Magi of House Flambeau. I suppose you know something of us?"

"You guys. Reginald warned me about you. He said there was a secret order of you Hermes guys, divided into houses and covenants." Johan scowled. "He told me there was a campus nearby, but he never told me you were *that* close to home."

"Reginald told us about you too. He said you were the best." Roberto smirked at Johan, thinking about what Reginald of Tylalus told him. Reginald was a magus Roberto didn't fully trust, but wholly respected. His Gift was Gentle, and combined with his abilities of magical disguise, he had infiltrated several mundane institutions to the benefit of the Order. The nobility, the church, merchants and guilds, and even criminal organizations such as the pirates at the very doorstep of Roberto's

own covenant; he was not trustworthy but he was too useful to dislike.

Wirth laid out the proposal. "Reginald told us you were an exceptional sailor. Legendary even. He also said you were an uncouth drunkard and cutthroat criminal. But he said you were a man of your word, and that you are the only man ever known to have sailed the Devil's Teeth and lived."

"I did better than live! Ship intact with crew and cargo I came out I did!" Johan shouted in boast. "And half in the bag drunk when I did it I was, I tell you. My son was with me, he's aboard here now and can back me up on all of it. You never know when it will come up on it. In the midst of the English channel, a Maelstrom will strike without warning in the midst of a sudden storm. The location is never the same, they say it shifts and moves at the whims of the Sea Hag. The whirlpool, the swirling

waters drags ships down into jagged rocks. The Devil's Teeth they call it, for some say it is the very mouth of Satan!

"Waters had been calm before it struck, and I had finished a bottle of wine before bed. Then thunder clapped, rain started hailing, and the ship was thrown up by waves! My son was thirteen, and I put him on night watch at the helm. He did well I tell you, better than any veteran seaman in my charge could have. But it was not enough. The rigging ripped away and wind tore the sail. The hull creaked and the waters whirled.

"I jumped in and took the helm. I had my boy climb the mast and lash the sail back as well had he could. I cranked the wheel hard, hoping and praying, taking my only chance at survival, The rudder moaned as if about to give way, taking the ship straight into the maelstrom's edge. I surfed along it,



letting it give me speed, and dialed the helm back the opposite way just in time to shoot out of the vortex and free from the storm.

“And my son, he swears that as he clung to the mast and the sail he tied, he could look straight into the maw of the Devil’s Teeth, and in it he saw the face of the Sea Hag..”

The magi looked at each other again, nodding. “This is where we want you to take us” Wirth said. “Only this time, instead of skating around it, we want you to sail *into* it. Between the rocks they call the Devil’s Teeth, down into the vortex. On the other side there is a mystical realm, what we call a Regio. There the waters are safe and calm, and there is an island home of a High Lady of the Fairies named Nehalenia, once worshipped as a minor Goddess by the Romans. We would seek her favor.”

“Are you damned crazy?!” Johan exclaimed with profanity. “I was barely able to avoid the rocks!” his voice accentuated their escape. “You want me to sail into them?” Johan asked incredulously. “Crazy! The Sea Hag will surely swallow our souls! And I told you, you never know when or where it will strike. The Devil’s Teeth isn’t a place, it is an event!”

“You’re wrong,” Roberto responded. “You just can’t see where it is except under special circumstances or with special abilities. Such as your son’s vision. We believe he has the gift of Second Sight. The Island Temple of Nehalenia is in a regio of layers. The first is the maelstrom, and only those so blessed to see can ever purposefully find it. The inner layer can only be accessed in the way we described. It has been done before, the proof is this.” Roberto displayed an ancient silver coin, Roman, inscribed with a short prayer blessing a trip at sea. “This is a votive, offerings the ancients used as sacrifice for their goddess in hopes for safe passage between the Netherlands and Britain. They would throw them into the sea, and the spirit would claim them and store them in her temple.

“One of our predecessors, Namorricus of Jerbiton, he has been there and left a record, along with this coin as proof. We have every reason to believe it is authentic and that the tale is true. And as for the Sea Hag...” Roberto laid his hand on Johan’s shoulder in a gesture of confidence and solidarity, “That is why we seek this sea spirit’s favor. The hag is a menace to us all, and is a threat to our prosperity. We depend on the sea not only for our food, but certain mystical resources,” referring to the Aquam vis they harvested in the form of sea shells. “The Sea Hag must be destroyed. We need Nehalenia to help us do that, and we need your help to get us to her.”

Johan spit. “I do hate that wretched Sea Hag! If that’s your goal, then it’s my goal, too. If there is anyone can pull this off, I’m the one.”

So then it was agreed. Captain Johan VanHalen formed an alliance with the two magi, blood sworn in service to Wirth. Johan’s ship, the Betty (named for his wife), was a twelve-man cog, although currently a skeleton crew of only five manned it. They weren’t raiding this time, they had been shipping. Besides Captain Johan, there was his seventeen year old son also named Johan (often called “Junior”). The lad was a strapping and brawny young man, an apt and able sailor but an even better brawler. Fred Fischer was Johan’s merchant partner, and Hank and Otto were old veteran comrades.

Then less than thirty yards away, there was a small boat hidden by a spell of invisibility. This is how the magi crept up close enough to magically leap and seize the Betty by surprise. There awaited Carlos, Roberto’s loyal henchman of many years, who sat there with his guitar trying to remember an old Portuguese sea chantey. Wirth decided to scuttle the boat and bring Carlos aboard, making for a crew of eight men that would dare fate and sail the Betty through the Devil’s Teeth.

It would take three days, sailing from where they were and awaiting a certain

conjunction of the moon, before they would find their goal. Every day at sunrise, and again at sunset, Wirth and Roberto would perform their ritual of protection, the Parma Magica, and share this charm with each member of the crew. Though it stretched them thin, it was essential that everyone was guarded from any surprise attack from the Sea Hag. The magi also knew that it was wise to shield the crew from the effects of their own disturbing magic air.

It was just after sunset on that third day. Calamity was soon to strike, yet they knew it not. The magi had finished conducting their ritual of protection and supper was being served; hard bread and cheese, fresh fish, and wine. They were trading tales of magic and the sea, and discussed what they knew of the Sea Hag.

“Her name is lost to time” Johan whispered dramatically. “They say she was a spinster, the only daughter of a merchant sailor lost at sea. She lived alone, growing ugly and bitter as she aged, until one day she met a sailor she fell in love with. Ugly Pete. Pete was the most loathsome, foul smelling, mean tempered, wart covered, pox ridden son of a mother there ever was. Ugly as sin and hated by everyone. He was a brute and a bully though, and could work a gang of seamen like no other. Ugly Pete was so foul that even whores turned him down no matter the money. But the spinster, who was only half as ugly as Pete but twice as evil, she took him in her bed and was the only man she ever been with. She wasn’t Pete’s first, just the only one he hadn’t taken by force. So they became betrothed, she talked him into it and he promised they would be wed whence he next returned after selling his cargo in England.

“He never came back. Instead Pete sold his wares and splurged in indulgent luxury and wine. Then once spent, he turned to a life of piracy, rape and plunder. Seven years went by, and the spinster grew more and more bitter and hateful. She turned to black magic and witchcraft, weaving a little haggard ragdoll with scraps of a jacket Pete left

behind and some hairs she clipped from his beard.

“At that time, Ugly Pete had become a wealthy pirate with his own ship. One night, after selling the bounty of successful plunder, the crew was engaged in high revelry in a harbor tavern. Pete had gotten so drunk that he passed out at the table and his crew had to carry him back to the ship and left him on his bunk.

“The spinster woman, now the Sea Hag for she had sold her soul for revenge, she plunged the rag doll into a tub of water and incanted her curse...

Life is bitter, life is sweet,

I place this hex on Pirate Pete

Since the sea you have made thy wife

Then the sea, she shall take thy life!

“The coast was slammed by an incredible torrent, a sudden storm that lashed the harbor with fury. So severe was it that the dock, the very dock I tell you! It snapped. Timbers tore and twisted, and the whole length of it collapsed and washed under the waves. Pete’s pirate ship, with that ugly son of a mother asleep inside as the sole occupant, it capsized and went under.

“Ugly Pete deserved to die a drowning death, but no man deserves the torment that continues. The Sea Hag was not satisfied in her revenge. Her soul already forfeit, she turned to necromancy. She bound his ghost and raised his corpse, and he is forced into her service. They say on rare moonless nights, his bloated puss ridden corpse sails in search of plunder to bring back to his foul mistress.”

There was a moment of silence as everyone contemplated the tale.

“You had me up until the cursed-corpse part. And how do you know what her rhyme was? Sounds like an old wife’s tale.” Carlos broke the silence with his criticism. As a student of song and story, too much of this tale seemed familiar. Johan narrated in French, though the rhyming part was Dutch. Yet he knew a similar story, La Bruja del

Mare”, The Witch of the Sea, and wondered which came from which and how much had mutated in the retelling over time.

“The tale is old, my wife is not. So yes, it is a tale women tell to scare children and entertain men folk. There are other stories and people make them up all the time. But that’s the one everyone knows and passes on. As for the curse, they say...

Lightning lit the sky with brilliance, and thunder echoed with an earth shattering KABOOOOOOOOM!!!! The rain came just as suddenly, pouring down in violent streams. The wind alone would have capsized the ship if Johan had not the quick thinking and action to cut the sail loose and let it flutter, so that the wind had not such a strangle hold. Junior, with twice the strength of his father, manned the wheel with all his might. Wood creaked and moaned, Johan said a prayer and thanked God for the shipwright from Navarre who build this thing with a rudder, A steering board would have cracked by now.

Johan clung to the mast, trying to secure the sail so that it did not fly loose nor drag the ship wildly. “Damn you dogs!” He shouted at his crew. “Get your asses over here and help me with this thing! And you two! I though you were wizards! Do something!!!”

“We are a little preoccupied!” Wirth shouted back in classic understatement. Lightning split the sky again, lighting the scene long enough so he could see what the wizard meant. There, standing on his deck, the disgusting and wretched horror stood sword in hand. It was the corpse of Ugly Pete the Pirate.

And he was not alone.

Much of Johan’s tale was accurate, but there was much he didn’t know. Pete wasn’t the first accursed bridegroom of the Sea Hag, nor was he the last. Anna was her true name, born on the Bay of Biscanay and raised up as a witch in the chthonic practice of the Sorginak. Her dark witchcraft had

warped and mutated her into a hag, driven with a deranged wrath against the men that spurned her. She would use magic to cloud the minds of sailors, appearing comely as to lure them to her bed. When the sun rose and her true nature was revealed, they would try to flee. Ugly Pete had always been a pirate, and Anna was already the Sea Hag. She cursed him with the evil eye right there and then, and the next sea voyage he took was sunk in a storm killing everyone aboard. But only Pete was raised as a walking corpse.

Ugly Pete was the second man lured into her psychotic schemes, and there were three others after him. Though others died due to her wrath, only those she had hexed were raised to serve her. And all five corpses stood on the deck of the Betty, possessed with the single minded goal to kill every man aboard.

Roberto shouted an incantation and sent a flare shooting across the deck. Or so it seemed. Then the same incantation again, “CREO IGNEM!”, shouted in repetition, sending several more flares. Johan saw the flares each strike one of the walking corpses straight on, yet they had no effect. “I think they might be highly magic resistant!” Roberto shouted to his fellow magus.

“Maybe” Wirth replied. “Or maybe they are immune to fire because they’re wet. I think I know the trick.”

“I know a trick too. The steel of my sword!” Roberto drew his blade as he shouted another incantation, enhancing his senses with the Howl of the Steel Weapons. A master of his spells, he was able to cast with such swift ease that he was able to lunge inward at that instant and check the axe swing of Dead Irving, the heinous third husband of the hag. Parrying the blow with uncanny ease, Roberto heaved him back, swinging around and over again with his sword, chopping down through the corpses collar bone. The fiend stumbled on, feeling no pain, but it was unable to raise it’s axe against him.

Wirth thought he knew what he was going to do, but he swiftly changed his

mind. He had recently studied an arcane tomb, Ablations and Abolitions of Apromor, and it described a few different spells to erode the energy of supernatural creatures. The problem is that they needed to be specific to an unknown condition. Were these creatures of Magic? Infernal beings or Faeries? He was reasonably certain they were borne of dark magic. But he was absolutely certain that they were animated corpses. So instead of targeting the spirit, he targeted the shell.

“PERDO CORPUS!!!” he shouted, casting the spell Dust to Dust, dissolving to nothingness the corpse of Bad Bob, Anna’s wicked first husband. Wirth surveyed the tactical scene at hand, surmising there were three corpse sailors yet to be dealt with. The one Roberto had attacked, Carlos came up from behind and shoved overboard. Dead Abe and Decayed Dan, the fourth and fifth husbands of the hag, were locked in combat with two of Johan’s crew. The mortal sailors, gripped with fear, still fought their best. But they were not faring well at all. Ugly Pete himself was trying to take the wheel and locked with Junior in grapple.

Johan VanHalen Junior! That deadly Dutch kid with tree trunks for arms and hammers for hands! Ugly Pete was no slacker and was ever a large and burly man. As a corpse his strength was amplified by the supernatural, yet he was still no match for the exceptional physical skill of Junior VanHalen. The kid had the pirates arm in a lock, and was putting the pressure on to break it. But Ugly Pete would not fall so easily! With a bellow, he dropped to his knee and threw his shoulder with force, tossing Junior over his hip and away from the helm. Now he could grasp the wheel unhindered.

Wirth and Roberto locked glances for a split second, and knew what to do. Though each had come from their separate backgrounds and different styles, they were both wizards of House Flambeau. Masters of Martial Magic! They shared a philosophy and certain core values, had spent time training

together and drawing up strategies and contingencies, and formed a strong bond of friendship that the Latin Speaking magi of the Order of Hermes call Amicus.

They knew what to do. Roberto took the lead by giving a hand gesture they used to mean Omicron, the name for the plan they worked out in practice. With an incantation, each blinked from existence to reappear in different locations on the ship within a split second. Captain Johan shook his head in disbelief as he climbed down from the mast, having safely secured the sail. These men were no mere wizards of the kind one would imagine, with their long beards and flowing robes. They were warriors born true!

Roberto appeared directly behind Ugly Pete, and hacked at him with his long sword using every ounce of strength he had. It barely bit into him, yet it was enough to get his attention and force him to release the helm in shock. Wirth appeared between Hank and Otto, the crewmen, just in time to save them. The corpse husbands were about to drive them overboard or split their hides if they did not retreat. Wirth appeared just in time to shove them aside and attract the attention of the dead. Hesitating not, the corpse-men struck at him with fury, sword and ax slashing down into him. And through him! Wirth had assumed immaterial form, an enchantment of his own devising placed in his Talisman. Then he repeated his earlier trick, casting the spell Dust to Dust, turning Dead Abe to ash first then turning upon Decaying Dan.

Back at the helm, Roberto managed to draw Ugly Pete away from the wheel, while Captain Johan managed to scramble over to take hold of it. Pete swung his sword at Roberto, who deflected it but was nearly unbalanced by the force of the blow. Another blow parried, just barely. Roberto wished he was carrying a shield, then placed his foot against Ugly Pete’s belly and shoved him back.

Time for another tactic.

Magic Resistance was not the issue, Wirth demonstrated that. Perhaps they actually were immune to fire. Fortunately, Roberto knew well the value of diversified tactics. Incanting once again with a shout, “CREO AURAM!”, Roberto summoned the Fist of Jupiter, holding now in his hand the crackling power of a thunderbolt! He stepped in low, sword raise high to deflect the swing of Pirate Pete. His other hand, a fist of thunder, struck the bloated corpse straight in the midsection and exploded in fury. The fat fiend’s torso was torn open, the corpse shattered, and knocked back several paces to stumble over the rail. There remained only an arm, clutching a sword and twitching, which Roberto kicked overboard.

The corpse bridegrooms of Anna the Sea Hag now dispatched, there was still no respite from danger. The ship lurched as waters whirled, for the vortex had already opened and revealed the circle of jagged rocks known as the Devil’s Teeth! Captain Johan struggled at the wheel, desperately trying to steer. The idea of sailing between the rocks, at this point, was sheer madness. Junior had scrambled over to help, but it was not a matter of strength. The tiller ropes were about to snap.

Then they did! The ship was out of control, veering wildly, being pulled down the vortex straight for the rocks. Junior ran over as fast as he could, trying to see what he could salvage with the tiller. The ship tilted wildly, and the crewman Hank was thrown overboard. Pulled into those savage waters, his body was dashed upon the jagged rocks. Roberto ran over to help Junior, trying to improvise what spells he could to magically grab hold of the tiller, then he tried to conjure material to repair it. But it was to no avail. Having spent much of his energy to destroy Pirate Pete, he was exhausted and failed to summon the mystical energies required.

Wirth though quickly, again casting the spell to make himself immaterial as

a spirit. As a ghost, he sank below the deck and passed through the hull, in the water directly under the keel. He then cast his signature spell, Giant amongst Men, increasing his size and strength, then allowed himself to become solid once again. Wirth physically grabbed hold of the ship, steering it by the keel, directing it between the Devil's Teeth. The ship smashed him against the rocks, his giant body cushioning it from the blow, but knocking all the wind from him. The ship was safe, but Wirth was unconscious and was about to drown.

It was Carlos who seized initiative and saved the day! The nimble musician grabbed a rope, and threw one end to the mighty Johan Junior who lashed it to the mast. Taking the other end in hand, he dived into the water. They were past the rocks, but the current was strong. Fortunately, in giant size, Wirth made an easy target to swiftly grab hold of. He rolled the giant wizard onto his back, lashed the cable to his belt, and clung on for dear life as the ship drew them both with it.

Into the vortex and another realm of existence.

The waters were calm and the sun was warm. All about them, the surface was flat and the horizon endless. All around them it was aglow, a state of perpetual sunrise or sunset, in every direction!

Captain Johan took stock of what remained of his ship and crew. Hank was dead, God rest his soul, devoured by those watery rocks. Otto was injured, having received a blow from the sword of Decaying Dan that gashed his shoulder and back. The two magi were out. Roberto was slumped against the rail, fatigued from all the energy he had spent. Wirth was being hoisted out of the water by Junior and Carlos. He returned to his natural size and was still alive, though they were not sure if he could be revived.

Now where was Fred? Fred Fischer, the coward! He hid himself below deck when things went crazy, with the storm

and the dead men walking. But could he be blamed? Was this not the sane rational thing to do? He thought so, but his pride compelled him to make an excuse.

"When the ship first lurched, I was thrown down the hole and landed straight on the side of my head. Knocked flat out." He said with a smile. Captain Johan shook his head and went on assessing the situation.

There was no way to get a bearing. No landmark, no moon or star, and the sun seemed in every direction just below the horizon. Madness. One man down and another man dead. And the two wizards that got them all in this mess were unconscious.

They seemed to drift in every direction yet no direction. No landmark in sight, gentle clouds ever shifting and moving in changing directions, no way to tell anything. The crew made repairs as best they could, sewed their injuries and cauterized wounds. Carlos attended to Wirth, who coughed up water and was breathing, but was still unconscious.

Roberto grunted as he revived, and wearily stood up with the help of the rail. He took to surveying the situation himself, and was more optimistic than Captain Johan. One man down yet seven remained. They would see this through to the end, for he knew exactly where to go from here.

"Captain! How long until we can effect repairs and get underway?"

"Underway to where?!? Every direction is nowhere"

"Hah!" Roberto laughed. You lack perspective. Even nowhere is a direction. You must sail against nowhere, into the noon and away from the sunset until the shore surrounds you. It's simple really. Just pick a direction and if it starts getting darker, reverse course."

Captain Johan shook his head and muttered. "Madness.."

Repairs were managed as best as could be. They had not enough spare

cable to repair the tiller, rendering the rudder useless and requiring the use of an old fashioned steering board. The sail was torn, but good fortune had it that they had a spare to replace it. Roberto renewed his Parma Magica, extending his protection to the others once again. Then he tended to Otto's grievous wound, using magic to assist his recovery and prevent infection. A veteran of battle since he was but an apprentice, Gentle Flames of Purification was amongst the first spells his master taught him. Wirth was recovering slowly, tended to by Carlos, and renewed his own Parma. Fred hoisted the new sail and Junior set the steering board in place, then Captain Johan gave the command.

"Set sail for Noon Mates! If madness be these seas, then madness shall be our course I tell you!"

"And which direction is that Paps?" his son shouted back.

"You got the steering board boy, you decide! Use that Second Eye thing the wizard was talking about!"

Junior scowled and shook his head at his father. Then looked out at the encircling horizon. The best he could figure, if he looked straight on and ignored his peripherals, they were headed into the dawn of the sun, so he kept straight on. And sure enough, as they kept on the sun started to rise.

In every direction.

As they kept on, there rose a halo burning brightly as the sun encircling and hovering just above the horizon in every direction. More time passed and the circle rose higher yet slowly shrank in diameter. Then a sudden wind blew them off course slightly, and the halo began to lower/widen. But the quickly corrected and it began again to rise higher and shrink, slowly concentrating.

And then land was spotted. Again in every direction. They kept on and the circle grew higher and began to close into becoming the very sun! And the shore grew closer and closer until it surrounded them. The sea became a

lake, and Captain Johan struck the sails and had the men put to oars and slow movement before it became a pond. Carefully they crept closer, until they could see all the details of the shore. A sandy beach bordered by light woodland. It was the same in every direction, except one. The one they were headed.

There, directly ahead of them, was a stone paved trail that lead up into the woods. Where it led could not be seen, but it was obvious that this was the path they wanted. Captain Johan ordered the ship to a halt, and Roberto nodded to the wisdom of that decision. They still needed room to maneuver and reverse course from here when they were through.

“Wirth! Are you doing alright there? Feeling strong enough?” Roberto inquired of his sodale with some slight concern, yet knowing full well Wirth

would never willingly let on any sign of weakness.

“I *kaff*..., Never felt better. Lungs needed a good washing anyway, what with all that smoke and soot you cause with your Ignem magic. Let’s get on with it. How do you want to proceed?”

Roberto stared at the shore with one eye closed as he mulled it over. “I suggest we leave a few men here on ship and the rest of us go ashore. The good captain here, with Otto and Brave Fred.” There was a condescending note in his voice as he bestowed the new nickname on Fred Fischer. “We can bring Carlos and Junior ashore with a simple levitation spell and use teleportation to get ourselves across.”

“Too risky. Neither of us knows that spell, and the mystical energies here are way to strong to chance using spontaneous magic. Stick to the spells we know and have mastered. You have

all of your spells mastered. Me, only just a few, including one in particular that will serve us well.” With that, Wirth threw himself overboard. But before anyone could react, he rose from the water as a giant using is signature spell A Giant amongst Men. The pond was shallow enough that, with his feet on the ground at the bottom, he was out of water from the waist up. His voice boomed out to his comrade “I do plan to invent a water breathing spell when I get back to the lab. Muto Auram to change water to air as I breath, like Lungs of the Fish. Or better yet, Muto Corpus to give myself gills. That fits my self-transformation focus. But that is for latter. For now, climb on my shoulders and I’ll bring you ashore”.

Roberto shrugged. He did not care for using technical jargon in front of mundanes. It just confuses them and inspires suspicion. But at least he was



speaking French. To babble on in Latin would seem secretive and sinister at this point. Carlos and Junior climbed aboard the gigantic wizard, but Roberto declined with a wave. "I'll meet you on the other side." And with that, he blinked out of view and appeared on shore waiting for them.

Wirth grumbled under his breath, and proceeded to wade over to him. He thought to himself how his friend's bold confidence was both an asset and weakness. Though it made Roberto determined and courageous, it also let him to be foolishly impulsive at times. This was an example, for it would have been the wiser course of discretion to keep the landing party all together. Wirth kept a keen eye on his sodale, wary of unexpected threats or sudden hazards. This was a magical land after all, and there was no telling what could happen suddenly at any moment. Though Wirth admired Roberto's bravery, he cursed his recklessness.

Fortunately no surprises presented themselves, and in short order all four stood on the shore. They reorganized themselves and cast protective spells as a precaution. All were covered by the protection of Parma Magica, the arcane secret of protection from magic that was the province of Hermetic magi. Roberto covered Carlos and Wirth covered Junior, pairing each wizard with a mundane mortal as teams.

This again was born of the martial philosophy of the Flambeau. Most other Hermetic magi paired with bodyguards the called "shield grogs", hiding behind them in dangerous encounters as they cast their spells. Roberto was trained different, taught to fight in organized teams as soldiers. Roberto and Carlos had a long history together, having served as mercenaries in the Reconquista before Roberto was an apprentice and the supernatural world was still yet an occult mystery to them both. Wirth was a student of the military science of Apromor, which emphasized patience and planning. Time Destroys all Things, and Victory is in the Preparation. At Novus Mane

Wirth often trained with Roberto and Carlos, and devised several combat and contingency with them. Junior VanHalen was the wild card, but Wirth was prepared for that. He would still be able to fight as a team if need be, and cast spells to make sure Junior was well defended. He saw how the lad fought Ugly Pete barehanded and figured the kid was a weapon unto himself!

There was no cause or need for such paranoid precaution, for the magic island of the Temple of Nehalenia was a benign and peaceful place. To be fair, they did not know this to be fact yet, and expectations of danger were often accurate when it came to the expeditions of this pair of mystic warriors. Paranoia had saved their lives on more than one occasion. Truly though, there was no cause for alarm for not only was Nehalenia benevolent, she knew of their arrival and the purpose of their visit, and had every intention of helping them. Such was the nature of her kindness, and the rivalry she had with the Sea Hag.

The stone path led uphill through a parting in the woods. After walking only a few minutes they saw the temple ahead, beyond it a cliff from which they could hear the roar of the sea. The building was a simple affair, a few marble columns and a roof standing on a stone pavilion. She stood their radiating in glory; Nehalenia, sister of the sea and matron of mariners, once venerated as a deity in ancient times. Though she made a magnificent presence, there was nothing imposing or intimidating about here. Rather, she seemed warm and inviting.

"Welcome brave travelers!" She called out to them as they approached. "Great were the challenged to overcome in order to get here. Yours must be a great quest to willingly face these dangers. I would ask what you would seek of me?"

Though she already knew she was obligated to ask, for such as were the supernatural laws that governed her existence. That and an offering must be

made. To gain her favor, the Romans used to offer her prayers inscribed on votive stones and cast minor treasures into the sea. This pleased her and inspired her blessing. In days even older than that, barbarians offered sacrificial drowning. This was also satisfying and earned her favor. Such was the strange morality of the Faerie Realm.

Roberto stepped forward and placed on the ground before her the votive coin he had shown Captain Johan earlier. What he didn't mention then was that this coin had been specially prepared beforehand, infused with mystical energy known as Vis. This was the offering the magi hoped would gain her favor. Nehalenia already wanted to help them. This gift just made her pleased and enabled her to help them.

"We seek your help, noble matron of the sea. These waters are plagued by a scourge, the vile Sea Hag. Her twisted games have ruined the lives of many men and her wrath has taken the lives of many innocents aside from the ones she targets. For the sake of mercy for seamen and the anguish of drowned souls, we humbly ask for your help in all humility."

Wirth's face was stoic, but inside he smiled. When it came to using Latin for diplomacy or drama, Roberto could lay it on thick when he wanted to. Carlos knew a little Latin and had a vague idea of what was going on. Johan had no idea what was being said at all, yet stood there with a smug smile as if he understood everything. Wirth was really starting to admire the way the kid carried himself like he had a set of apples. It was then that he decided he was going to hire Junior on himself as his own grog. But that is a tale for a latter day.

Roberto looked up at Nehalenia with hope in his eyes and sincere supplication. He hoped she would accept the offering, give them some special edge they could use against the Sea Hag. He was ready to put Carlos to work singing in an attempt to charm her if need be. But she happily accepted the

votive infused with vis, and proceeded to tell him everything she knew about the Sea Hag. This tale, as told before, yet left questions as to the true nature of their enemy.

“What is her weakness? How powerful is she? How can we find her or lure her attention?” Wirth spoke blunt and to his point. He did not come all this way for a faerie tale that told them mostly what they already knew or had figured out. Knowing her true name was Anna was somewhat of a help for spell casting if he could get a piece of her.

Nehalena smirked at the dour wizard, and she answered “Her weakness is that she can be cut by her own blade. Her power is as the temper of the sea. She is found where an innocent maiden should not be for she is drawn by the desire for that which she hates.

“I have told you the tale and I have answered three questions. Return to your ship and you will see that I have helped you seven times. Now I must return to gazing into the eternal ocean at the endless gloaming. If I see you there, I shall put my hand out. Farewell brave wanderers. May fortune grant you victory. Keep hope in the righteousness of your quest, for Anna the Sea Hag deserves no mercy or pity.”

“No! Absolutely not!” Carlos shouted his refusal as he glared at Roberto. The moon hung high in the air and the lights of a coastal town could be seen in the near distance.

After Nehalena had advised them with riddles, the magi had thanked her graciously and returned to the ship. The Betty was fully repaired! Fred Fischer had found spare cable down in the hold, which Captain Johan knew wasn't there before. It was woven of strange material too, much stronger than normal and it was a chore cutting it to length. The tiller was now repaired and the rudder functional again.

There was more. Fred had gone into the hold to rummage for food, knowing there was some bread and cheese down there and hopefully some wine. When he found the cable, he also found the stores filled with fresh foods! Fruits, salted meats, new wine, and more. The two magi were instantly leery and declined to partake, for many were the tales they heard of the consequences of faerie food. But those on the ship had already feasted and the only discernable effect was that Otto's injuries were now fully healed. Junior could not be dissuaded, and Carlos joined him.

Reversing direction, they sailed away from noon and into the sunset. The surrounding shore receded, and the sun slowly moved ahead of them progressing into afternoon then evening. The sun stayed whole and the moon rose as it set, and Captain Johan could sense they were on familiar waters. He smelled the air, looked up to his left at the position of the moon, and made a subtle course correction. Soon they were within sight of land and spotted the town. They put to drift as they had a conference as to their next move.

That's is when Roberto proposed the scheme Carlos had so vehemently objected to. He wanted for Carlos to be the bait to lure Anna into a trap. Wirth and Roberto were sitting conference with they whole crew, discussing what they knew and brainstorming ideas. Contemplating Nehalena's cryptic advice, in consideration of the Hag's method of operation, they concluded the best place to find her was a seedy sea side tavern. Amongst the bawdy wenches and seamen indulging in debauchery, that is where innocent girls should not be. That is where she can find the thing she is drawn to and what she hates.

“Love!

“She Falls in love then hates all her lovers. Like a widow spider. And women really swoon when you play those guitar ballads.” Roberto kept right on going ignoring Carlos' angry protest.

“She will probably be the only pretty one among the ugly girls, so you just got to woo her then we'll snag her. You got nothing to worry about.”

“You, can go, *straight* to hell. I told you no, I mean no. And by the way. No. Just let it go.” Carlos was absolutely sangfroid, playing it off ad ridiculous.

“He's right.” Wirth said, which drew a glare from Carlos. “No. I mean you. You're right. It is an ill conceived plan for three reasons. First, the Hag preys upon ugly and brutish men. Secondly, public confrontation such as suggested is unwise. Too many variables. And flashy displays of violent magic could make for bad publicity. The third reason is Roberto thought of it, which is always a red flag”

“Hey!”

“Oh, there is some merit to it. We can track the Hag to her lair that way or maybe claim an arcane connection. But Carlos isn't the type. We need someone mean and nasty. Someone with a reputation as the fiercest fighting sailor on either side of the channel. That's the kind of man the hag is attracted to.”

Roberto thought about it, and said “Duly noted, but where are you going to find a fierce fighting sailor willing to cooperate?”

Carlos chuckled at that last word.

Wirth looked straight at his choice and smiled. “Junior, over here..”

SEABHAG: THE HAWK OF ACHILL

By DAVID AGNEW

The Hawk of Achill is a vastly long-lived hawk found in Ireland. Born around the time of the Great Flood, the Hawk of Achill, also known as Seabhag, possesses knowledge almost unmatched by any other being, and vision so acute that he can see any part of Ireland from any other and every creature that calls Ireland home.

Given his great age and experience, the Hawk of Achill is noted and respected amongst all the native peoples of Hibernia, but despite his learning the Hawk is capable of extreme savagery. It enjoys combat, even against foes many times larger than it, and it enjoys taking the spoils of its victories, which are usually the flesh of those who fall before it.

Those who hear the Hawk of Achill cry before they see the beast must be wary for they may have been challenged to a contest of strength and valor but a warrior that defeats the Hawk, forcing it to submit, will never again be troubled by it and will instead have an ally.

But the Hawk of Achill is no mere butcher of men; Seabhag will also warn the virtuous of dangers ahead and his cry can install courage and determination as well as fear.

The Hawk is a messenger between the mundane world and the Magic Realm. Rare among beasts from the Magic Realm, the Hawk is also able to enter the Faerie Realm and there find any faerie, beast, or individual that calls Ireland home.

HABITAT

The Hawk of Achill lives in Hibernia and never ventures away from Ireland, not even to cross the short stretch of sea to England, Wales, or Scotland. Seabhag can most often be found on the Isle of Achill on Hibernia's far western coast in the Province of Connaught and it is the island that gives Seabhag its other name. Seabhag spends much of his time within a regio at the far western end of the island on a hill above a small lake.

The regio is easily found by those who seek the Hawk; any who climb the hills above the lake at the far end of Achill with the express aim of finding the Hawk move into the magical regio. It can also be stumbled into by chance. The regio is darker than the surrounding lands, even in broad daylight, and the air tends to be still and the ground boggy underfoot. There is a smell of decay in the air and the center of the regio is littered with bones and other trophies taken from five-thousand years of conquests. Amid all this dark and humid horror, the Hawk of Achill nests atop a tall and twisted tree.

There are stories that suggest that the Hawk of Achill left the mundane world to go to the Magic Realm along with the similarly ancient shapechanger Fintan mac Bóchra. This is not entirely true. Seabhag does know the way into the Magic Realm and does spend some time there but he considers the mundane world his home and cannot leave for long before feeling a longing to return.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Despite his great age and the things he has seen, Seabhag feels compelled to return to the mundane world and the various peoples of Ireland. Respected and feared by all the ancient races found across Hibernia and is considered by them to be a messenger and ambassador trusted in his honesty if not always in his intentions. The fear in comes from the Hawk of Achill as a violent force that may as easily cause strife in his wake as much as good.

His appetites run to flesh of all kinds, including the Sons of Mil, including the Fir Bolg, including the Tuatha de Dannan, and even including the mighty Fomoiré to say nothing of the beasts of the land. He may seek out a target and attack with the intention of carrying away and eating some part of them or he may fly above the field of battle and then take his choice from the bodies that are left. Despite his relatively small size, the Hawk of Achill is a dangerous foe.

From time to time, the Hawk of Achill seeks out a strong and powerful warrior and challenges them to a contest of arms. The Hawk does not seek to kill his target, but instead to maim him. As per the rules in *Lords of Men*, page 125, if the Hawk of Achill achieves an incapacitating wound or a fatality, then reduce the wound to Heavy but also impose a flaw from the following list; Disfigured, Missing Ear, Missing Eye, or Missing Hand.

He might also help those native to Ireland, giving them guidance and warning of dangers unseen. This is especially true of those the Hawk has bested in battle or been bested by.

Seabhag wants to stave off Acclimation (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 52) in a way that will allow him to remain in the mundane world. He knows all the ways he could protect his Might and his power and has used most in his time but he has never yet bound himself to a mortal as a familiar. It is an experience he has not had and one that he could be open to.

Given the stories and legends that have accumulated over his life it is no surprise that the Faerie Realm often reflects these stories. There are many faeries, or perhaps just one in many places, who claim to be the Hawk of Achill and who challenge mundanes in his name. These beasts are false and exist only to feed off the vitality afforded by their loss in battle to a heroic warrior. The true Hawk of Achill does not appreciate imposters and nor does it appreciate the stories of those who claim to have defeated the Hawk in mortal combat.

STORY

The Challenge: One of the covenant grogs has proven herself in combat, taking on impossible odds and protecting her masters against a most dangerous foe. Impressed, the Hawk of Achill seeks out her masters to ask their permission to challenge this warrior. The request for permission is an act of courtesy and respect on the part of the Hawk of Achill, but the challenge will go ahead regardless. Once challenged, the grog



has a season in which to prepare before attending the Hill of Tara to face the Hawk.

The Quest: Initiating into one of the Clesrada, the ancient martial Mysteries of Ireland, the initiate is sent on a quest to seek out and face the Hawk of Achill in combat. But having found the beast in its lair on the Isle of Achill, the contest is refused; the Hawk considers the initiate unworthy. Without the contest the initiate cannot learn the cles he seeks. How can the initiate prove his worth as an opponent? What can he do to force the Hawk of Achill to face him in honorable combat?

Tales of the Elders: An ally to the covenant is struck down by a magical poison brewed from a description in an ancient text. No cure known to the magi can stave off death and even their healing rituals can sustain their ally for so long. But the text suggests that the Hawk of Achill, oldest of all the beasts of Ireland, knows of a cure. The magi must seek out the Hawk and ask its help before it is too late.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

The Hawk of Achill is prepared to become a familiar, but only to the right magus. An untested or young magus is likely to end up in danger on approaching the Hawk of Achill with such a request, but if a magus of distinction, age, and experience can be found then Seabhag might consider such an offer. Of course, the Hawk of Achill has lived for so very long already and it would consider carefully any actions which might bring about an end to that extreme longevity.

So strong is the Hawk of Achill as a warrior in his own right that the Hawk figures in many quests undertaken by those initiating into various martial and mystical Mysteries. To face the Hawk of Achill in combat is to risk gruesome injury and doing so is a test of bravery, fortitude, and cunning.

Should the Hawk of Achill be slain, its body can be put to any magical uses. For instance, a cloak incorporating its feathers allows the wearer to fly (Lesser Enchantment Vis as per *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 120), his eyes can be enriched (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124), becoming gems and granting the Keen Vision Virtue to their bearer, and the Hawk's

talons grant a Shape and Material bonus of +5 to fighting and can be enriched to provide a Puissance to the bearer's favored martial Ability.

SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

The Hawk of Achill provides the following shape and material bonuses:

Seabhag's Wing: +7 leadership

Seabhag's Wing Feather: +7 flight

Seabhag's Foot/Talon: +7 fighting

Seabhag's Eye: +7 identifying enemies



THE HAWK OF ACHILL

Magic Might: 35 (Animal)

Season: Winter

Characteristics: Cun +1, Per +3, Pre 0, Com 0, Str -6, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +6

Size: -3

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Animal; Magical Master; Keen Vision, Educated, Improved Characteristics

Qualities: Accomplished Flier, Fast Flier, Keen Eyesight, Pursuit Predator, Extra Natural Weapons

Magical Qualities & Inferiorities: Ritual Power X 7; Improved Attack (talons) X 3, Improved Defense (talons) X 3, Improved Damage (talons) X 3, Improved Initiative (talons) X 3, Improved Soak X 3, Lesser Power, Gift of Speech; Susceptible to Deprivation

Personality Traits: Fierce +3, Honorable +2, Respectful of Irish Lore +1

Reputations: Ancient Creature 5 (magical beasts of Ireland), Fearsome Warrior 4 (bards of Ireland), A Thing to be Feared and Respected 3 (The Order of Hermes in Hibernia)

Combat:

Talons: Init +14, Attack +18, Defense +24, Damage +5

Beak: Init +6, Atk +12, Defense +15, Damage -5

Soak: +8

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-2), -3 (3-4), -5 (5-6), Incapacitated (7-8), Dead (9+)

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Athletics 5 (swift flight), Awareness 4 (spotting prey), Brawl 8 (talons), Dominion Lore 5 (saints), Etiquette 4 (warriors), Faerie Lore 5 (regions), Folk Ken 4 (warriors), Hibernia Lore 7 (history), Hunt 4 (game birds), Infernal Lore 5 (curses), Irish 5 (ancient tongues), Latin 4 (church Latin), Leadership 5 (intimidate), Magic Lore 6 (auras), Music 3 (sing), Order of Hermes Lore 4 (covenants), Penetration 7 (granting Minor Virtues), Philosophiae 3 (natural philosophy), Survival 3 (cold climates), Teaching 4 (magic lore)

Natural Weapons: The weapon statistics for a falcon's talons are Init -1, Atk +2, Def +3, Dam +2. The statistics for its beak are Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1.

Powers:

Grant (Death Prophecy), 10 points, Init -14, Vim, Ritual Power; upon suffering defeat to a challenged warrior, the Hawk of Achill shows the warrior a vision of their own death. This grants the warrior the Death Prophecy Major Virtue.

Grant (Puissant Single Weapon), 5 points, Init -4, Vim, Ritual

Power; upon defeating a challenged warrior the Hawk of Achill may grant them Puissant Single Weapon. This is allowed to stack should the warrior already have that Virtue.

Grant (Puissant Great Weapon), 5 points, Init -4, Vim, Ritual Power; upon defeating a challenged warrior the Hawk of Achill may grant them Puissant Great Weapon. This is allowed to stack should the warrior already have that Virtue.

Grant (Puissant Thrown Weapon), 5 points, Init -4, Vim, Ritual Power; upon defeating a challenged warrior the Hawk of Achill may grant them Puissant Thrown Weapon. This is allowed to stack should the warrior already have that Virtue.

Grant (Puissant Bows), 5 points, Init -4, Vim, Ritual Power; upon defeating a challenged warrior the Hawk of Achill may grant them Puissant Bows. This is allowed to stack should the warrior already have that Virtue.

Grant (Puissant Brawl), 5 points, Init -4, Vim, Ritual Power; upon defeating a challenged warrior the Hawk of Achill may grant them Puissant Brawl. This is allowed to stack should the warrior already have that Virtue.

Panic at the Hawk's Passing, 4 points, Init -1, Mentem, Lesser Power; As Panic of the Trembling heart but at Voice Range. One Intracacy Point spent to improve Initiative. The normally Hawk uses this power when issuing challenges to opponents. Those able to resist the fear are deemed worthy of the challenge. The Hawk may also use this power to scare away those who come too close to his territory, those who the Hawk has no desire to kill, at least.

Vis: 7 pawns of Animal vis that can be enriched for numerous effects as described nearby

Appearance: The Hawk of Achill is a large raptor, with a wingspan in excess of four feet. It has a short, hooked beak and dark eyes. Its plumage is a shining bronze-brown with glossy black tips to its wings and tail.

SAINT ATTRACTA'S CREATURE

BY PAULA MOORE

Another of Hibernia's strange and feral creatures, Saint Attracta's Creature is a chimeric beast; it boasts a strange bulbous body with a head very much like a horse, except that it has a single fiery-red eye in the middle of its forehead. Like a horse, it has a long mane that stretches down its back, but rather than hooves at the end of its equine legs, it has claws. It roars like a lion, a sound that carries across the water from its island home of Inis Cathaig all the way to the mainland.

Saint Attracta's Creature can run across the water as ably as it can on land, its claws causing sparks as it does so. The sharp curved claws also make it a proficient climber and it is able to scale the steep cliffs that surround Inis Cathaig.

The creature was banished to its island from the mainland by Saint Senan, a bishop in the sixth century, but it takes its common name from Saint Attracta. She too lived in the sixth

century and while she is more commonly associated with the mainland and the hospices and alms houses she established there, she did indeed found such a house on Inis Cathaig.

One legend says that on reaching the island, intent on founding her remote house of sanctity, Saint Attracta made the sign of the cross over the creature and that he then fell dead. This is not,



SUB ROSA

however true. In fact, the sign of the cross inflicted a curse on the creature such that the crucifix and even invoking the sign of the cross became the creature's Sovereign Ward (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 52). The nature of this Sovereign Ward may be learned by those researching the creature (through Faerie Lore), Saint Attracta (through Dominion Lore), or the region in which the creature lives (through Area Lore).

What might also be learned is what the creature guards. While Saint Attracta's house has long been lost to the elements, a potent Divine treasure has been left behind. There is a wooden pitcher hidden on the island that fills and refills with water. The miraculous holy waters have the power to provide comfort and rest to the weary, the injured, and the sick. The nature and degree of this comfort is left to the storyguide to decide but the pitcher itself can be found in the scattered ruins of Attracta's old hermitage, which still bear an Empyrean Aura of level 1.

Those in need may compel the creature to lead them to the pitcher. Those who intend to remove the pitcher from the island face the creature's wrath – the Sovereign Ward that keeps the creature from harming those protected by the sign of the cross is miraculously lifted!

HABITAT

Saint Attracta's Creature can be found only on Inis Cathaig (Scattery Island) and the waters around it. This island is out on the bay beyond the port of Limerick and in fact ships using the port sail so close to the island that their crews often see the creature. Those who know the waters are careful to give the creature both a wide berth and no cause for anger.

The creature frequently dives for fish and may be spotted as it surfaces for air and then rolls back below the waves.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Saint Attracta's Creature has little in the way of personal motivation; it lacks the intellect to rail against its exile to the island, and has enough food to stave off hunger. It is, however, suspicious and wary of both humans and Fir Bolg, which it considers to be the only threat to its safety.

This is why it makes such a great show of aggression to those who come too near and attacks those who fail to keep their distance.

As mentioned above, it cannot attack those who protect themselves with the sign of the cross, and indeed must flee from their presence.

STORY SEEDS

An Infernal Festering Wound: A wound that will not heal, that no blessing or magic known to the covenant may make whole, threatens the life of a most valued ally. With time running out, someone in or close to the covenant learns, either through research, vision, or Divine intervention, of a pitcher of holy water that has the power to wash the injury away. The only problem is that it is found on an island and protected by a foul beast. The covenant must visit the island and take their chances, or investigate further and learn what they might from the local folklore before attempting to approach the creature.

A Cornucopia of Gifts: A chimeric creature is a veritable cornucopia of shape and material bonuses, which each part bearing similarity to different creatures. The body of Saint Attracta's Creature may supply a magus with many and varied components, each of which may enhance many different magics. But the creature is bold and can breathe fire of extraordinary intensity, and while it may be warded against with the sign of the cross, the touch of the cross will

destroy the creature's body completely. The task, then, is to capture the creature whole and contain it.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS / SERVICE

Saint Attracta's Creature is a chimera and as such its many body parts provide many powerful shape and material bonuses to magi and other workers of magic.

Claws: +7 climbing

Eye: +3 versus malign Corpus

Mane: +5 strength, courage, pride

Shin bones: +3 to move at speed

Skull: +5 to flame/fire

Tongue: +3 to projecting voice

The vis contained within the beast can be collected from its tongue and, until the tongue rots, it may be used to produce the same intensity flame as the creature could in life, essentially conferring the creature's power to the character wielding the tongue.

But perhaps more important than what might be taken from the creature's corpse, the living creature can take those with true intentions to the site where the pitcher of divine water is hidden.

SAINT ATTRACTA'S CREATURE

down its back, but rather than hooves at the end of its equine legs, it has claws.

Faerie Might: 20 (Ignem)

Characteristics: Cun +1, Per +1, Pre +3, Com -2, Str +6, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik -1

Size: +3

Virtues and Flaws: Faerie Beast; Greater Power; Improved Powers x2, Personal Power; Monstrous Appearance, Sovereign Ward (the sign of the cross)

Personality Traits: Quick to Anger +3, Solitary +2

Reputations: Dangerous 2 (sailors), Monster 3 (locals)

Combat:

Claws: Init -1, Attack +12, Defense +8, Damage +10

Soak: +3

Fatigue Levels: n/a

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16), -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32), Dead (33+)

Pretenses: (Hibernia) Lore 2 (waters), Athletics 5 (climbing), Awareness 3 (intruders on its island), Brawl 5 (claws), Hunt 3 (tracking), Penetration 5 (fire), Stealth 3 (at night), Swim 3 (ambush)

Powers:

Unnatural Fire, 0 points, Init +0, Aquam R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Saint Attracta's Creature can project a blast of white-hot flame up to Voice range doing +40 damage.

CrIg 35 (Base 35, +2 Voice: Greater Power (45 levels with 5 points turned into 1 intricacy point and used to reduce the activation cost. All intricacy points earned from the Improved Powers Virtues have been spent on further reducing the activation cost and initiative both to zero.)

Supernatural Agility, 3 points, constant, Animal R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

As per the power described in *Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 62. It is this power that allows Saint Attracta's Creature to run across the ocean as easily as running across the land.

Costs 25 spell levels (Base 10, +2 Sun, +1 constant)

Equipment: None.

Encumbrance: 0

Vis: 4 pawns of Ignem in its tongue.

Appearance: Saint Attracta's Creature is a chimeric beast; it boasts a strange bulbous body with a head very much like a horse, except that it has a single fiery-red eye in the middle of its forehead. Like a horse, it has a long mane that stretches

THE REVOLVING BEAST

By GERALD WYLIE

Mael Duin and his crew found another island, with a fence of stone around it. When they drew near it a huge beast sprang up in the island, and raced round about the island. To Mael Duin it seemed swifter than the wind. And then it went to the height of the island and there it performed (the feat called) "straightening of body", to wit, its head below and its feet above; and thus it used to be: it turned in its skin that is, the flesh and the bones revolved, but the skin outside was unmoved. Or at another time the skin outside turned like a mill, the bones and the flesh remaining still.

Voyage of Máel Dúin

The Revolving Beast is a curious faerie found on a small island off Hibernia's west coast. It is a misshapen beast, a thing of baggy skin and a great mane of dark hair that hangs loosely over a skeleton made up of far too many bones. Its skin and flesh and bones writhe over and under each other such that the beast can completely change its physical form.

It may approximate the form of any beast that it has seen, although this is not a true transformation so while it cannot grow feathers, scales, or hooves, for instance, its skin, hair, nails, and teeth all shift in order to best represent the target shape. As it changes its shape, so its strengths and abilities also change; one form may become stronger, another faster; one might swim, and another might fly.

The beast lives alone on its island, which it has sought to protect with a great wall of white stones, but as a faerie must have vitality, the Revolving Beast is a teacher of sorts. Those who suffer a great defeat might be advised to seek out the Revolving Beast, or might chance upon its island seemingly by chance in a storm. There the beast provides an example of how changing one's tactics to meet the challenge might overcome great odds.

Others might seek out the Revolving Beast to learn the power of its transformation, either by initiation or by slaying the beast and taking its skin. Other still might come across the Revolving Beast by chance, venturing too close to its island and being drawn in by its power.

HABITAT

The Revolving Beast lives on a small but fertile island somewhere off the west coast of Ireland. It's hard to be more precise as the island lies within a level-five Faerie regio, which is accessed through a ship and her crew experiencing a minor calamity on board the vessel, such as a water barrel that has leaked leaving no fresh water to drink, the hull breached by a collision with rocks beneath the surface, a sail torn... All the result of the Revolving Beast using its magical influence. Any event that under normal circumstances might force a ship into harbor falls within the Revolving Beast's power. As the crew scours the horizon for the nearest land, the safe haven of the Revolving Beast's island is revealed.

Once the crew nears the island they see a large figure watching them from the top of the cliffs. From here, the Beast's pretense of wanting to be left alone is played out; the Revolving Beast, in the form of a man, tries to wave them away from his harbor, or it might suddenly take the form of a great and terrible bull and bellow out its wrath, or a large hawk and angrily beat its wings. Likely all three and more besides, sending its bones and muscles into eccentric spasms as it reforms itself.

The island itself provides plentiful food and fresh water as there is an orchard of apple and pear trees always heavy with fruit and the Revolving Beast keeps a flock of mundane sheep on the island that happily graze the island's grassy slopes. There is shelter too in the form of abandoned huts and cottages along the coast, and good strong flax grows along the spring and the island's stream. Everything the crew might need to overcome their difficulty can be found upon the island.

The regio also generates vis at several places; some of the apples in the orchard each contain a pawn of vis, a sheep's fleece is similarly endowed, and more vis can be found bubbling up from the spring at the center of the island. Anywhere the characters go and anything they might have need or cause to take has the potential for containing vis. The Revolving Beast is immediately aware of any theft of this vis.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Outwardly, the Revolving Beast seems to want nothing than to live in isolation on his island. His behavior towards those who come there likely ranges from unfriendly to hostile. The beast apparently longs to be left alone, shamed by its own appearance and nervous of those who might find it for fear of what they may do to learn its power. But this is only part of the story.

As a faerie, the Revolving Beast must have vitality and it gains that through drawing mortals to his island where they can be confronted by him. It needs them to learn of its powers of transformation and for them to be tempted; capture or slay the beast for profit or do the honorable thing and leave the beast in peace.

The Revolving Beast's power causes it pain, which in turn causes it to grow wild and angry. Every second transformation increases its Pained Personality Trait by +1 and its Angry Personality Trait also by +1 (assume a starting score of zero). These are reset to their starting levels at sunrise and sunset when the Revolving Beast resumes its human form.

The Beast has no name other than The Revolving Beast. The Beast bears a Greater Malediction such that should anybody upon his island attempt to give him a name, no matter how well-intentioned, the Revolving Beast is prone to fly into a Fury (as per the Flaw in *ArM5*, page 54).

The Revolving Beast always finds a reason to drive visitors off his island. He gains vitality not from the arrival of a ship's crew but from their stories of their visit and of being driven away from the beast who wants to be left

alone. The reason may be that they take something from him, make demands of him, or that they try to give him a name.

STORY SEEDS

The Bjornaer Quest: House Bjornaer has learned of The Revolving Beast and believes its strange power to be an ancient form of shapeshifting magic. The beast must be captured and brought to Crintera for study. It must be captured alive, but the first task is locating the beast.

Lost at Sea: A sailor drifts into shore kept afloat only by the broken plank he clutches. Once fed and watered, he tells how his ship hit a rock and was forced to put into the harbor of a small island. A strange giant warned them off, but he was persuaded to let them take wood to repair their hull. However, some of the crew found an



orchard and took the giant's apples. The giant grew angry and shifted even inside its own skin and became a thing like a bear and then a great eagle. It captured all the men and locked them away. The lone sailor was the only one to escape.

The Unknown Clesrada: The faerie teacher Úathach of the Mercer House of Leth Cuinn in Hibernia has known for years of a beast that can teach her a new Clesrada, or martial feat. But who can she send to bargain with the creature that would not take the knowledge for themselves? She seeks out a band of young magi fresh from apprenticeship keen to make their mark. Do this one thing for her and they earn her favor.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

The story of the beast may be of interest to magi of House Bjornaer as the description of the beast is clearly of something that can change shape. Finding, capturing, and taking the Revolving Beast back to Crintera may make for an initiation quest or serve as the basis of some original research into further expanding the powers available to magi of House Bjornaer.

The beast may also be able to teach an individual the Cles of The Straightening of the Body if its pain and wrath can be overcome for any length of time.

THE STRAIGHTENING OF THE BODY

There is one Cles that Úathach of the Mercer House of Leth Cuinn does not know, and that is the Straightening of the Body. This is currently known only by the Revolving Beast but if the

beast can be bargained with then it can and will initiate another.

**Ability Roll: Stamina +
Concentration**

Ease Factor: 9

This feat allows the character to shift their muscles and bones beneath their skin to take on a new form. This allows the player to reassign the character's physical characteristic scores and switch the scores of any two physical Abilities (with a score of at least one) as the new form becomes more suited to the task at hand.

This new form may be maintained for a number of rounds equal to the character's original Stamina + Concentration total and/or may be released instantly. If the form is maintained for more than a single round the character is considered to be under a magical effect and any unarmed attacks made by them would be resisted (as described in *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal*, page 101).

WEARING THE SKIN OF THE REVOLVING BEAST

If the Revolving Beast is slain, its skin, in which its Vis remains, can be taken and worn. This confers the Straightening of the Body Cles power on the wearer without the need to initiate it from the beast. However, in this case the effect has a zero Penetration and activation costs either a fatigue level or the consumption of a pawn of Rego vis.

SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

The Revolving Beast can be harvested by enterprising magi to provide the following shape and material bonuses:

- Skin:** +7 change shape
+5 disguise
- Bones:** +3 strength
- Voice:** +3 misfortune

THE REVOLVING BEAST

(HUMAN FORM)

Faerie Might: 30 (Corpus)

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

Size: +2

Virtues and Flaws: Huge, Focus Power, Shapeshifter*; Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, Human Form, Place of Power, The Straightening of the Body; Greater Malediction (someone trying to give him a name)**; Incognizant

* The Revolving Beast's powers of transformation are governed by both the Shapeshifter Virtue and the Ability/Pretense it provides and The Straightening of the Body Cles Virtue it also possesses.

** The Revolving Beast is prone to Fury (**ArM5**, page 54) if any try to give him a name. This applies to any on the island who have met with the Revolving Beast and they need not be in its presence.

Personality Traits: Solitary +3, Shamed by its Appearance +2, Pained +1

Combat:

Fist: Init -2, Atk +6, Def +3, Dam +4

Bludgeon: Init -2, Atk +8, Def +3, Dam +6

Club: Init -1, Atk +10, Def +6, Dam +7

Thrown Rocks: Init -2, Atk +6, Def +2, Dam +6

Soak: +3 (or +5 if wearing his leather and fur clothes)

Fatigue Levels: N/A

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-38), Dead (29+)

Pretenses: Awareness 3 (small moving things), Brawl 5 (bludgeon), Carouse 2 (drinking), Concentration 5 (The Straightening of the Body), Faerie Speech 4 (Irish), Folk Ken 3 (threats), Shapeshifter 10 (taking the shape of a bull), Single Weapon 6 (club), Thrown Weapon 3 (rocks)

Powers:

Fortune's Grasp, 5 points, Init -7, Various Forms: The Revolving Beast can make any simple misfortune befall any vessel sailing within sight of the island. Any effect that may be modelled through a Base Level 3 (for instance, setting fire to something flammable, spoiling an amount of food, or creating an illusion affecting three senses) can be replicated for the purposes only of drawing a vessel towards the island.

Vis: 6 pawns of Corpus vis in its skin

Appearance: The Revolving Beast's natural form is that of a saggy-skinned large human man. In this form he has dark

shaggy hair and a similarly unkempt beard, is often naked although can clothe himself in thick leathery hides, and armed with a hefty club.

DESIGN NOTES

The Revolving Beast's ability to change shape has been achieved through the Shapeshifter Virtue as that provides the most flexible way of allowing for multiple shapes that may be adopted at will. A Focus Power could have been used but this would have had a relatively high Might Point cost to be spent each time the beast changed shape – it would become quickly depleted.

The Straightening of the Body Cles allows the Revolving Beast to modify any of its forms as per the description of the Cles provided below.

BELAGOG

BY ROBIN BLAND

The giant Belagog has been bound by a bargain made long, long ago to stand guard over a castle hidden within a magical cave. Centuries have passed and the location of Belagog and his hidden castle has been lost to history. Alone and untroubled, the giant protects the castle against... precisely no-one.

It was Tristan, knight of Arthur's round table, who bested the vile and destructive Belagog by spearing him in the foot and pinning him to the spot. Belagog yielded and the price of his ransom Tristan extracted was all his lands and treasures. Upon his release, Belagog led Tristan to a small cave within a deep wood and therein revealed a castle filled with the riches of his people.

Tristan commanded Belagog to stand watch over the castle and admit no-one but Tristan himself. Over the years, Tristan stripped the castle of much of its wealth and his visits became increasingly infrequent until they eventually stopped altogether. Since then, a few people have wandered into Belagog's realm by accident and a few others have followed rumor and legend in search of the source of Tristan's wealth. None returned, all Belagog's victims.

HABITAT

You may site Belagog and his hidden castle in Brittany or anywhere that tales of King Arthur are told and venerated, anywhere that Tristan may have visited during the fateful journey to fetch Iseult to her intended husband, which includes Hibernia and Cornwall in the Stonehenge Tribunal.

THE WOODLAND

Belagog's cave is found within a deep woods. Specifically, a magical regio within a deep woodland so far untouched by human intervention. This woodland itself has a magical aura of strength 2. It is a distracting aura (as per the example in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 16), which creates an impediment to those specifically seeking the cave within the woods.

Vis may spontaneously manifest here and magical creatures of various strengths may seek the aura and be found here, which is incentive enough for magi to similarly follow.

THE CAVE

Those able to concentrate on the task of finding the cave (or indeed those who find it by chance) find the aura increase to 3 and it is here that Belagog is most likely to be encountered.

The cave itself is set within a deep gouge taken out of the earth, which channels those who approach it into a narrow valley.

The cave mouth forms the entrance to a regio of level 5 and the castle beyond may be found by entering the cave, but as with many regionnes, there is a ritual involved. Those who defeat Belagog see the way open up and can see the castle deep inside the cave as though the cave were simply a natural archway of stone. Those with Second Sight or similar may see the pathway open up in the normal way for such methods, but those without must first defeat the giant Belagog that defends the way.

THE CASTLE

Built by ancient giants, the castle itself is rough and primitive, more similar to a ring fort bolstered by stone walls than a true stone-built castle. It is, however, extensive and it seems to have grown in size as it has warped due to the effects of the aura in which it has been built.

From the deepest cellars to the highest watch-tower, the rooms are all large with high ceilings to accommodate the tribe of giants that once lived there. Furniture and other items are all large too, but can be found in a range of sizes that matched the various sizes of those same giants. It is clear that Belagog is not the largest of those who once could be found there.

There may be a host of minor magical creatures and phenomena within the castle and it forms a great opportunity to run a traditional "dungeoneering" scenario – a castle, hidden doors, traps, treasure, monsters, etc. Vis may be found in the bodies of those creatures attracted to the castle and some of the articles found in the castle may have become warped and awakened, gaining powers of their own (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 130).

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

There is a difference between what Belagog wants and what Belagog does. Belagog has been forced to stand

guard over the castle for centuries. He does not want to. He, not unreasonably, resents his duty and complains to those who give him opportunity. However, he cannot be persuaded to put aside his obligation. Only by besting the giant in combat or through some feat of cunning can Belagog's loyalty to his prior commands be overcome.

If he can be commanded by a new master, then he has little choice but to submit to their instruction. Belagog accepts any command that is not inherently inimical to his well-being. He cannot be commanded to harm himself, but he can put himself in harm's way (as being a guard or watchman necessarily does). He does not consider himself a beast of burden, but grudgingly accepts such commands with as much complaint as he can muster.

He accepts instruction from his direct master or those specifically known to represent him. Others might have to take their chances.

He is naturally lustful, dangerously so. Given the opportunity he acts upon his urges, which is a risk to the women that may cross his path. Those who choose to bind him to a bargain would do well to understand and manage these impulses.

STORY

Hidden Treasure: A merchant contacts companions to the covenant with something of interest to sell to their scholarly friends. It is a magic item that the merchant alleges a connection to Tristan. He claims that the item was taken from a hidden trove guarded by a giant. Moreover, a parchment accompanying the item is said to show the location of this trove. There is sufficient to suggest the presence of a regio.

Initiation: A magus or companion seeking initiation into one of the mysteries is tasked with finding and

capturing or killing Belagog. The initiate is given an old telling of the legend of Tristan and Iseult including the route that they took from Hibernia to Cornwall. Belagog is said to have been somewhere along that route.

Rescue Mission: While not abandoning his role of securing the entrance to the hidden castle, Belagog has strayed close to the new track recently cut through his woodland. It was the sound of women on the road that lured Belagog and the temptation to indulge his lustful nature was too great. With a woman taken and held prisoner by Belagog, the local populace seek out someone, a hero, who can find the giant in his hidden lair and free the unfortunate captive.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

Belagog makes a loyal guardsman, despite his worst intentions. Commanded to stand watch, he is tireless in his attentions and fights to the point of submission against those who would seek to cross any threshold he is set to guard. Magi and covenants may want such a guard for certain areas inside or outside their territories and if Belagog can be bested in combat and made to yield, the victor may set him to watch under their command.

Of course, it may be the regio that the magi seek rather than Belagog and the giant may simply be an impediment to claiming the site, perhaps as a home to a new covenant.

SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

Belagog also provides the following shape and material bonuses:

Blood: +5 Binding Oaths
+3 Trickery
Bones: +2 Fortitude
Eye: +3 Watchfulness

TRISTAN AND ISEULT

At the core of the story of Tristan and Iseult is the forbidden love between the title characters. There are many different versions of the story, but they all agree that Tristan was sent to accompany Iseult from Ireland to Cornwall and there deliver her to her intended husband, Mark. They shared adventures together and on the boat during the crossing to Cornwall, they imbibed a love potion that forever bound their hearts.

Despite their love, Iseult married King Mark and Tristan continued to serve him, thereby forming a love triangle. Some versions of the story have Tristan leaving his love and marrying another woman also called Iseult, though she was Iseult of the White Hands. While he provided for her materially, Tristan never consummated this marriage as he saw it as tantamount to a betrayal of the first Iseult.

It is possible that Tristan talked with Belagog, in the manner of a secret confessor, about both women. It is possible that Iseult of the White Hands was herself a faerie who sought to capture Tristan's heart, or at least complicate his story. Belagog may know the whereabouts of both Iseult of the White Hands and the treasure given to her.

BELAGOG

Magic Might: 25 (Corpus)

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

Size: +2

Season: Summer

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Human; Puissant Great Weapon, Tough; Overconfident (minor), Weakness (women)

Magic Qualities and Inferiorities: Gigantic; Improved Initiative (x2), Improved Soak (x4); Minor Flaw (Lesser Malediction: bound by bargains)

Personality Traits: Easily Bound by Bargain +3, Lustful +2, Wrathful +2

Combat:

Kick: Init -1, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +9

Cudgel: Init +7, Attack +12, Defense +9, Damage +13

Thrown Stone: Init 0, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +8

Soak: +12

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (16-21), Incapacitated (22+), Dead (29+)

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

Abilities: Brawl 4 (kick), Carouse 3 (drinking wine), Great Weapon 6+2 (cudgel), Magic Lore 1 (auras), Leadership 2 (intimidation), (Living Language) 4 (rustic dialect), Survival 3 (woodland), Thrown Weapon 3 (stone)

Equipment: Old leather armor, cudgel

Encumbrance: 0

Vis: 5 Corpus in blood

Appearance: Belagog is nearly ten feet tall with thick limbs and a solid torso. He often dresses himself in scraps of leather armor found in the castle he guards and arms himself with a cudgel or other large club. He is usually filthy and his hair and beard are unkempt and matted.



HISTORY. MAGIC. ART.

THE ILLUSTRATIVE WORK OF JEFF A. MENGES



ILLUSTRATION, PRINTS AND ORIGINAL WORKS

Find and like Jeff A. Menges/Skaircrow Graphics on facebook!

Email- skaircrow@optonline.net

SUB ROSA

DISCOVERING NEW SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

By GERALD WYLIE

There are means by which a magus might discover new shape and material bonuses granted by common materials, notably through the Vulgar Alchemy Virtue and its supporting rules described in *The Mysteries*, page 32. These rules require that the magus possess the Virtue in question and that they engage in experimentation within the laboratory. This is fine for characters who have that Virtue and we can well imagine such a character being particularly useful within a saga.

However, unique creatures, monsters, substances, shapes, and materials may not lend themselves easily to experimentation. So we can lower the barrier a little and exchange complexity for something a little more thematic.

THE PROCESS

A character spending a season studying any target entity in possession of a Might Score arising from any realm (and we define a season of study here as either learning something about the entity from reading, say, Area Lore, Realm Lore, or by encountering the entity during a story and then applying the resulting story experience towards an appropriate Ability score) may attempt to discern what use may be made of that entity and/or its component parts as part of that season.

This is done using the following check:

**Stress Die + Perception + [Area/
Realm] Lore + Aura Bonus**

Versus

**Ease Factor of (3 x proposed
Material or Shape Bonus)**

Characters who use powers arising from a non-Magic realm may use the appropriate Realm Lore Ability in this check. Botch dice are equal to the proposed Shape or Material bonus.

Any number of proposed Shape and Material bonuses might be checked for but the proposed bonuses must be checked from the lowest bonus value to the highest in order and checks can continue until the first failure is encountered.

Once a Shape and Material bonus is discovered, the magus may apply it in any future laboratory work. Knowledge of the bonus may be shared with others. There is little cost or process involved in this. It is assumed that the notes describing how to apply the bonus in laboratory work are created during the season spent examining the entity and that these may be shared simply through written instructions or tuition. Either of these methods costs a single day of distraction to any laboratory activities within the season the knowledge is shared.

EXAMPLE

The witch Mór Greannach travels west to investigate stories of the Hawk of Achill suspecting that such a famed unique beast might be of value to her own magic and the magic of those with whom she has formed a pact. The journey and the encounters along the way are treated as a story and Mór Greannach applies the resulting experience to Magic Lore.

The Hawk of Achill has a number of inherent shape and material bonuses,

each providing a bonus of 7. This makes the ease factor for any check 21.

Having observed the Hawk, Mór Greannach rolls an 8 on the stress die, added to 2 for Perception, plus 7 for her Magic Lore, and 4 for the magic aura, for a total of 21. This is just enough to learn that the Hawk of Achill's wing provides a +7 to effects dealing with leadership.

As this first check was successful, she makes another check. This time the roll is 4, which means her total is too low to learn anything further in that season. She must continue to study the Hawk of Achill for another season in order to undertake further attempts.

Having learned that the wings of the Hawk of Achill affect leadership, Mór Greannach could spend a day teaching this knowledge to someone else.

THE BEAST MASTERS OF HIBERNIA

By JASON TONDRRO

Sanctuary of Ice: The Greater Alps Tribunal includes a character, Kentigern ex Miscellanea, described as “A member of a beast-mage tradition from Hibernia.” *Houses of Hermes: Societates* describes a Beast-Master tradition in Ex Miscellanea, but notes that Feral Upbringing is required; this minor flaw prohibits characters from starting play with a score in a language. This does not describe Kentigern Ex Miscellanea (a former monk) or any other Hermetic magus. No mention is made of Hibernia in the description of Ex Miscellanea's Beast-Masters. *The Contested Isle: The Hibernian Tribunal* includes a covenant of magi who specifically raise magical animals for trade and war, but they belong to House Flambeau. Among the non-Hermetic hedge magicians of Connacht, there is no mention of either the Beast-Masters of *Houses of Hermes: Societates* or Kentigern's “beast-mages.” Beast masters do, however, appear fighting alongside Pralix in the history of the Spider War, as recounted in *Thrice-Told Tales*.

One of the player characters in my current saga, HBO Ars Magica, was apprenticed to Kentigern, and the saga's new Spring covenant is based in Hibernia. This article is an attempt to synthesize these hints, revising canon when necessary into a single tradition of Hibernian hedge magicians who specialize in the use of animals. The goal is not to create a hedge magic tradition for player characters who have many more potent options, but rather to create an interesting faction -- a source for allies, enemies, rivals, and

magical secrets. In other words, the low power level and other inconveniences of beast-mastery are intended.

THE NATURE OF BEAST-MASTERY

Beast-mastery is a hedge tradition which was once common throughout Hibernia but has, since the Treaty of Cnoc Maol Reudh in 898, been largely restricted

instead, they communicate with mundane and supernatural beasts using Supernatural Abilities and other virtues. Alone, a beast-master is no more dangerous than any other Irishman. But with his hounds, hawks, and horse, he can be the leader of a dangerous and well-coordinated group able to gather information across a large area, move rapidly across difficult natural terrain, and overwhelm enemies through sheer numbers.



to Connacht, Ireland's westernmost province. Beast-masters do not cast spells, make potions or charms, or even work much magic in the traditional sense;

Animal Ken, Summon Animals, and Animal Healer are the three Favored Abilities of the beast-master. This is a very narrow palette, but they supplement these three Abilities with additional virtues. Command Animals, first described in *Realms of Power: the Infernal*, is available to beast-masters in a version aligned to the Magic realm (usually but not always) free of Infernal influence. While Animal Ken is by far the most common Supernatural Ability among the beast-masters, it is not universal. A beast-master who restricts himself to a particular area can rely on Voice of the (Land) to communicate with all beasts of his forest, hill, valley, or lake. Some beast-masters are served by an animal spirit which watches over them; this is represented with the Fetch virtue, also seen among the Gruagachan (and detailed in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*). A few beast-masters have a natural talent for training and domesticating magical animals, represented with the Master of (Form) Creatures virtue (see *Realms of*

Power: Magic or Grags). Beast-masters also make good use of Affinity with (Ability), Puissant (Ability), Cautious with (Ability) and Learn (Ability) from Mistakes, to maximize the effect of their core powers. Many also learn Penetration. Beast-masters with Animal Ken can substitute Animal Handling for all interaction Abilities with animals, including Leadership; this makes it useful for organizing trained groups. Beast-master Lore is required for initiations into the various Supernatural virtues, and to Open The Gift.

UnGifted beast-masters are uncommon in Connacht, but hardly rare. Since their Supernatural Abilities require a particular species of animal as a speciality, they tend to focus on one kind of animal in preference to all others. This has led beast-masters to find occupations which utilize their preferred animal, and almost all beast-masters specialize in either hounds, horses, hawks, or cattle. (It is, however, not uncommon for a beast-master to have a bear or stag available when necessary, and a beast-master with a natural gift for snakes would have an excellent reason to leave Hibernia, if he even realized he had such powers at all!) A beast-master whose powers are strongest with hounds is likely to be a Master of Kennels and a Natural Leader, while one whose talents are best with horses will have a Magical Mount and be a Mythic Farrier, and so on. Gifted beast-masters usually require Inoffensive to Animals but may be able to get by with Ways of the (Land) if they stay in one place. They are more likely to spread their ability specializations out among various kinds of animals.

HISTORY

The Order of Hermes first records mention of the beast-masters of Hibernia in the 9th century, when the beast-mage Aine Ahland fought alongside Pralix in the Battle on the Irthing. After Ex Miscellanea joined the Order, Aine went on to found a Hermetic lineage of beast-masters which continues to this day. Aine was by no means the first beast-master however; her tradition stretched back generations and

was practiced across Ireland. Many of her Irish brethren, however, avoided the war, so the beast-masters in Pralix's army were mostly Scottish, Welsh, and English. Some hid in the wilderness, while others, mostly male, found protection as respected servants of Irish chieftains, maintaining their horses, hounds, hawks, or (least glamorous) cattle. Diedne's aggressive pogroms did not spare the beast-masters, though they were low in priority because of their modest powers. A few were saved by Quendalon, but they resisted integration with House Merinita and instead retreated to Connacht.

The beast-masters had no leadership or organization beyond a token obedience to the heirs of Aine Ahland, an obedience made even more tenuous by the generally patriarchal beast-masters. Their role in the War of the Spider ensured they had a voice in the formation of the Treaty of Cnoc Maol Reidh, and they abided by its terms, making their homes in Connacht and maintaining traditional Hibernian ways, albeit with the assistance of supernatural animals.

In 1141, Gormlaith Ghleanna, whose Hermetic lineage went back to Aine Ahland, discovered a novice with the Gift in an Irish monastery. After luring him from the church by playing on his love of the hunt, Gormlaith took Kentigern as her apprentice. Gormlaith's master had told her stories of the Schism War, and as she trained Kentigern, Gormlaith encouraged him to work with hedge magicians as well as the Order, especially in the vigorous pursuit of their mutual enemies. Kentigern sought out the beast-masters of Connacht and reinstated over them the authority of Aine Ahland's line, a challenge he backed up by dueling and (thanks to Rego Animal spells) easily mastering all rivals. For the first time, the beast-masters of Hibernia had a true chieftain, and Kentigern used his new followers to track and harass magi who fled into Connacht to escape Hermetic justice.

At the Tribunal meeting of 1165, the Coill Tri paid its expected tribute of seven Gifted youngsters to the Order, but one of these children was found to not actually have the Gift after all. (Detecting the Gift

is much more difficult for hedge magicians than it is for Hermetic magi.) Suddenly there was intense pressure for a seventh Gifted child to be handed over, and it was in this way that Dalton mac Donngal, only son of a young and unGifted beast-mage, became apprenticed to an Ui Broin Flambeau at the covenant of Lambaird. Dalton's Master of Animal Creatures virtue survived the opening of his Gift and over the last fifty years Lambaird has developed a profitable industry in the breeding and trading of magical beasts. Dalton, a traditionalist in the Ordo Hibernia, maintains good relations with his father and other beast-masters though he rarely sees them outside of Tribunal meetings. Donngal is aged but remains hale thanks to a longevity potion crafted by his son; he is Master of Kennels for Ualgarg Ui Ruairc, King of Breifne.

Two Tribunals ago, in 1200, Kentigern an t-Eigse Measeal was named a Quaesitor by House Guernicus and dispatched to the Greater Alps Tribunal. This left vacant his position as chief of all beast-masters in Hibernia. No Hermetic magus was both qualified and interested in the role, so naturally Connacht beast-masters began to fight over it. The current claimant, the Gifted hedge magician Fogartach Greannach, defeated Donngal only a few years ago and makes his home in a cave behind the Glencar waterfall in East Breifne.

NEW VIRTUES

HIBERNIAN BEAST-MAGE

Free Social Status Virtue

You have been trained as a beast-master and are a member of the Coill Tri. You are promised freedom from molestation by the Order of Hermes and can live in the province of Connacht in relative security. You have the right to attend Tribunal and lodge complaints there. If you do not live in Connacht, you must wear an amulet bearing three hazel leaves signifying that you are a partner to the Treaty of Cnoc Maol Reidh.

If Gifted, you have Animal Ken, Animal Healer, and Summon Animals as Favored Abilities; you begin with a 0 in each and may raise them with XP. If you are not Gifted, you may acquire those abilities through additional Virtues. You can bind familiars. Each of your Supernatural Abilities also grants you a magical defense. When you accumulate Warping, you suffer Feral Madness. You can take Martial Abilities at character creation, as well as Dominion Lore, Faerie Lore, Infernal Lore, Magic Lore, and Penetration.

You are not supported by a covenant, and must work two seasons of every year.

This virtue is compatible with Wealthy and Poor and also with the Social Status virtues Master of Kennels, Falconer, and Craftsman.

COMMON VIRTUES & FLAWS

The following existing Virtues and Flaws are especially suitable for beast-master characters:

Major Hermetic Virtues: Gentle Gift

Major Supernatural Virtues: Command Animals (*Realms of Power: Infernal*, page 83), Summon Animals (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 105 or *Rival Magic*, pages 99-100)

Major General Virtues: Ways of the (Land)

Minor Hermetic Virtues: Inoffensive to Animals

Minor Supernatural Virtues: Animal Healer (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 35), Animal Ken, Fetch (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 57), Mythic Farrier (*Grogs*, page 76), Voice of the (Land) (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 47)

Minor General Virtues: Affinity with (Ability), Alluring to Animals (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 86), Cautious with (Ability), Independent Study (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 86), Learn (Ability) from Mistakes, Magical Mount

FERAL UPBRINGING

Houses of Hermes: Societates describes a Beast-master tradition on page 108, including the Minor Flaw Feral Upbringing as required for all Beast-masters. This is difficult to reconcile since, according to the text of this Flaw, "You may only choose beginning Abilities that you could have learned in the wilds. In particular, you may not start with a score in a Language." In other words, Feral Upbringing is intended for characters who have just emerged from the wild at the start of

play. Beast-masters of Ex Miscellanea, in contrast, spend years living in the wild before becoming apprentices and, presumably, entering play as Gauntleted magi who know Latin and many other skills not available in the wild.

It is recommended that a different Minor Flaw be substituted for the Feral Upbringing of Hermetic Beast-masters. Social Handicap, Feral Scent, Poor Living Conditions, or Primitive Equipment (if the magus is also a warrior or crafter) can all represent the limitations of a character who spent formative years living as an animal before his Hermetic apprenticeship.

(*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 46), Master of (Form) Creatures (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 46 or *Grogs*, page 75), Natural Leader (*Grogs*, page 76), Puissant (Ability), Warrior

Minor Social Status Virtues: Falconer (*Lords of Men*, page 61), Master of Kennels (*Grogs*, page 76 or LoM 61)

Major Hermetic Flaws: Blatant Gift

Major Story Flaws: Difficult Underlings, Known Hedge Wizard

Minor Supernatural Flaws: Necessary (Realm) Aura for (Ability) (*Grogs*, page 82)

Minor General Flaws: Feral Scent (*Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 38), Feral Upbringing, Poor Living Conditions (*Grogs*, page 83), Primitive Equipment (*Grogs*, page 83), Social Handicap

Minor Story Flaws: Animal Companion, Demonic Familiar (*Realms of Power: Infernal*, page 88), Magical Animal Companion

FAMILIARS

A beast-master can bind an animal to himself as a familiar. This takes one season and has two advantages over Hermetic familiars. First, it does not require a

laboratory. Second, the beast-master can have multiple familiars bound at a time.

The beast-master's ability to bind a familiar is measured by Pre + Animal Ken + Animal Handling + Aura. This must exceed the familiar's Binding Total:

Beast-mage Familiar Binding Total:

5 + Familiar's Size + (Familiar's Magic Might/5)

When binding the second or subsequent familiar, always begin with the highest Binding Total of any familiar (including the prospective one), then raise this Binding Total by +3 for every familiar the beast-master has already bound. Binding a familiar requires the expenditure of pawns of vis (usually Animal, but other forms as appropriate) equal to the Binding Total.

BENEFITS OF A FAMILIAR

These rules are largely copied from *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 42.

If it did not previously have human Intelligence, the familiar gains it with a score of -3. It also gains a score equal to the beast-master in any languages; any familiar can understand the languages understood by its master, and if it has the relevant vocal equipment (few do) it can

speak them. Familiars can learn Abilities in the same way as humans. They cannot, however, learn magic or Supernatural Abilities.

The familiar binding gives both the beast-master and the familiar the Minor Virtue True Friend, relating to the other half of the partnership. Thus, they also each gain Personality Traits of Loyal (partner) +3.

The familiar won't die of old age as long as the beast-master is alive, and it only suffers ill effects from aging when the beast-master does.

The beast-master and his familiar are magically linked. Each serves an Arcane Connection to the other, but if a beast-master has multiple familiars they are not Arcane Connections to other familiars. Neither the beast-master nor the familiar needs to overcome the other's Magic Resistance in order to affect him with a magical effect.

The beast-master can use his Animal Ken Ability to enter a trance-like state which allows him to see (and hear, etc.) through the senses of his familiar. The Ease Factor for this effect is 6. While he is in the trance state, the beast-master is not

really conscious of his own surroundings. But if something distracting happens to him (he is attacked, there is a loud noise, etc.) then he must make an immediate Sta + Concentration roll against an Ease Factor of 9, or he breaks out of the trance.

Beast-masters do not know how to form the bonds that a hermetic magus does to his familiar, nor can they invest additional powers in the familiar bond.

MAGIC DEFENSES

Each of the three beast-master Supernatural Abilities grants him a Magical Defense against effects cast on him. Magical Defenses are detailed in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 10. Note that these Supernatural Abilities do not normally grant a Magic Defense — this is a special consequence of beast-master training.

POWER: ANIMAL KEN

Defense: Magical Fortitude Defense against attacks made by casters in an Animal form (includes shapeshifted magi, magical animals, faerie animals, etc.).

ANIMAL HEALER

As described in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, Animal Healer can cure Wounds or Fatigue. Disease, however, is neither of these things and requires new Ease Factors.

Ease	Disease	(Vis)
6	Minor	(3 pawns)
9	Serious	(4 pawns)
12	Major	(5 pawns)
15	Critical	(6 pawns)

POWER: ANIMAL HEALER

Defense: Strength of Form Defense against Animal or Corpus effects intended to transform the beast-mage into an Animal form.

POWER: SUMMON ANIMALS

Defense: Confounding Magics. Defense against Animal or Mentem effects requiring Concentration. By remaining in a Group or other Target with his animals, the beast-master can use this Defense to indirectly make it more difficult for spells to be maintained on those animals.

INITIATIONS

Beast-masters initiate others into their Supernatural virtues using these initiation scripts and the Beast-master Lore Ability. The beast-master who is conducting the initiation is acting as Mystagogue, even though these are not mysteries per se. Mystagogues generate an Initiation Total equal to **Pre + Beast-master Lore + Script Bonus**. If the Target Level for an initiation is too high, the initiate might, at the discretion of the Storyguide, endure an Ordeal, reducing the Target Number and receiving a Minor or Major Flaw. For this



and other specifics of initiation, see *Hedge Magic Revised Edition* or *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*.

Opening The Gift

The initiate must sever all remaining ties with friends and family, then find another Gifted beast-master (who may be the Mystagogue) and challenge him in personal combat over three days of the full moon. The first duel ends at the first infliction of a Wound. The second duel ends when one of the beast-masters surrenders. The third duel ends only when one of the beast-masters can no longer fight. Each night, an audience of beasts gather and judge the initiate worthy or unworthy. Victory in the duel is less important than the initiate's conduct. If judged worthy, the initiate gains Animal Ken on the first night, Summon Animals on the second night, and Animal Healer on the third. The Mystagogue completes the initiate's instruction over the rest of the season.

Target Level: 21 if the Mystagogue is Gifted, otherwise 30

Initiation Script: +16 (personal sacrifice +3, travel at a special time +3, perform a quest +3, Mystagogue sacrifices time +3, initiate sacrifices time +1, sympathetic bonus +3)

Potential Ordeal: The initiate's rejection of human society is reflected in the Blatant Gift (+9).

INITIATION OF ANIMAL KEN

The Mystagogue spends a season preparing the initiate for his initiation. The initiate must locate a meeting of Beasts of Virtue, such as the Parliament of Fowls or meetings of the Hibernian Tribunal, where magical beasts are welcome and which they traditionally attend. He must secure entrance, introduce himself, and prove his knowledge of animal kind in debate. If the gathering votes to accept him, he gains the power to speak to animals.

Target Level: 15 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 18

Initiation Script: +13 (initiate sacrifices time +1, travel at a special time

+3, perform a quest +3, Mystagogue sacrifices time +3, sympathetic bonus +3)

Potential Ordeal: The parliament assigns an Animal Companion to the beast -mage as an observer and representative (+3).

INITIATION OF SUMMON ANIMALS

The Mystagogue spends a season preparing the initiate for the trial to come. The initiate must gain audience with the magical beast who serves as ambassador to meetings of the Hibernian Tribunal; since 1207, that individual is the Eagle King. This audience must take place at Tribunal. The initiate must serve this magical beast for a year and a day, doing whatever that beast demands. If he successfully completes his service, the ambassador, by virtue of his post, confers authority over animals upon the initiate.

Target Level: 21 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 30

Initiation Script: +15 (Mystagogue sacrifices time +3, travel at a specific time +3, perform a quest +3, extended service +3, sympathetic bonus +3)

Potential Ordeal: The initiate's political activities at Tribunal and his new powers draw the attention of aggressive English magi, and he becomes a Known Hedge Wizard (+9).

INITIATION OF ANIMAL HEALER

The initiate must, with the assistance of the Mystagogue, craft an antidote for the venom of the cockatrice, an Infernal creature born from an egg laid by a rooster and hatched by a toad. The cockatrice is so lethal that even striking it with a weapon causes venom to slay the weapon's wielder, and the cockatrice can slay with a glance of its venomous stare. To test the antidote, the initiate must stab the cockatrice with a spear and then consume his own antidote before the venom slays him. If he lives, he can cure the ailments of all animals.

Target Level: 15 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 18

Initiation Script: +10 (Mystagogue sacrifices time +3, perform a quest +3, initiate sacrifices time +1, sympathetic bonus +3)

Potential Ordeal: The venom is not cured in time, leaving the initiate with a Fragile Constitution (+3).

INITIATION OF FETCH

The Mystagogue spends a season preparing the initiate for the trial to come. The initiate breaks his best weapon, then travels unarmed into the hunting ground of a beast which is a known killer of men. He must trust in the spirit of an animal to come to his rescue and instruct him how to escape or defeat the beast into whose lair he has trod. If he does as the spirit commands and survives (killing the beast is not required), the spirit acknowledges his worth and agrees to serve him.

Target Level: 15 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 18

Initiation Script: +11 (Mystagogue sacrifices time +3, initiate sacrifices time +1, sacrifices material wealth +1, perform a quest +3, sympathetic bonus +3)

Potential Ordeal: The constant presence of the fetch lends the initiate a Feral Scent (+3).

INITIATION OF COMMAND ANIMALS

The Mystagogue spends a season preparing the initiate for the trial to come. The initiate must hunt a supernatural beast appropriate to the kind of animals he seeks to command. The initiate must slay this beast alone, unobserved by other humans and without help, though other animals may be present. He then must eat whatever part of the beast contains its vis. If the beast was Divine or Infernal, the initiate's new virtue is Tainted.

Target Level: 21 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 30

Initiation Script: +10 (Mystagogue sacrifices time +3, initiate sacrifices time

+1, perform a quest +3, sympathetic bonus +3, Major Ordeal +9)

Potential Ordeal: The initiate's animals resent being commanded and become Difficult Underlings (+9).

INITIATION OF VOICE OF THE (LAND)

The initiate spends a season living as an animal in the chosen region. During this time, he can speak no words a human would understand. Every fortnight, six times in total, an animal comes to him and demands tribute; the initiate must choose one word to sacrifice, and he can never again speak that word. The word must be significant in proportion to the animal who is demanding it, so small and humble creatures will be satisfied with small and humble words, but proud and powerful creatures will expect words of social importance.

Target Level: 15 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 18

Initiation Script: +10 (Initiate sacrifices time +1, initiate performs a quest +3, initiate makes significant sacrifice +3, sympathetic bonus +3)

Potential Ordeal: The initiate's sacrifice is considered inferior, and he is cursed with an Afflicted Tongue (+3)

INITIATION OF WAYS OF THE (LAND)

This initiation is rare, almost always performed by a beast-master who does not have Animal Ken but who gains an apprentice. Sometimes an individual stumbles across an ancient initiation script and tries to self-initiate this virtue.

The initiate must live like a wild animal in the land which he seeks knowledge of, remaining there for a year and a day. If he survives, the Mystagogue completes his training over the following season.

Target Level: 21 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 30

Initiation Script: +12 (initiate sacrifices extended time +3, perform a

quest +3, sympathetic bonus +3, Mystagogue sacrifices time +3)

Potential Ordeal: The initiate's bond with nature grants him a permanent Magical Air (+9).

INITIATION OF MYTHIC FARRIER

The initiate must gather lodestones that have fallen from the sky and bring them to a Mythic Farrier (who may be the Mystagogue). After the smith is handsomely paid, the lodestones are made into horseshoes which the initiate takes with him as he finds a horse which belongs to one of the four supernatural Realms. He must tame this horse and, before night falls on the same day, shoe it.

Target Level: 15 if known to the Mystagogue, otherwise 18

Initiation Script: +10 (perform a quest +3, sacrifice of money +1, perform another quest +3, sympathetic bonus +3)

Potential Ordeal: The newly-shoed horse is cast out of its own society, but also will allow no one save the initiate to ride him, becoming a Magical Animal Companion (+3).

EFFECT OF WARPING

A beast-master gains Warping points via the usual methods, including exposure to strong (non-Magical) auras and powerful or continuous mystical effects. He also gains Warping when he botches using his Supernatural Abilities. Whenever he gains enough Warping to increase his Warping Score by 1, he has a bout of insanity during which he forgets his human nature and acts as a beast. These episodes are known as Feral Madness. This is the beast-master's equivalent of Wizard's Twilight and replaces the effects of Warping on a beast-master character. All beast-masters suffer from Feral Madness, both those with and without the Gift. Note that neither Gifted nor unGifted beast-masters gain Warping points due to exposure to strong Magic auras (unGifted beast-masters have

Supernatural Abilities aligned to the Magic realm).

FERAL MADNESS

The base duration for a period of Feral Madness is based on the beast-master's Warping Score. Use the table on the top of **ArM5**, page 88, reading Feral Madness instead of Twilight. Thus, the first time a beast-master experiences Feral Madness, the duration begins at Diameter (2 minutes).

When Feral Madness strikes, the beast-master struggles to retain some self control even as the bestial nature overwhelms him.

Feral Madness Self Control:

Pre + Beast-master Lore + stress die vs. Warping Score + stress die

If the Self Control roll botches, the duration of the Feral Madness increases one step on the table for every 0 on the botch dice and his experience is a bad one. If the Self Control roll is a failure, the beast-master spends the base duration in the Feral Madness and his experience is a bad one. If the Self-Control roll succeeds, the beast-master's experience is a good one. Decrease the duration of the Feral Madness one step for every 3 points by which the Self-Control roll exceeded the Target Number. If this reduces the Feral Madness to less than Diameter duration, it lasts one round.

During Feral Madness, the beast-master's Intelligence is replaced by a Cunning attribute of the same value. (This means Mentem magic fails to affect him, an apparent violation of the Law of Essential Nature which would cause great debate among Hermetic magi if any cared enough to know about it.) His behavior is heavily influenced by his success or failure on the Self-Control roll. If his experience is a good one, the beast-master keeps all his Personality Traits and continues to recognize his friends and loved ones. He cannot think as a man does, but on an instinctual level he still recognizes elements of his human life. However, if his experience is a bad one, the beast-master loses all connection with his human life.

He will not recognize friends or familiar places. All his Personality Traits are replaced by those of an animal chosen by the Storyguide. He may attack those near to him. Getting out of his clothes and escaping into the wild will be a priority. Beast-masters enduring a good Feral Madness can often be kept calm and under the care of loved ones until the Madness expires. This is seldom possible for those who have lost all self control.

GOOD EXPERIENCES

Beast-masters who have a good Feral Madness receive one of the following benefits, chosen by the Storyguide.

Increased Knowledge: The beast-master gains a number of experience points in a pre-existing Supernatural Ability or in Beast-master Lore equal to 5 x his new Warping Score.

New Mystical Virtue: The beast-master gains a Minor Virtue.

New Ability: The beast-master gains a new Supernatural Ability with a score of 1.

BAD EXPERIENCES

Beast-masters who have a bad Feral Madness suffer one of the following, chosen by the Storyguide.

Lost Knowledge: He loses 2 experience points in a Supernatural Ability or in Beast-master Lore for every Warping Point gained. This cannot reduce a score below 0.

New Mystical Flaw: The beast-master gains a Minor Flaw.

HERMETIC INTEGRATION

The most obvious avenue of research into beast-mastery is the ability to bind multiple familiars at once. For magi with Leadership (familiars have Int and therefore Animal Handling cannot be used to lead them), this would allow multiple familiars to assist in the lab and create the potential for significantly higher Lab

Totals. This would be a Major Breakthrough; House Merinita, which takes credit for the original introduction of familiars and which still has some secrets not available to the Order at large, would be sure to take a strong interest in this research. House Bjornaer, which eschews familiars as a consequence of their Heartbeast mystery, might see this research as undermining their House's power relative to its rivals and attempt to discourage such work.

More significant in the long-term, though perhaps not as obvious, would be integration of the beast-master's Summon Animals ability, which affects all nearby targets of a named type; the beast-master does not need to see these animals nor have an arcane connection to them. Breaking each of these limits would be a

separate Breakthrough, resulting in the invention of a new range or a new target.

Range Unseen: Anything the magus cannot perceive but which is within a league (approximately seven miles). Equivalent to Arcane Connection. This would be a Hermetic Breakthrough, breaking the Limit of Arcane Connection.

Target Creatures: The spell effects up to ten creatures of the same type, such as all human beings, all dogs, or all demons. Creatures within range are targeted first based on their proximity to the caster, regardless of direction. Equivalent to Room. This would be a Minor Breakthrough.



FOGARTACH GREANNACH, CHIEF OF THE HIBERNIAN BEAST- MAGES

Age: 34

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

Warping: 2 (14)

Confidence: 1 (3)

Virtues & Flaws: Hibernian Beast-Mage; The Gift; Affinity with Animal Handling, Alluring to Animals, Improved Characteristics x2, Independent Study, Inoffensive to Animals, Magical Mount, Puissant Animal Handling, Puissant Summon Animals, Warrior; Ability Block: Human Social Skills, Blatant Gift, Feral Scent, Magical Animal Companion, Poor Living Conditions, Reclusive, Social Handicap, Wrathful

Personality Traits: Reclusive +4, Protective of Animals +3, Wrathful +2, Charitable +1

Reputations: The Beast-Man of Briefne 3 (Hibernians), Chief of the Beast-Mages 3 (Coill Tri and Beasts of Virtue)

Abilities: Animal Handling 7+2 (wolves) (95), Animal Healer 4 (wounds), Animal Ken 5 (falcons), Area Lore: Hibernia 2 (Connacht), Athletics 3 (climbing), Awareness 4 (ambush), Beast-Mage Lore 4 (6) (rivals), Brawl 3 (dodge), Concentration 2 (in bad weather), Gaelic 5 (children), Great Weapon 4 (boar spear), Hunt 3 (with wolves), Magic Lore 2 (beasts), Ride 3 (chases), Stealth 3 (avoiding animals), Summon Animals 3+2 (30), Survival 3 (finding food), Swim 2 (near his home)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +1, Atk N/A, Def +5, Dam NA

Boar Spear: Init +4, Atk +9, Def +7, Dam +8

Knife: Init +1, Atk +5, Def +4, Dam +3

Soak: +3 (Sta +1 and armor +2)

Equipment: Partial heavy leather armor, boar spear, knife

Encumbrance: 2

Appearance: Fogartach is tall and lean, wearing pelts over leather armor. He is in excellent physical shape and is darkly handsome with smoldering black eyes, but his face is almost impossible to find behind his thick, black, curly hair. He carries a long spear. Even if bathed, he smells like an animal.

Fogartach “the Hairy” is, quite literally, a legend. Known as “the beast-man of Briefne,” he was beaten and otherwise

abused by his hateful father before he fled into the forest and found solace in the company of wild beasts. A wise old owl told him of another man who knew the ways of animals; eventually Fogartach found this Gifted Beast-Mage and dueled him over the three days of the full moon. His apprenticeship was quarrelsome and did not last long; Fogartach preferred to find his own way. Now a grown man at the peak of his powers, Fogartach claimed the status of chief of the Beast-Mages because he knew he was the strongest; the position has no particular value to him, but he felt it was his duty to take it. He avoids all human habitation except when absolutely necessary, grunts rather than speaks, reeks of animal scent, and in his garb of heavy animal hide and fur appears more animal than man.

Fogartach’s home behind the Glencar Waterfall is a Magic Aura 4, and the waters there are a source of spell-like vis which duplicates Incantation of the Body Made Whole. The waters do not work on animals, however; for that Fogartach relies on his Animal Healer Ability. The Glencar cave would make an excellent site for a covenant; it has so far been protected by the Treaty of Cnoc Maol Reidh, but Guillaume Flambeau of Normandy, a magus at the covenant of Praesis, has probed the region with Briefne mercenaries. Fogartach slaughtered them to a man.

The Beast of Briefne rides a Fiorlair, a particular breed of magical horses unique to Hibernia, named River; for her game statistics see *The Contested Isle*, page 121. His Magical Animal Companion is a Wolf of Virtue named Moon; use the Magical Wolf statistics on **ArM5**, page 193. His first familiar was a mundane falcon named Sky who remains with him; see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 142 for statistics on falcons. Since then he has also bound Moon and five mundane wolves of his pack as familiars; statistics for ordinary wolves can be found on *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 144. When Fogartach enters battle, he does so in a Trained Group with Moon as vanguard, assisted by up to eight mundane wolves; this gives Fogartach a potential +30 bonus to Attack or Defense each round, and a successful attack inflicts ten Wounds of the appropriate severity.

Fogartach received 4 extra experience points every year to account for his Independent Study Virtue.

THE WICKER MAN

By ROBIN BLAND

Borne of despicable pagan practice adopted by the druids of House Diedne, the Wicker Man is now a faerie creature taking on the role of that ancient horror. Those foolish enough to disturb the burned remains of a Wicker Man awaken a giant burning monstrosity. But there is still power in the old Wicker Man ritual and some might be attracted on the promise of gifts from the old gods.

The wicker man ritual historically involved human sacrifice. Most often, criminals or prisoners of some kind would be bound up inside a large wicker construction in the shape of a man. It would then be set alight, with fatal consequences to those inside and granting magical power to the ritualists.

The creature described here is a faerie that takes on the form, if not always the function, of the Wicker Man. It lays dormant beneath the ground, patiently waiting for someone to find it. The tangled mess of charred wood and bodies is just a lure, however. When the body is disturbed, the Wicker Man rises from the ground, burning with intense fire and screaming with the tortured voices of those who once died within the structure.

There is another aspect to the Wicker Man. Those who build such a structure and fill it with sacrificial victims attract a faerie that takes on the ancient role of the Wicker Man. Once the evil thing is lit, the faerie animates the Wicker Man and grants the supplicant virtues in the name of Taranis, the thunder god.

A Wicker Man faerie might be found at an old Diedne ritual site, lying in wait for a careless or curious magus to disturb it. In these cases, the beast is a trap for the unwary. The Wicker Man might be discovered by those seeking to clear and claim new farmland, sweeping away ancient sites of power. In these cases, the thing is a guardian that drives away those who would desecrate the site. Finally, in the case of a new Wicker Man being built, it is an object of temptation and a swift though dangerous route to power. In this case the Wicker Man is the ultimate threat in a story likely starting with the disappearance of individuals destined to meet their end inside the burning Wicker Man.

HABITAT

A Wicker Man faerie can be found wherever those of House Diedne and their magical forebears carried out their perverse rituals. This means that they are to be found across Hibernia, Stonehenge, Normandy, and potentially into Iberia. Further out from these Tribunals the chances of finding such a site and such a creature diminish.

They are always found within Faerie Auras. While they can move beyond Faerie Auras once active, they cannot willingly enter the Dominion and it is for this reason that they sometimes act as guardians of faerie sites; to prevent the spread of the Dominion and to preserve those faerie places.

The remains of a Wicker Man are buried just below the surface and the site of a buried Wicker Man is usually identified by the discolored ground and vegetation above it. Those who know the enclosing woodland, hillsides, or marsh well easily recognize that there is something different about a localized area, likely about ten feet across.

An awakened Wicker Man leaves a burning trail behind it, scorching the ground with each step; these are not masters of subtlety or stealth.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Wicker Men are first and foremost a murderous trap. Dormant until disturbed, they lay in wait to catch the unwary and the greedy. As incognizant faeries, Wicker Men are unable to change or develop their role or their aims and as such they cannot be reasoned with and nor do they submit to bargaining or threats. Those seeking long-buried Diedne secrets may unleash one of these creatures.

They might also be found as guardians of old sites of significance to the old pagan gods, particularly Taranis. They are awakened not by those rooting around for old Diedne secrets but by any act that desecrated or otherwise harms the site.

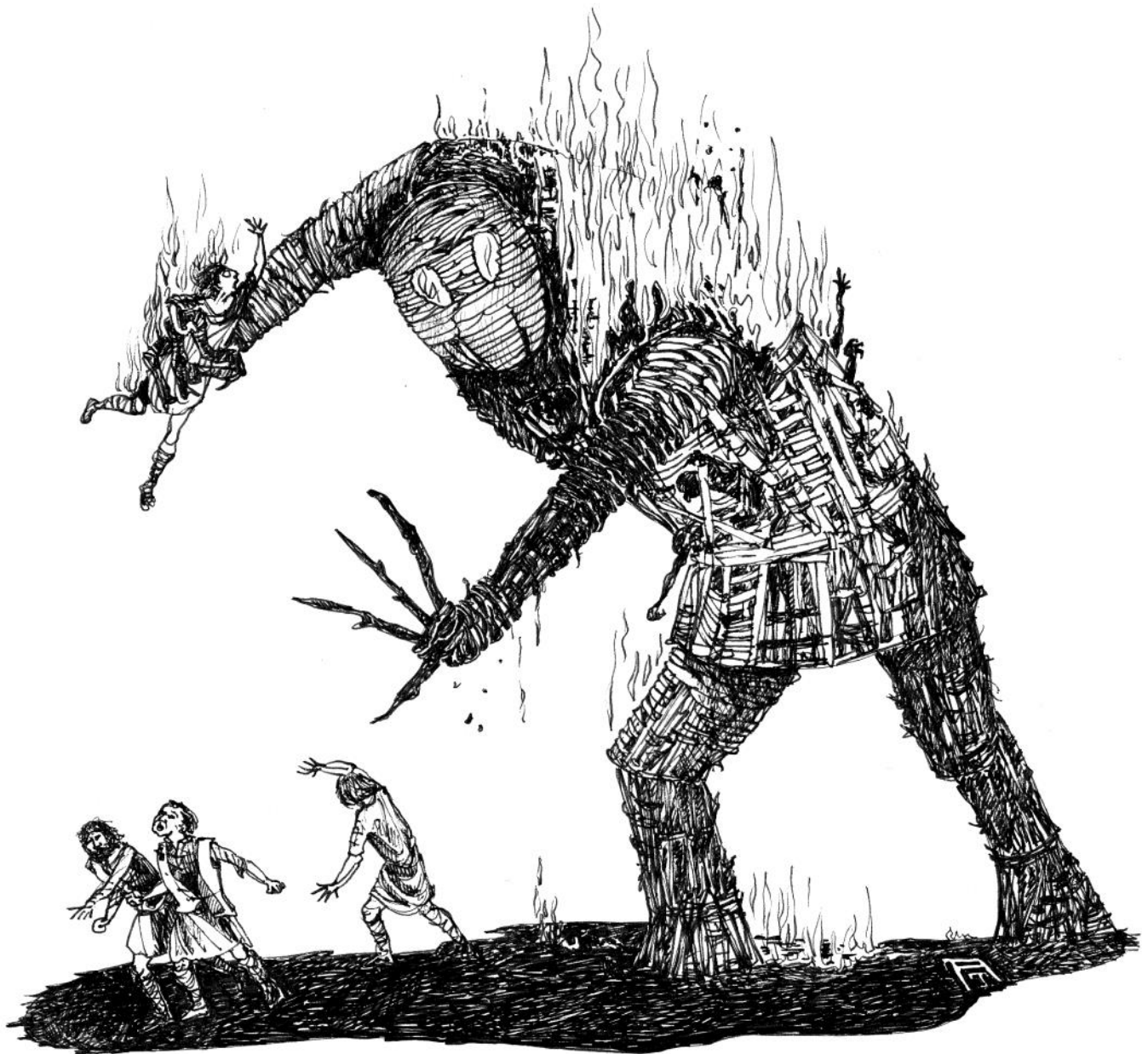
Once awakened, a Wicker Man fights until the end, attempting to

cause as much damage and suffering as possible. The Wicker Man returns to the ground and its slumber only when no other targets survive and none are left to tell the tale of the Wicker Man's awakening. In returning to the ground, the Wicker Man releases its hold over the material that forms its body and it resets its trap; a curious patch of discolored earth, beneath which

ancient charred wood and bones can be found.

A Wicker Man faerie may inhabit a wicker man structure created by a mortal for the purposes of ritual murder and sacrifice. A foolish mortal who constructs such a device perpetuates the practice, feeding these faeries the vitality they need. In return, the Wicker Man does grant power to its summoner, though these gifts nominally come

from the old god Taranis. A Wicker Man awakened in this way, i.e. constructed, filled with living victims, and then set alight, grants Virtues on request and also becomes animate and able to carry out tasks on behalf of the summoner. The Wicker Man in these circumstances remains active for as long as the task takes to complete, which may mean indefinitely.



Only one Wicker Man may be summoned at any one time by any one mortal.

The Dominion is inimical to the Wicker Men and forms the basis for their Traditional Ward. A Wicker Man may not enter any area protected by the Dominion and it suffers the full effects of breaching its Traditional Ward if exposed to trappings of the Dominion, such as blessings, holy water, relics, etc.

STORY SEEDS

Looking for Books in All the Wrong Places: A magus foolish enough to go looking for old Diedne secrets awakens the Wicker Man, which then kills the magus and begins a rampage. As it heads towards the covenant, leaving destruction in its wake, the magi must either destroy it or contain it. But once they find it, could they use it to learn more about that forbidden House?

Wrong Place at the Wrong Time: Woodsmen from a nearby manner have tried to expand their coppicing into the deep woodland. In doing so they strayed into faerie lands and a Wicker Man has been awoken. The smoke from the burning figure can be seen rising above the woods but none dare to go near, no matter what threats the lord of the manner makes. In desperation, the villagers turn to the covenant for relief against both the horror in the woods and their cruel master.

Masters and Servants: People have been going missing. Every season, three or four people; travelers on the road, the village idiot, a farmer's daughter. Who or what has been taking them? A monk from the nearby monastery, turned away from God in frustration at his lowly status has resurrected the practice of the Wicker Man in order

to advance his career. The confidence granted by the Wicker Man has already seen him successfully commit murder and gain new position at the monastery. How long before his designs upon the abbot come to fruition?

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

Rumors of a Wicker Man might mean a connection with a Diedne sacrificial site, which may in turn lead seekers to clues as to the nature of Diedne magical practice.

The faeries inhabiting the roles of the Wicker Men might also know something of Diedne magical practice, or perhaps more likely they have the pretense of knowledge; nothing they are able to teach can be relied upon, although they may still be able to grant tangible Virtues that mimic Diedne Mysteries.

SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

Parts of the Wicker Man provide the following shape and material bonuses:

Ash from the body of the Wicker Man: +7 to sustain fire

Earth Scorched by the Wicker Man: +7 to destroy living plants

Bones of a Wicker Man's Victim: +7 to control dead bodies

THE WICKER MAN

Faerie Might: 30 (Ignem)

Characteristics: Int +1, Per 0, Pre +5, Com 0, Str +10, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik -5

Size: +5

Virtues and Flaws: Greater Power, Immune to Fire, Ritual Power X 2; Faerie Speech, Feast of the Fae, Great Presence X 2, Lesser Power, Place of Power; Intangible Flesh, Monstrous Appearance, Slow Might Recovery, Vulnerable to Water; Freshly Sprung, Incognizant, Traditional Ward (Dominion Aura)

Personality Traits: Destructive +3

Combat:

Brawl (stomp): Init -6, Atk +7, Def 0, Dam +18

Brawl (grapple):* Init -6, Atk +7, Def 0, Dam +5

Thrown Object: Init -5, Attack +8, Defense +1, Damage +12

*Burning Form **:* Contact with the Wicker Man causes +5 damage through fire. A victim grappled inside the Wicker Man is completely engulfed and takes +20 damage through fire per round.

* The Wicker Man first attempts to injure its opponents to make grappling them easier. Once an opponent has been injured, the Wicker Man attempts to grapple. If the first grapple is successful, a second successful grapple allows the Wicker Man to push the victim inside its burning torso.

** The +5 damage due to the burning form has been applied to both the stomp and grapple attacks.

Soak: +3

Fatigue Levels: N/A

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-10), -3 (11-20), -5 (21-30), Incapacitated (31-40), Dead (41+)

Powers:

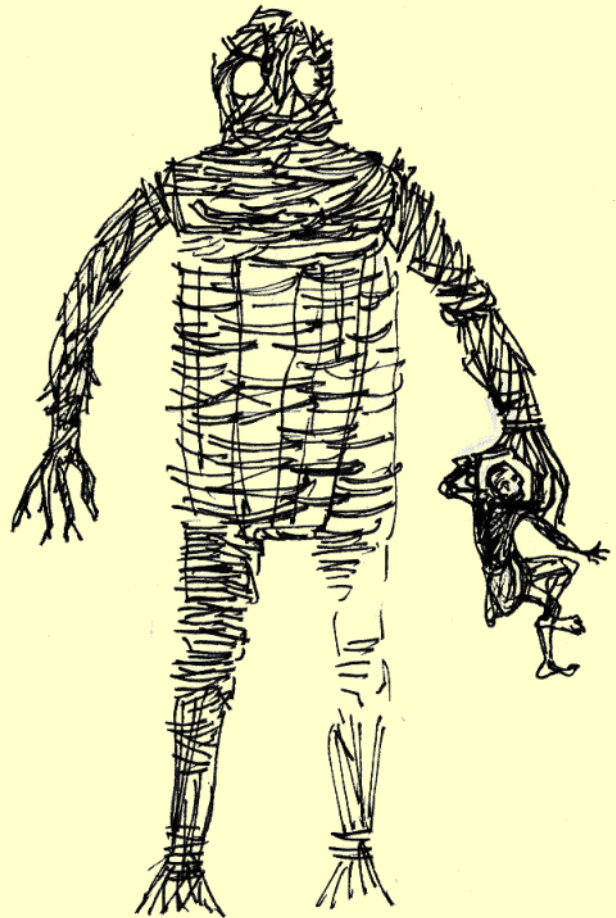
Loosely Material (Greater Power) 9 Points, Init -5, Herbam, Corpus, Ignem: Creates an appropriate body for the Wicker Man, which includes the wooden structure, the bodies trapped within it, and the fire that engulfs the whole thing. This creates the form described by these character statistics.

Grant (Self-Confident) (Ritual Power) 5 Points, Init -20, Mentem: As the power describes Realms of Power: Faerie, page 56. The Wicker Man demands sacrifice and so grants this Virtue for only a season at a time.

Pretenses: Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 3 (small moving things), Brawl 5 (stomp), Faerie Lore 2 (pagan places), Faerie Speech 5 (magical nonsense), House Diedne Lore 2 (mysteries), Order of Hermes Lore 1 (Houses), Penetration 1 (Loosely Material), Thrown Weapon 5 (trees)

Vis: 6 pawns of Ignem in the charred bones of its victims

Appearance: The immaterial form of the faerie looks the same as the loosely-material body that it creates using its powers; a large burning wooden structure in the shape of a man, stuffed full with the writhing and screaming bodies of its burning sacrificial victims.



THE FALSE GOLEM

By ROBIN BLAND

The most divine of the Kabbalist's arts is the creation of the Golem; a thing of clay and earth brought to life by God under the Kabbalist's guidance. The creation of such a being is a responsibility and a duty as much as it is an achievement.

But the forces of the Infernal look on with jealous eyes. Jealous for the power of creation and for the adoration heaped by the Kabbalist upon his creation. Where the infernal feels envy it also sees something it can exploit. The False Golem is just such an exploitation. Demons and those who traffic with them have created false Kabbalistic texts that describe the rituals of creation needed to construct a Golem and bring it to life. The Golem, these texts promise, will serve the false Kabbalist and bring him great power and acclaim. But it is a False Golem, animated by wretched spirits of hate and envy, and while it may do its creator's bidding it also subtly guides the fool towards sin and ultimately claims his soul.

The means to create a False Golem are described in a book. This volume provides a means to acquire the Infernal powers necessary to undertake the rituals and it describes the environment into which the False Golem must be born. The book also contains descriptions of how the False Golem may be empowered with apparently Divine effects, effects the False Golem uses on behalf of its creator.

Once created, the False Golem appears to be a well-proportioned and handsome man without blemish or defect; a reflection of its creators pride and vanity. The False Golem does its master's bidding without question, but its motivations remain its own.

HABITAT

As a thing created by the hands of a natural philosopher, the False Golem is normally found in towns or cities where its master lives and works. It may venture out on errands as directed by its master but the False Golem is a precious thing and no matter how powerful it becomes, it is rarely far from its master's side.

The False Golem could be set to guard important people or places, but doing so would be an affront to its creation. The False Golem is instead something to be admired and it may be set to loftier work than mere guard duty; it may be set against the diabolist's enemies.

It is possible to discover a False Golem living without the guidance of its master where either the master turns the creature out for some reason or the False Golem has succeeded in killing its master. In either case, the creature lacks the motivational force to live as a normal member of society and the evil taint it carries likely sends it alone to the streets where it waits for others to discover it and put its powers to use, whereupon it gains a new master and a new target for its corruption.

THE BOOK

The book, or books, that open the way to creating the False Golem provide everything that the unwary philosopher needs. This includes the means to initiate himself into the required Infernal Virtues of Incantation and Diablerie, the means to create a laboratory in which to birth the False Golem, methods through which vis

might be found or corrupted, the rites of sacrifice, and the ways in which others might be brought to the cause.

Physically, the book appears old. It is written in Hebrew but it is glossed in Latin, providing just enough evidence that the book contains rites through which a Golem may be created. The content, for those who can read Hebrew, talks of the kabbalah and Kabbalistic rituals. However, a reader knowledgeable in such things sees through the lies and can identify it as an Infernal corruption. The book's origin cannot be divined, nor can its true age, or the identity of its author or the hand that glossed it.

Possession of the book is treated as having a Mystagogue that already possesses the Virtues of Incantation, Diablerie, and Ceremony with contributing scores of seven for each initiation. Each initiation has a target Ease Factor of 21, which leaves 14 points remaining for each. The initiation scripts within the book provide these 14 points, allowing the philosopher to initiate the Virtues from the guidance of the book alone.

Once the Virtues have been initiated, the philosopher becomes a Diabolist able to use the Maleficia of Incantation and Diablerie just as described in Realms of Power: The Infernal, chapter ten.

INITIATION SCRIPT FOR INCANTATION

Target level 21, as Major Virtue
Script Bonus +15



Major Ordeal of gaining the Dark Secret Flaw +9, initiate discovers a source of Infernal vis +3, special place (travel to a shrine in Jerusalem) +3.

INITIATION SCRIPT FOR DIABLERIE

Target level 21, as Major Virtue

Script Bonus +15

Second initiation after undergoing a Major Ordeal +6, Major Ordeal of gaining the Enemies Flaw +9 as the initiate must foster antipathy with one of his peers or equal standing and reputation. The individual must previously have been a friend.

INITIATION SCRIPT FOR CEREMONY

Target level 21, as Major Virtue

Script Bonus +14

Third initiation after undergoing a Major Ordeal +3, Second initiation after undergoing a Major Ordeal +6, initiate spends time and money creating a laboratory +2, initiate reveals the plan to another individual and either gains their assistance or silences them +3.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

The False Golem obeys its creator and master in all things, except that it is prone to deliberate mistakes. It may steal, something small and insignificant at first, or it may hurt someone, apparently accidentally. These small transgressions test its creator to see whether it will punish and correct or conceal and share in the False Golem's sin. Over time, the scale of these acts increases ultimately to cold-blooded murder. The diabolist who continues to conceal these sins puts himself at risk for the ultimate aim of the False Golem is to slay its master while that master is in a state of unrepented sin thereby damning his soul to hell.

A False Golem given powers of its own may use them as it wishes in fulfilment of its desires and it may experiment over time to discover what those desires may be. In fact, it may ask its master, while that master lives, to grant it new powers so that it may explore and affect the world around it.

False Golems react to spells and effects targeting Infernal Might just as other Infernal creatures do.

CREATING A FALSE GOLEM

The rituals for creating the False Golem are not known by all diabolists. Even those who know the required Incantation and Diablerie Maleficia may not know the means by which a False Golem may be created. The only sure way is the acquisition of the book containing the rites. Once this has been obtained and the diabolist has acquired the necessary Virtues, the process is as follows.

The creation of a False Golem takes several seasons and requires the dedicated attention of one or more diabolists. During the first season the body of the False Golem is formed from clay which is then inscribed with astrological and apparently holy symbols.

The second and subsequent seasons are spent awakening the lifeless form through generating an Awaken False Golem Total. For each point by which the total exceeds the Ease Factor, the diabolist accumulates one point towards the False Golem's Might Score. A Ceremony bonus may be gained by bringing other diabolists into the ritual and a Sacrifice bonus (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 95) may optionally be added each season.

The diabolist may choose to extend the ritual for additional consecutive seasons, carrying any accumulated points forward. A Stress Die is rolled in the final season and added to the total.

STANDARD FALSE GOLEM TRAITS

Although limited, False Golems made in human form may be played as Companion characters and have the following attributes when first created.

MIGHT SCORE

This is determined by the diabolist when the False Golem is created.

HIERARCHY SCORE

A False Golem has a Hierarchy Score of 2, matching its False Golem Reputation of 2 amongst demons.

CHARACTERISTICS

The diabolist may assign Characteristic scores, including the bonus for the Improved Characteristics Virtue, freely when designing the False Golem.

VIRTUES & FLAWS

All False Golems start with the Arcane Lore, Improved Characteristics, and Unaging Virtues. These are balanced by the Simple-Minded, Tainted with Evil, and Wrathful Flaws. They may gain other Virtues or Flaws through play and in particular through being Empowered by the diabolist (see nearby).

ABILITIES

All False Golems start with the following: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Guile 5, Infernal Lore 5, Leadership 3, Living Language 5, Penetration 3, Stealth 2. The troupe may assign specialties as desired.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

All False Golems have the following Personality Traits: Requires Direction +3, Wrathful +3, Sinful +2, Obedient to Master +1. This makes them easily angered, prone to small sinful acts, and inclined to obey their masters when given direct instruction. It also means that they have little directive force of their own – they cannot exist well in society without the direction of someone with free will.

The False Golem's Might is capped at 5 times the lead diabolist's Incantation score.

AWAKEN FALSE GOLEM TOTAL:

Communication + Incantation + Diablerie + Ceremony Bonus + Sacrifice Bonus + Infernal Aura

AWAKEN FALSE GOLEM EASE FACTOR:

20

FALSE GOLEM'S DIVINE MIGHT:

Accumulated Points + Stress Die

MIGHT CAP:

Diabolist's Incantation x 5

Botch dice on the Awaken False Golem roll in the final season are equal to the number of diabolists that have contributed plus the number of seasons spent awakening the False Golem.

A diabolist may be master to a single False Golem at any one time. If the diabolist wants to create a more powerful False Golem, he must destroy the existing creature. Doing so can be used as a form of Sacrifice granting a bonus of +8.

EMPOWERING A FALSE GOLEM

Like their Divine counterparts, False Golems may be bestowed with additional powers. These are described using the rules for Personal, Minor, Greater, and Ritual Powers as described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, including calculating the Might Cost. Personal and Minor Powers are considered to be Minor Virtues while Greater and Ritual Powers are considered Major Virtues. As such they are bestowed upon the False Golem through level 20 (base level 15 +5 Touch) and level 40 (base level 35 +5 Touch) Incantation + Diablerie effects (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 106).

Empowering a False Golem is a seasonal activity similar to a Hermetic Magus enchanting a Greater Enchantment.

EMPOWER FALSE GOLEM TOTAL:

Communication + Incantation + Diablerie + Ceremony Bonus + Sacrifice Bonus + Infernal Aura

The Empower False Golem Total must exceed the power's target level. Each season, for every point by which the total exceeds this level one point is accumulated. Once a number of points equal to the target level have been accumulated the False Golem acquires and may use the power.

The same technique may be used to grant the False Golem additional Virtues and again using levels 20 and 40 as the target level of effect.

STORY SEEDS

Forbidden Fruits: The book describing the means of creating a False Golem comes into the possession of a player character leaning towards the infernal. As the book provides a means

to self-initiate into the Maleficia, is this enough to entice the character?

The Unwitting Corruption: An academic comes to the covenant to ask whether the mystics there know of the Kabbalistic rituals of the golem. He wants to know the risks involved in creating such a beast and how he might protect himself. He has not sought out a true kabbalist for fear of dealing with Jews and of them preventing him from undertaking his studies. He could be persuaded to let the magi see the book, but could they differentiate Divine from Infernal? Could they become unwitting partners to his slow corruption?

A Deadly Rivalry: A rivalry suddenly erupts between a player character academic and a man considered to be his friend. This new rival seems intent on destroying the player character's reputation. Why this sudden change?

The Man in the Street: There's something wrong with that beggar in the street. For a man who spends his time chased from doorway to doorway he seems young, healthy, and robust. And there's a magical air about him. What is his story? Talking to this False Golem, the characters learn of a fight he had with his master, he leads them to his alchemical laboratory and his books. Will the characters forgive the False Golem his crime of murder in return for the books he has led them to?

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

A character may come across the book and discover the means to create their own apparently Divine being. Of course, it may be too late by the time the character discovers that they have taken steps towards the Infernal rather than towards the Divine.

A False Golem has a Might Score and may be bound to a magus in the manner of a familiar. This may be done regardless of whether the magus created the False Golem or not.

THE SHAMBLING MOUND

By ROBIN BLAND

Elementals are animated magical entities formed from pure rarefied elemental matter; air, fire, earth, and water. The Shambling Mound is a similar beast. Though not a *true* elemental, being formed as it is of complex living matter, it is created in the same way, i.e. through warping or exposure to a powerful magical effect.

The Shambling Mound starts small but it has a unique power that allows it to grow, both in size and Might, which means that what may start as a curiosity or a small threat soon develops into something capable of threatening entire settlements. A Shambling Mound of Size 0 is approximately human-sized, while a Shambling Mound of size +3 is the size and weight of a warhorse. There is no upper limit to the size of a Shambling Mound and one allowed to roam free continues to grow all the while it has plant matter on which to feed. Every six days, the Shambling Mound adds +3 to its Size and +5 to its Magic Might Score. However, a Shambling Mound's size is determined by its Might Score, however, so a Shambling Mound allowed to burn through its Might Score is physically depleted over time.

While free, a Shambling Mound uses what cunning it has to seek out food. Anything, living or dead, that gets in its way is in danger.

A Shambling Mound may be created intentionally and bound by magi of various traditions if they know how, but they spawn spontaneously in relation to magical phenomenon. Their propensity to grow makes them dangerous beasts for those unable to combat their magical nature.

ELEMENTALS OF COMPLEX FORM

The Shambling Mound is an example of an elemental rarefied from the complex forms rather than the pure platonic elements. Others are possible. For instance, the elementals described in *Realms of Power*: Magic cannot be formed from living matter or matter that has been worked. This means that Animal, Corpus, and Herbam, representing living matter, would not normally be considered elementals. Neither would water that has been worked to make ale, wine, or poison, or iron that has been forged into swords or armor.

The Magic Realm is a vast and unusual place, however, and the Shambling Mound should provide inspiration to arrive at your own unique elementals.

HABITAT

Unless created intentionally, Shambling Mounds only arise in the wild, although as they grow they may start to endanger villages, covenants, and even towns and cities if they are allowed to grow large enough and they leave their birth place in search of food.

This means that a Shambling Mound undetected in the woods might only be detected when it strays into neighboring farmland.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

A Shambling Mound has little in the way of motivation. It wants to feed and to propagate. To this end, it roams its habitat leaving a trail of destruction behind it. It attempts to feed on anything it encounters, which includes animate, living things.

On encountering a living thing, a Shambling Mound investigates by sending a tendril out towards it. These tendrils contain all its senses, including taste and smell. Because of its low Cunning and Poor Memory, it must do this even if it has encountered a similar thing before. If it determines that it can eat a thing, it then attempts to ensnare it. This is a grappling attack. If it fails to ensnare its target, it then attempts to crush it flailing branches.

The Shambling Mound is not sentimental about its home and sets out to find the means to continue its growth wherever that might take it.

STORY SEED

A swineherd is found injured at the edge of the woodland into which he normally takes his pigs. In his delirium, he tells of how the woods came to life around him, catching his pigs and swallowing them whole. He narrowly escaped but his pigs were not so fortunate. Fearing what might be in the woods, the villagers go to the covenant for assistance.

A small Shambling Mound (of size -18 and Might 1, no more than a sapling) is found. Lacking the Might Score to successfully use its The Reaping power, it cannot grow. In fact, it is only recognized as magical through its movement. It remains a curiosity until it is brought into contact with Herbam vis and a quantity of plant material. Once this happens, the Shambling Mound uses the vis in place of its own Might Score to use its Ritual Power and it absorbs the plant material into itself. A careless researcher might over-feed the

creature, which might allow it to break free.

to Hermetic knowledge. A magus able to capture and/or control such a creature and introduce it to the Order would gain fame and likely fortune.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

An elemental formed from complex and/or living matter is something new



THE SHAMBLING MOUND

As the Shambling Mound grows, so its Might Score, Size, and Characteristics change. Values appropriate up to Size +21 and Might 50 are shown. Size +21 represents a beast of hundreds of thousands of tons in weight; an entire forest turned into one enormous Shambling Mound. Might 50 should be the highest Might Score you'll need, but it could keep growing.

Given that the Shambling Mound always starts small (Size -6 and Might 5) its powers, Qualities, and Inferiorities are based on that base Shambling Mound and they do not change as the beast grows.

Magic Might: Variable (Herbam)

Season: Spring

Characteristics (Size -18, Might 1): Cun -1, Per 1, Pre 1, Com 0, Str 2, Sta 2, Dex 1, Qik -1

Characteristics (Size -6, Might 5): Cun -1, Per 0, Pre 1, Com 0, Str 2, Sta 3, Dex 1, Qik -2

Characteristics (Size -3, Might 10): Cun -1, Per 0, Pre 1, Com 0, Str 3, Sta 3, Dex 1, Qik -3

Characteristics (Size 0, Might 15): Cun -2, Per 0, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 3, Sta 4, Dex 1, Qik -4

Characteristics (Size +3, Might 20): Cun -5, Per 1, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 5, Sta 6, Dex 2, Qik -6

Characteristics (Size +6, Might 25): Cun -6, Per 1, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 6, Sta 7, Dex 2, Qik -7

Characteristics (Size +9, Might 30): Cun -6, Per 1, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 6, Sta 8, Dex 2, Qik -8

Characteristics (Size +12, Might 35): Cun -7, Per 1, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 7, Sta 9, Dex 2, Qik -9

Characteristics (Size +15, Might 40): Cun -8, Per 1, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 8, Sta 10, Dex 2, Qik -10

Characteristics (Size +18, Might 45): Cun -9, Per 1, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 9, Sta 11, Dex 2, Qik -11

Characteristics (Size +21, Might 50): Cun -9, Per 1, Pre 2, Com 0, Str 9, Sta 12, Dex 2, Qik -12

Size: Variable (see above)

Virtues and Flaws: Magic Thing; Ways of the Forest; Poor Memory, Short Attention Span, Simple Minded

Magical Qualities and Inferiorities: Ritual Power x 2; Improved Soak; Monstrous Appearance; Reduced Abilities, Minor Flaw (Environmental Sensitivity as per Realms of Power: Magic, page 48), Minor Flaw (Lesser Malediction: Compulsion to use The Reaping power)

Personality Traits: Shambling Mound +6, Must use The

Reaping power daily +6

Combat:

Snare: Init 2 + current Quickness, Atk 2 + current Dexterity, Def 2 + current Quickness, Dam -3 + current Strength

Crush: Init 1 + current Quickness, Atk 4 + current Dexterity, Def 3 + current Quickness, Dam 3 + current Strength

Bite: Init 0 + current Quickness, Atk 5 + current Dexterity, Def 2 + current Quickness, Dam 3 + current Strength

Soak: +2 (+ current Stamina)

Abilities: Athletics 1 (climbing), Brawl 1 (crush), (Home) Area Lore 3 (pathways), Awareness 4 (movement), Stealth 3 (remaining still)

Powers:

The Reaping (Ritual Power): 4 Points, Init (-10 + current Quickness), Herbam. 2 Intricacy points spent to reduce the casting cost, 2 spent to improve Initiative. Each day, the Shambling Mound uses this power, spending 4 Might Points (reducing its Might Score by 4) to rarefy a further amount of plant matter sufficient to create a Shambling Mound of Might 5. Rather than this new Shambling Mound being an independent entity, it instead binds with its originator. The Might Scores of the two Shambling Mounds are instantly combined creating a single larger creature.

Vis: Current Might Score / 5

Appearance: A large mass of vegetative matter. It may have picked up non-plant material as it moves and feeds but this does not form part of the beast. As it grows, it grows both upwards and outwards, eventually becoming taller than the trees, which start to rise out of its back. It has no discernible limbs or organs until it unfurls them in seeking out its prey.

Notes: If it has sufficient Might Score with which to power the Ritual Power, the Shambling Mound must use its The Reaping power and points from its Might Score are expended regardless of whether it is in contact with an appropriate target. In using this power, and assuming it is not given Herbam vis to absorb and replenish itself, the Shambling Mound grows at the following rate:

Day	Might	Size
1	5	-6
6	10	-3
11	15	0
16	20	+3
21	25	+6
26	30	+9
31	35	+12
36	40	+15
41	45	+18
46	50	+21

THE SPRIGGAN

By NORMAN ASHBY



Spriggans are woodland faeries found in Stonehenge. They are the archetypal “green man”; creatures of twigs and twisted branches made into human form. Small and light, they skip among the trees and watch over their territories. They are generally unkind; by turns mischievous and then malicious, they harry those who stray into their lands and take revenge on those who intrude.

HABITAT

Spriggans are native to the Stonehenge Tribunal and specifically Cornwall and the surrounding area. They can be found in wooded areas, especially places with cave entrances or other spaces marked out as different from the surrounding woods, such as a clearing, a particularly large and ancient tree, a hill, etc. These places must also have a Faerie Aura and Spriggans are never found outside of such an aura unless they have truck with a specific individual.

An area protected by Spriggans is marked out with little charms, usually made to look like Spriggans or their faces, hung from branches, propped against tree trunks, or staked into the ground. A Faerie Lore roll against Ease Factor of 9 is sufficient to recognize the charms as being left by Spriggans. Failure to observe the signs brings retribution.

Unless forced or pursuing those who have wronged them, Spriggans are never found in towns or cities. If they are caught outside of their

protected places they always try to flee and never stand and fight.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Spriggans are mischievous and malicious but they do not go out of their way to harm humans, instead punishing those who intrude into their territories. That may make them sound like guardians over places of significance, but their territories are rarely that significant or powerful; any Faerie Aura is sufficient for a Spriggan or band of Spriggans to lay claim to a place.

Those who trespass might find things going missing from their packs (invisible Spriggans stealing from them), or they might hear the sounds of beast snuffling and hunting nearby (Spriggans disguising their voices). Those who continue to trespass or cause damage or offence find that Spriggans go beyond simple mischief. They may follow an individual back home and take their revenge there. Spriggans are not above stealing children and leaving changelings in their places to teach the mortals a lesson.

They cannot, however, harm or affect those who wear their clothes inside out. This is a Traditional Ward and part of their nature that they cannot overcome.

As Spriggans recover their Might slowly, severely limiting their ability to disguise themselves, they do not like being caught outside their own patches of land, which form their places of power and increase their Might Scores.

STORY SEEDS

Trespass: The grogs fail to heed the signs, setting up camp for the night in a Spriggan glade. Things start

to go missing, grogs are lured beyond the protection of the camp fire by the sounds of large animals stalking through the woods, and eventually someone is attacked. Can the grogs make amends, get their stolen property back, and avoid taking the wrath of the Spriggans back home with them?

Left Holding the Baby: A woodsman finds a baby in the woods and takes it to his village. Nobody has reported losing a baby and fearful that the thing is a faerie trick the villagers tell the woodsman to take it back and leave it where he found it. Unable to do so, he takes it instead to the covenant to give it to them. There is nothing unnatural about the baby except how it came to be found in the woods; the Spriggans took it. The unsuspecting parents are quite enjoying their now well-behaved child, however, and refuse to believe that the replacement brought by the strange men from the distant tower is anything to do with them. Left holding the baby, how do the magi return it to its parents and put the Spriggans in their place?

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS / SERVICE

A Spriggan may be compelled, through magic, through enslaving, or through bargaining, to stand watch over a place, even a non-Faerie place. It is not unknown for Spriggans to be set to watch over churches or even covenants to be on watch for invisible spirits that might try to enter uninvited. Here, the Spriggan's powers of disguise come into their own and the Spriggan seems to become part of the building or place it is given to watch over.

Where a Spriggan is set to watch over a place, that place immediately becomes their Place of Power, which brings with it an increase in the Spriggan's Might Score all the while the Spriggan remains there. As its Place of Power, the Spriggan then becomes reluctant to leave.

SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

A Spriggan can provide the following shape and material bonuses:

Spriggan's Face: +10 to remain hidden in the woods

Wood from a Spriggan's Body: +7 to animate wood

In addition, a charm created by a Spriggan acts as a +5 prop to rituals affecting boundaries.

THE SPRIGGAN

Faerie Might: 5 (Herbam) / Increasing to 15 in their places of power

Size: -2

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

Virtues and Flaws: Focus Power (disguise self); Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, Humanoid Faerie, Improved Powers (used to increase maximum level of Focus Powers), Place of Power, Second Sight; Little, Slow Might Recovery; Incognizant, Negative Reaction, Traditional Ward (clothes turned inside out)

Personality Traits: Mischievous +3, Vengeful +2, Brave -1

Combat:

Dodge: Init +4, Attack n/a, Defense +6, Damage n/a

Bludgeon:* Init +4, Attack +7, Defense +7, Damage -2

* May also throw things at the target and use this at range

Soak: +1

Fatigue Levels: N/A

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

Pretenses: Athletics 5 (climbing), Awareness 5 (trespassers), Bargain 2 (with mortals), Brawl 2 (bludgeon), Faerie Sight 5 (seeing through glamour), Second Sight 6 (seeing invisible intruders)

Powers:

Woodland Disguise of the Standing Spriggan, 1 point, Init +3, Imaginem (Focus Power). At will, while the Spriggan remains still, it appears to be a natural part of the woodland, perhaps a sapling on the ground or a branch on a tree. Second and/or Faerie Sight sees through this effect, however.

Stone Skin of the Perched Spriggan, 1 point, Init +3, Imaginem (Focus Power). Until it moves from its perch, the Spriggan looks and feels like a part of the stone building over which it has been set to watch. Second and/or Faerie Sight sees through this effect, but visual and/or tactile investigation cannot detect the Spriggan behind the illusion.

The Smaddling Clothes of the Switched Spriggan, 3 points, Init +0, Imaginem (Focus Power). Until it is discovered as a faerie, the Spriggan takes on the appearance of a baby

across all senses. This power is used by a Spriggan left as a changeling in place of a mortal child.

Equipment: Small charms made from twigs and leaves.

Vis: 1 Pawn, in the bundle of their twiggy fingers.

Appearance: A small and slender figure apparently made from bundles of sticks and twigs bound together with vines with leaves sprouting here and there. The Spriggan's face is like a crude mask carved from wood and stuck atop the pile of sticks.



CREATURES: NATURAL ANIMALS

BY MARK SHIRLEY

This article is intended to expand and improve upon the current rules for creatures in **Ars Magica Fifth Edition**. The rules (found mostly in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, pages 38–43) need updating to reflect changes in the game since the publication of that book,

particularly *Realms of Power: Magic and Grogg*.

A creature, in medieval terms, was anything that was created by God rather than something made by man. A creature therefore includes all animals, but also plants and natural objects such as mountains and rivers. This article

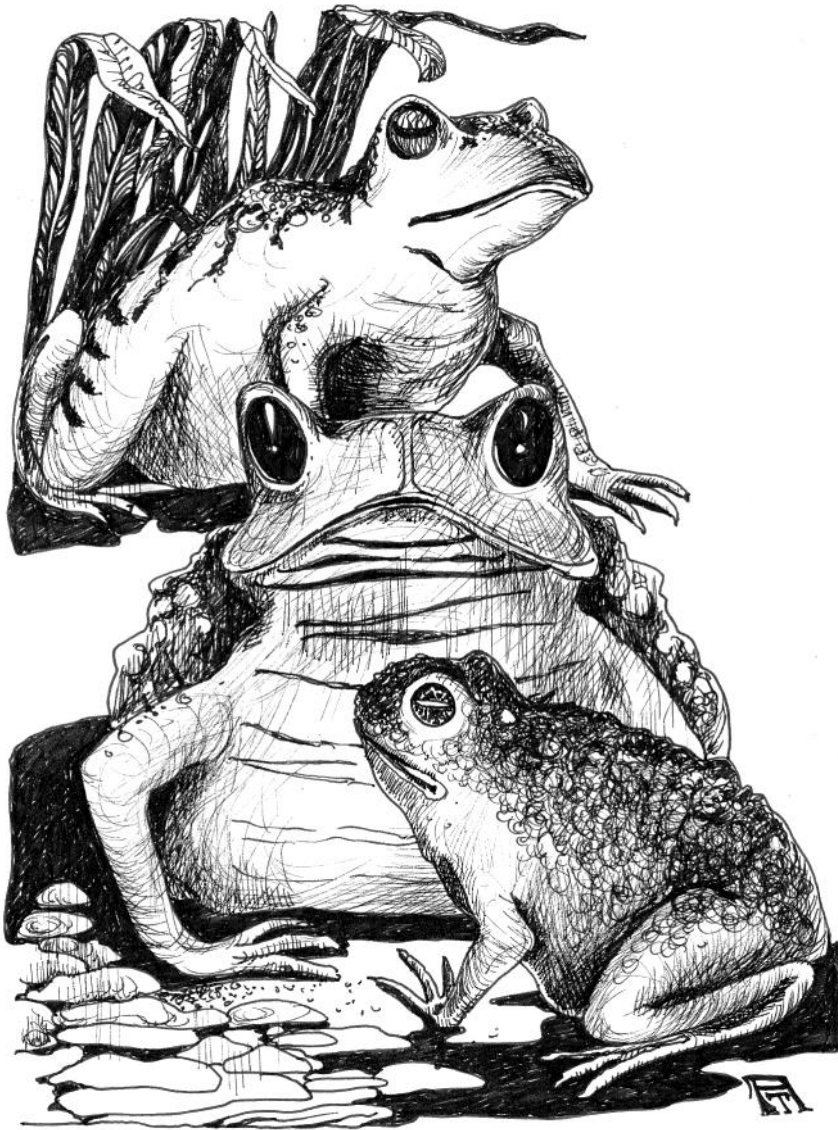
concentrates mostly on animals, since there are limited opportunities for a rosebush or a boulder as a player character.

A key design consideration for these rules is that the characteristics of a creature fall into two categories. Firstly are those characteristics that all members of the species share. All dogs have good hearing and they shouldn't have to spend Virtue points on gaining this. Under the rules presented here, these shared characteristics are represented by Qualities and Inferiorities: by definition areas of competence or ineptitude lacked by human characters.

Virtues and Flaws should be reserved for the second kind of characteristics: those that set this individual apart from all other creatures of its species. Not all dogs are Long-Winded or Lamé, and this should be reflected by Virtues and Flaws. This treats animal characters in the same way as human characters; it is just that humans lack Qualities and Inferiorities — they are the standard to which such things are measured.

ANIMAL CHARACTERS

Animals are divided into several categories in medieval bestiaries. First are the Hoofed Animals (*cornipedes*) and Clawed Animals (*unguliferae*). Wild animals who are not in man's charge are called *ferae* or *quadrupedia*; these are subdivided into the *belua* (beasts) who pose a threat to man, and the *pecora*



(cattle) who do not. Domestic animals include the *pecudes* (literally *pecu edes*, “edible cattle”) raised for meat, the *jumenta* (beasts of burden), and companion animals.

The next categories are the Birds (*aves*), and the Fish (*pisces*). The category of fish includes not only those animals we recognize today as fish, but also a variety of other animals that live mostly or solely in the water such as otters, seals and whales. Next are the Serpents (*serpentes*), which includes legless and legged members; legged serpents are sometimes called reptiles (*reptilia*) because they creep (*reptit*) on legs rather than crawl (*serpiti*) on their bellies, and covers snakes, frogs, newts, and lizards. Finally are the Worms (*vermes*) that are germinated rather than born; this includes all invertebrates such as insects, spiders, earthworms, slugs and snails, and other lower forms of life.

CHARACTERISTICS

Just like human characters, all creatures have seven positive points to spend on Characteristics, and may acquire more positive points by taking negative scores in some Characteristics.

Base Characteristics should be considered relative to other members of the same species, not comparable to humans. Later on in Character Creation, Strength and Quickness will be adjusted for the creature’s Size, and the Communication and Presence are adjusted for the creature’s Social Status Virtue, bringing these characteristics comparable with human Characteristic scores. The base Characteristic should be recorded in parentheses following the adjusted number.

Animals tend not to have high base scores in Communication and (to a lesser extent) Presence. Being incapable of sophisticated language, their ability to communicate with one another is generally low. Note that Presence relates less to physical attractiveness and more to the effect the character has on others. A loathsome creature that makes others recoil in fear has a high Presence, not a

Size	Mass*	Length
-10	0.8 – 1.7 oz	3.7 – 4.8 in
-9	1.7 – 3.6 oz	4.8 – 6.2 in
-8	3.6 – 7.8 oz	6.2 – 8 in
-7	7.8 – 16.8 oz	8 – 10.4 in
-6	16.8 – 36.2 oz	10.4 – 13.4 in
-5	2.3 – 4.9 lb	1.1 – 1.4 ft
-4	4.9 – 10.5 lb	1.4 – 1.9 ft
-3	10.5 – 22.7 lb	1.9 – 2.4 ft
-2	22.7 – 48.8 lb	2.4 – 3.1 ft
-1	48.8 – 105.2 lb	3.1 – 4 ft
0	105 – 227 lb	4 – 5 ft
1	227 – 488 lb	5 – 7 ft
2	488 – 1052 lb	7 – 9 ft
3	1052 – 2266 lb	9 – 11 ft
4	1 – 2 ton	4 – 5 paces
5	2 – 5 ton	5 – 6 paces
6	5 – 10 ton	6 – 8 paces
7	10 – 22 ton	8 – 10 paces
8	22 – 47 ton	10 – 14 paces
9	47 – 101 ton	14 – 18 paces
10	101 – 218 ton	18 – 23 paces

*16 oz = 1 lb; 2240 lb = 1 ton

low one. Creatures with negative Presence tend to be ignored.

CUNNING

Non-rational creatures have Cunning rather than Intelligence. This reflects their lack of reason. Animals tend to be motivated by their instincts, and have simple emotional responses: fear, lust, anger, hunger, disgust, contentment. Animals believe their senses and react accordingly. They cannot apply logical thinking, so neither deduce nor infer. They have poor memories for things outside of their basic needs, and cognition is diminished — animals have no long-term plans or ambitions, and do not dream.

Animals with Cunning possess five Abilities, and cannot apply experience points to any other Abilities unless they have a Quality or Virtue that permits it, or else is specifically trained by a rational creature.

SIZE

Size is based on volume, which translates directly to mass since most animals have the same density. Three points of Size represents a tenfold change in mass, meaning that one point of Size roughly doubles or halves mass, and two points is approximately a five fold change (for more precision multiply volume/mass by $10^{1/3}$ or $10^{2/3}$ for one or two increases in Size respectively, and multiply volume/mass by $0.1^{1/3}$ or $0.1^{2/3}$ for one and two decreases in Size respectively). In some cases, mass and volume do not directly correlate, and Size requires adjustment. The most obvious example of this is birds. A bird with the same volume as a land animal will have a much smaller mass, as they tend to be very light in order to fly. The Size of a bird relates to its volume, not its mass; subtract two from the Size to discover how much it weighs.

Sizes of typical animals found in Mythic Europe are included in the following table.

Size	Hoofed animals	Clawed animals	Aves	Pisces & Serpentes
Smaller		shrew (-12), mouse (-11)		lizard (-12), slowworm (-11)
-10		weasel		minnow, frog, salamander
-9		rat	wren, swallow	toad
-8		stoat, mole	lark, sparrow, robin	adder
-7		dormouse, squirrel	thrush	grass snake
-6		hedgehog	cuckoo, kestrel, magpie	herring
-5		polecat, ferret, rabbit	dove, partridge, falcon	
-4		wildcat, hare, vervet monkey	crow, hen*, common gull, owl	eel, carp, mackerel
-3		fox, otter	duck, heron, raven, grouse, rooster, goshawk, pheasant, osprey	asp (cobra), octopus
-2	roe deer, gazelle	badger, lynx, baboon, dog (terrier)	goose, eagle, stork, eagle owl, cormorant	flounder
-1	sheep*, gazelle, fallow deer (doe), chamois, wild goat (nanny)	wolf, wolverine, beaver, dog (running hound)	swan, crane	pike, salmon, cod
0	fallow deer (buck), red deer (hind), ibex, pig*, wild boar (sow), wild goat (buck)	leopard, dog (mastiff)		porpoise, seal (cow)
1	red deer (hart), wild boar (boar), horse (pony), reindeer (cow)	lion (female)	ostrich	dolphin, seal (bull)
2	horse (palfrey), dromedary, donkey, onager, reindeer (bull)	bear, lion (male)		crocodile
3	Bull, elk/moose, camel, horse (destrier), wisent			walrus, shark
Larger	hippopotamus (+5), rhinoceros (+5), elephant (cow +5, bull +6)			orca (+5), basking shark (+5), humpback whale (+9)

*these medieval domestic animals are smaller than modern varieties

Three points of Size also roughly translates to a doubling or halving of a single linear dimension. If a wolf (Size -1) stands two feet tall at the shoulder, then a bear (three points of Size larger at +2) can be assumed to be roughly twice as tall, at four feet. A 1 point difference in size increases or decreases a single dimension by a quarter, and a two point difference alters it by about half (again, these are approximate; for more precision multiply a length by $2\frac{1}{3}$ or $2\frac{2}{3}$ for one or two increases in Size respectively, and multiply a length by

$0.5\frac{1}{3}$ or $0.5\frac{2}{3}$ for one and two decreases in Size respectively)

The table below gives some measurements for typical animals of each Size. The length applies to most four-footed animals and excludes any tail.

- The shoulder height when standing on all four feet of most four-footed beasts is the same as the length of a creature two points of Size smaller. *Example:* a destrier (Size +3) that has a nose-to-rump length of 10 feet stands

about 6 feet (18 hands) at the shoulder (equivalent to the length of a Size +1 creature).

- To get the length of an elongated animal such as a ferret or otter, or that of most fish, use the length of a creature of its Size plus one, but treat height or breadth as three lower than its Size. This adjustment can also be used to derive the height (= length) of human-shaped characters. *Example:* A salmon (Size -1) grows to 4- to 5 feet

long, and has a breadth of no more than 2 feet.

- For the length of squat animals that have their bellies close to the ground such as lizards and crocodiles, use the length appropriate to its Size plus two, and height appropriate to its Size minus 4. *Example:* A lizard (Size -12) is about 4 inches long.
- For a snake use the length appropriate to its Size plus six. Diameter is usually about a twentieth of its length (i.e. length equal to that for Size minus 5). *Example:* An adder (Size -8) is up to 3 feet long and has a diameter of about 2 inches.
- The height of a bird is the same as the length of an equivalently-sized quadruped. Its wingspan (wingtip to wingtip) is the length of an animal three Sizes bigger. *Example:* a hawk (Size -4) stands about 20 inches from the falconer's wrist and has a 3 feet wingspan. Remember to subtract two points of Size to determine weight, so this hawk weighs about 1 pound 10 ounces.

Vermes tend to be a lot smaller than other creatures. Some example Sizes are: ant (-22), fly (-20), spider (-19), honeybee (-18), bumblebee (-15), wasp (-15), hornet (-15), caterpillar (-14), locust (-14), scorpion (-14), slug (-13), butterfly* (-12), snail (-12), crab (-9 to -6), lobster (-5)

*like birds, butterflies have a Size two greater than their mass would indicate.

A standard individual of the Animal Form (Size +1) is therefore equivalent to the mass of 50 million ants, 5 million spiders, one hundred thousand locusts, or twenty thousand butterflies

There is no cost associated with Size during character creation, and players should take the Size average for the species they wish to play. It is recommended that characters regularly in play should fall between Size -5 and

SWARMS

A swarm is a group of creatures of Size -3 or less, with a combined mass equivalent to Size +1 or more. A swarm must occupied a volume of no more than four points of Size greater than its mass, else it is too dispersed to gain the benefits of a swarm listed below. So a group of 5 million spiders (= Size +1 in mass) remaining in a volume equivalent to +5 or less is a swarm, although these spiders could cover a much larger area without benefiting from the swarm rules. All instances of Size below refer to volume rather than mass unless stated otherwise.

Swarms are created as if they were a single individual of the component creatures' type, but with the appropriate Size instead.

Swarms ignore defenders and can always reach their intended target.

Swarms may attack a number of targets equal to the swarm's Size each round.

At the storyguide's discretion, swarms may have an immunity or resistance to regular weapons; a blade passing harmlessly through a swarm of insects, for instance.

Attacks with the capacity to destroy large numbers of individuals outright (such as fire, buckets of water, or a broom) tend to reduce the Size of the swarm rather than doing damage. Estimate what proportion of the swarm's volume is affected and reduce Size accordingly.

Being made up of many smaller individuals, a swarm is hard to destroy. Unless a swarm is destroyed outright, it can disengage and return at full strength after a number of rounds equal to its single highest Wound penalty.

A swarm of venomous creatures bites or stings numerous times each round. Make one Stamina roll to resist the venom of all bites received in the same round but increase the severity of the wound normally inflicted by the venom. If attacking targets equal to a fifth of its Size then the severity is increased by three steps; if targets are equal to half its size or less, increase by two steps; otherwise increase by one step. *Example:* bee venom normally inflicts no wound, but a swarm of Size +5 inflicts a Heavy Wound on 1 target, a Medium Wound on 2 to 3 targets, and a Light Wound on 4 or 5 targets. Increase the Ease Factor for the Stamina roll to resist venom by 1 for each consecutive round of combat to represent the cumulative effect of multiple bites.

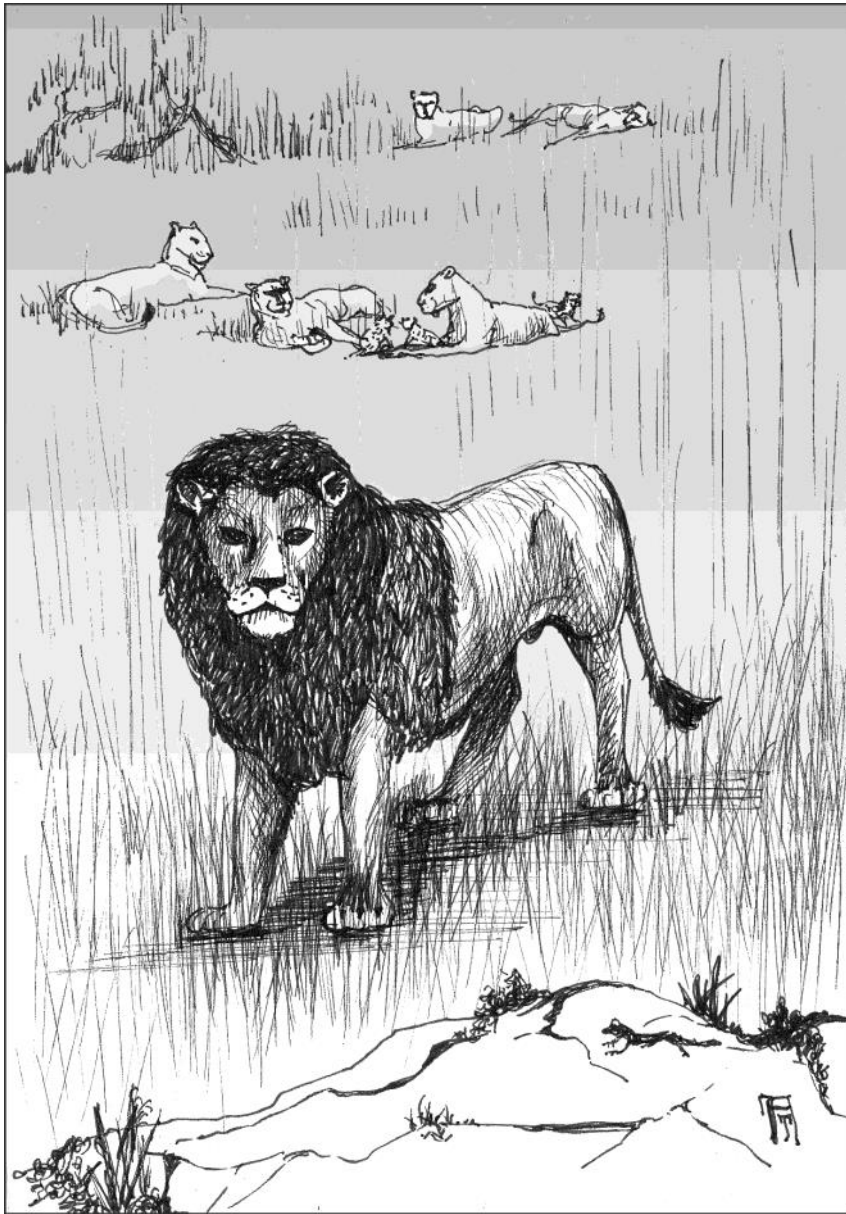
Swarms can combine to form larger swarms. Two swarms of the same number combine to increase Size by 1. Five swarms increase Size by 2. Ten swarms increase Size by 3. As well as affecting venom potency due to the increase in Size, add 2 points of Strength and subtract 1 point of Quickness for each point of Size and adjust wound ranges accordingly.

A swarm counts as Target: Group, and for this purpose its Size is based on its mass

Size +2; outside of these limits the features associated with Size can make a character difficult to play. Once Size has been chosen, derive adjusted Strength by adding twice Size, and adjusted Quickness by subtracting Size. If the character is larger or smaller than average members of his species (i.e. through the Large or Small-Framed

Virtue and Flaw), this does not affect Strength or Quickness unless specified in the description of the Virtue or Flaw.

Size can add to Ability rolls; whenever this is done the storyguide should determine whether the creature's size is a help or a hindrance and adjust the sign of the Characteristic



appropriately. For example, small size is advantageous when trying not to be seen, so a storyguide might ask for a $Dex + Stealth - Size$ roll. However, high mass is advantageous for preventing being knocked over; this might be a $Stamina + Athletics + Size$ roll. Ability rolls involving Strength or Quickness are not usually modified by Size, since these Characteristics are already adjusted for the creature's Size. Evasion Totals (see later) are an exception to this rule.

VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Virtues and Flaws should be considered as features of an individual animal that makes it different from members of its own species. Unlike the rules presented in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, an animal character does not need to take Virtues which represent the aptitudes inherent to its form (such as Sharp Ears for a dog); these things are now covered by Qualities. This brings animals in line with human characters, who have no intrinsic Qualities and no obligatory Virtues or Flaws imposed for being human.

MODIFIED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Great (Characteristic)

Minor General Virtue

As per **ArM5**, except to note that this raises the base score in the Characteristic; any adjustments are cumulative with this Virtue.

Improved Characteristics

Minor General Virtue

Grants 3 extra points or $3+Size$ points (whichever is greater) to spend on Characteristics. Do not include Size adjusted by Virtues and Flaws, but do include Size adjusted by Qualities (mundane or supernatural). Apply these points to the base Characteristics rather than the adjusted ones. The Reduced Characteristics Flaw remains unchanged.

Poor (Characteristic)

Minor General Flaw

As per **ArM5**, except to note that this lowers the base score in the Characteristic; any adjustments are cumulative with this Flaw.

NEW VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Companion Animal

Minor Social Status Virtue

You are the Animal Companion of another character (either a player character or a storyguide character) and therefore has little control over your own life. However, you have a privileged existence as a favored work animal, pet or mount. Among people who know your master, you are treated better than you would be otherwise. Adjust your Communication by -1 and Presence by -1 around humans. You are largely dependent on your master for food and shelter, and have an additional Personality Trait of 'Loyal to Master' which represents this bond.

Domestic Animal

Free Social Status Virtue

You are an animal who is the property of a covenant or character, and

Animal	Size	Social Status	Cun	Per	Pre	Com	Str	Sta	Dex	Qik	Points
Adder	-8	Wild Beast	0	3	+3 (+2)	-6 (-3)	-13 (+3)	1	2	+5 (-3)	+7
Bear	2	Wild Beast	1	0	+1 (0)	-4 (-1)	+6 (+2)	3	0	0 (+2)	+12*
Bull	2	Domestic Animal	-2	-2	-3 (0)	0 (+1)	+7 (+3)	3	-1	-2 (0)	7
Cat	-4	Companion Animal	0	1	-2 (-1)	-1 (0)	-7 (+1)	0	3	+4 (0)	7
Hare	-4	Wild Animal	0	3	-3 (-2)	-5 (-2)	-8 (0)	2	2	+5 (+1)	7
Hart	1	Wild Animal	-1	0	0 (+1)	-3 (0)	+3 (+1)	2	0	0 (+2)	7
Hawk	-3	Wild Animal	-1	2	0 (+1)	-5 (-2)	-6 (0)	1	3	+4 (+1)	7
Hen	-4	Domestic Animal	-3	2	-3 (0)	-1 (-0)	-6 (+2)	2	2	+2 (-2)	+4**
Horse	2	Companion Animal	-2	1	-1 (0)	-2 (-1)	+4 (0)	3	1	0 (+2)	7
Hound	-1	Companion Animal	0	2	-1 (0)	0 (+1)	-1 (+1)	1	1	+1 (0)	7
Pig	0	Domestic Animal	0	0	-3 (0)	-1 (0)	3	2	-1	-1	7
Salmon	-1	Wild Animal	-2	-2	0 (+1)	-6 (-3)	+1 (+3)	3	2	+1 (0)	+4**
Wolf	-1	Wild Beast	1	2	+1 (0)	-3 (0)	-1 (+1)	2	1	+1 (0)	+9*

* Requires Improved Characteristics (note effects of Size under Modified Virtues and Flaws)

** Requires Poor Characteristics

are supplied with food and shelter. You are expected to serve your master in return for this provender, as a mount, beast of burden, hunter, or so forth. You are shown no special favor, and are likely treated as a brute or a dumb beast. Adjust your Communication by -1 and Presence by -3 around humans.

Expertise

Minor General Virtue

You may take one three-year training package without increasing your age. This represents experience gained with immediate feedback, such as heightened practice or through a trainer.

Familiar

Free Social Status Virtue

You are the familiar of a magus (or certain other type of hedge wizard). You are treated with the same reverence as your master by your covenfolk and other servants of the Order who know what you are. You should take another Social Status Virtue to indicate how you are treated by those who don't know your identity, which typically matches that of mundane animals of your species.

Ferocity

Minor General Virtue

This Virtue may only be taken by animal characters. Like companion and magus characters you have Confidence points. However, your Confidence points may only be used in situations where your natural animal ferocity is triggered, such as when defending your den or fighting a natural enemy. Describe a situation which activates your Confidence, and take three Confidence points and a Confidence Score of 1 to use when those circumstances are met.

Wild Animal

Minor Social Status Flaw

You are a wild animal (in Latin, *fera*) of a non-aggressive kind, and are neither persecuted nor feared. Most humans you encounter treat you with caution or indifference. You must find your own food and seek your own shelter, and occasionally avoid predators (including mankind). Adjust your Communication by -3 and Presence by -1 around humans.

Wild Beast

Major Social Status Flaw

You are a wild beast (in Latin, *belua*) that on occasion poses a threat to humans; and consequently you are treated with fear or hostility by them. Your presence near settlements may provoke brave characters to seek you out and try to slay you. Adjust your Communication by -3 and Presence by +1 around humans.

CHARACTERISTIC TEMPLATES

The following table provides pre-calculated Characteristics for a selection of creatures. Where Characteristics have been modified by Size or Social Status, the base values are given in parentheses. These templates can be used to quickly determine the Characteristics of similar animals not listed below.

QUALITIES

A Quality is a feature possessed by an animal species. Qualities do not need to be purchased during character creation, they are chosen (with the consent of the troupe, if necessary) to

suit the animal species under consideration.

Qualities represent things that the animal is particularly good at compared with humans, or else they offer a special ability such as a venomous bite or walking on vertical surfaces. If the benefit granted is not shared by the species as a whole but just an individual, then it should be treated as a Virtue instead.

Qualities often give significant mechanical bonuses to an animal but they are balanced by the intrinsic penalties of the animal form such as lack of true intelligence or language, often shorter life spans, lack of thumbs, and so forth.

SYMPATHIES

In a major change from *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, Qualities under these rules no longer alter Characteristics or Ability scores. Instead, they may grant Sympathies. These are traits which replace the specialty of an Ability with their score whenever the situation described by the Sympathy applies. They can potentially apply to a range of different Abilities, so a Good Sense of Smell Sympathy could apply to Awareness rolls to detect the approach of an opponent, Hunt rolls to follow prey, or Survival rolls to scavenge food. A character can benefit from only one Sympathy at a time, and they do not stack, just use the highest applicable value. Many Virtues offer Sympathy-like bonuses and these do not stack with Qualities or provide any additional benefit.

For example:

All dogs share the Good Hearing +3 Sympathy. If a dog's specialty in Awareness is 'food', it normally gets a +1 to the roll whenever food is involved. If an Awareness roll involves hearing, then the dog claims the higher bonus of +3 to hearing rather than the +1 for food, although the dog could still use his specialty of 'food' for a +1 bonus in situations where hearing is not applicable. Further, a dog would gain no

benefit from the Sharp Ears Virtue, which gives a similar bonus to its Sympathy.

Sympathies can be negative, indicating things at which an animal is particularly poor. A negative sympathy is always applied when applicable instead of any specialty

GENERAL QUALITIES

Every animal has one of the following Qualities, and it should be listed first in the Quality section of the statistics block, much like Social Status is listed first in the Virtues section. Note down permitted Abilities granted by Qualities: these will be used in the next step of character creation.

Hoofed Animal: You are a four-footed creature with hooves. Your natural weapons are your hooves, and your fur or thick skin provides a Protection of 1. Your permitted Abilities are: Area Lore, Athletics, Awareness, Brawl, and Survival

Clawed Animal: You are a four-footed creature with claws. Your natural weapons are either your claws or your teeth (pick one), and your fur provides a Protection of 1. Your permitted Abilities are: Area Lore, Athletics, Awareness, Brawl, and Survival

Bird: You are a bird. You have a pair of wings and can fly, and may also walk or hop as a secondary mode of movement. Your natural weapons are either your claws or your beak (pick one), and your feathers provides a Protection of 1. Your permitted Abilities are: Area Lore, Fly, Awareness, Brawl, and Survival

Fish: You are an aquatic animal with either fins instead of legs or else webbed feet. You can breathe water by default, although furred 'fish' (beavers, otters, seals) are air breathers. Your natural weapons are your teeth, and your scales or fur provides a Protection of 1. Your permitted Abilities are: Area Lore, Awareness, Brawl, Survival, and Swim. Some fish also have legs, granted by the Legged Quality.

AVOID QUALITY BLOAT

The troupe should be cautious when assigning Qualities to an animal, particularly those granting Sympathies. Qualities represent exceptional talent in a specific area that cannot be represented through Characteristics or Abilities. A Quality should be applied when an animal is famous for a particular aptitude, or where an animal exceeds in one aspect of a Characteristic or Ability but is normal in others.

For example:

Many animals can run fast, but this doesn't mean they should all have the Swift Quality: Athletics and a positive Quickness may be enough. The Swift Quality should be reserved for those animals who are famous for their speed, like some horses or antelopes.

An animal with good all-round senses probably has a high Perception. Good Eyesight is reserved for those animals who have normal hearing and sense of smell but exceptional eyesight.

Animals that are known for known for running, jumping, and climbing should have a high Athletics; but cats are hardly known for their running ability, so probably have Good Balance and Good Climber rather than a high Athletics score.

Serpent: You are a scaly creature that crawls upon its belly. Your natural weapons are your teeth, and your scales provides a Protection of 1. Your permitted Abilities are: Area Lore, Awareness, Brawl, Survival, and Swim. Some serpents have legs, granted by the Legged Quality.



Worm: You are a creature without a backbone that is generated rather than reproduced. This covers all insects, arachnids, crustaceans, and so forth. Some other animals (e.g. fish, frogs, mice) are also spontaneously generated, but they are not worms. You have no natural weapons or integument that provides Protection. Your permitted Abilities are: Area Lore, Awareness, Brawl, Survival and either Athletics (if you have legs but not wings), Fly (if you have wings), or Swim (if you have neither legs nor wings)

SUB ROSA SPECIFIC QUALITIES

Acrobatic: Gain the Acrobatic +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving tumbles or rolls. Note that this can be used with Athletics, Fly, and/or Swim, but does not add to

Evasion unless the character desires to be prone until their next action.

Amphibious: Add Swim to list of permitted Abilities. Gain swimming as a secondary mode of movement.

Athletic: Add Athletics to list of permitted Abilities.

Awe-Inspiring: Gain the Awe-Inspiring +3 Sympathy which can be used to force Morale checks or instill awe.

Beast of Burden: increase Strength by one half before calculating Encumbrance.

Burrower: Gain burrowing as a secondary mode of movement.

Camouflaged: Gain the Camouflaged +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls to avoid detection when not moving.

Crushing Jaws: the animal has powerful jaws that inflict 3 more points of damage than usual. If using the Grab Worn Item combat maneuver, the animal can break the item grabbed by forcing it to make a Stress Check, adding the creature's Teeth Damage Total to the roll. If the result is 15 or more, the item loses a Damage Level

Deceitful: Add Guile to list of permitted Abilities. If unintelligent, the creature is only capable of simple ruses and feints to confuse others.

Deep Breather: double the interval between Deprivation rolls due to lack of air. Typically possessed by air-breathing 'fish'.

Dense Fur: +2 to Protection; this Quality stacks with natural Protection and other Qualities affecting Protection except where noted. The animal also gains the Dense Fur +3 Sympathy which adds to Deprivation rolls against exposure and to Soak totals against frostbite.

Extra Arms: the creature has an extra set of manipulators. This is not necessary for extra legs used only for walking. The creature gains the Extra Arms +3 Sympathy, which adds to attempts to climb, grapple, and certain other Strength or Dexterity-related tasks. If the creature is sentient, it can wield a Great Weapon and a shield, or two Single Weapons and a shield, and counts as an extra individual in any Trained Group without increasing the Leadership requirement.

Extra Natural Weapons: gain an extra set of Natural Weapons, such as Horns, Antlers, Teeth, Tusks, Claws, or Hooves. Only one set of weapons may be used in each round of combat. This quality may be taken more than once.

Gliding Wings: gain flight as a secondary mode of movement. This covers creatures that glide with membranes rather than those possessed of true powered flight (which are either birds or flying worms). Gliders cannot typically gain altitude unassisted, but

some can achieve impressive horizontal movement as they descend.

Good Balance: Gain the Good Balance +3 Sympathy which applies to any rolls to avoid falling or tripping. This is not cumulative with the Perfect Balance Virtue; that bonus supersedes this one.

Good Climber: Gain the Good Climber +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving climbing, scaling sheer surfaces, and scrambling up inclines.

Good Eyesight: Gain the Good Eyesight +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving the sense of sight. This is not cumulative with the Keen Vision Virtue.

Good Hearing: Gain the Good Hearing +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving the sense of hearing. This is not cumulative with the Sharp Ears Virtue.

Good Jumper: gain the Good Jumper +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving leaping vertical or horizontal distances

Good Sense of Smell: Gain the Good Sense of Smell +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving the sense of smell

Hardy: the animal is rugged and athletic. Gain one fatigue level. This Quality stacks with other Qualities that grant extra fatigue levels.

Heat-Adapted: Gain the Heat-Adapted +3 Sympathy which applies to all Deprivation rolls made in hot climates.

Heavy Scales: +3 to Protection; this Quality stacks with natural Protection and other Qualities affecting Protection except where noted

Herd/Pack Animal: Can fight as an Untrained Group, or a Trained Group with a leader

Herd/Pack Leader: Add Leadership to list of permitted Abilities, can lead a Trained Group of the same species.

Hunter: Add Hunt to list of permitted Abilities

Large Claws: the creature's claws are larger than average for a creature of its size. Use the weapon statistics for Large Claws listed below.

Large Horns/Antlers: the creature's horns or antlers are larger than average for a creature of its size. Use the weapon statistics for Large Horns listed below.

Large Teeth/Tusks: the creature's teeth are larger than average for a creature of its size. Use the weapon statistics for Large Teeth listed below.

Legged: available to Fish and Serpents, you have four strong legs useful for walking as your primary mode of movement. Add Athletics to list of permitted Abilities, and gain the movement rate of a four-footed animal.

Loathsome: Gain the Loathsome +3 Sympathy, which can be used to horrify and repel.

Long Runner: Gain the Long Runner +3 Sympathy trait which applies to all Fatigue rolls when running

Man-Wise: Add Folk Ken to list of permitted Abilities. This is not a necessary Quality for domesticated beasts, who by-and-large ignore or fail to comprehend patterns in human behavior. However, this Ability proves useful to creatures who specifically serve (or hunt) man.

Mimic: the creature is capable of mimicking other noises, such as a human voice. Unless it is sentient, it does not understand the meaning of the sounds it makes. Add Profession: Mimic to the list of permitted Abilities

Nauseating Odor: when startled or panicked the creature can produce excreta which causes nausea to those within three paces. Those within range must make a Stamina roll to avoid a penalty to all actions for the rest of the scene, the Ease Factor (typically 6 or 9) and the penalty (typically -1 or -3) vary according to the creature. Opponents with the Good Sense of Smell Quality

suffer the Sympathy as a penalty to the Stamina roll. This Quality can be found in some sea birds and snakes.

Night Vision: Gain the Night Vision +3 Sympathy which adds to all rolls to do with seeing in darkness (this actually offsets the penalty that other creatures suffer in darkness). This Quality can be taken up to three times; a typical lightless night imposes a -6 bonus, and total darkness imposes a -9 penalty. The creature's eyes shine in the darkness.

Poisonous: the creature secretes poison through its skin, or else anoints itself with poison from another source. Any opponent biting the creature and inflicting a wound is immediately subjected to the toxin. A very poisonous creature may be able to affect its victims just through skin contact. The Ease Factor to avoid damage from poison varies from 3 to 15 (see **ArM5**, page 180).

Prehensile Tail: the creature has a tail with which it can perform simple manipulations. It has the Prehensile Tail +3 Sympathy which assists with climbing rolls. The tail can be used for tasks usually performed with a hand, but with a -3 penalty.

Shell: the creature is encased in a protective shell. Replaces any current Protection with Protection 8. This Protection does not stack with that granted by other Qualities, but these Qualities can still be taken for parts of the body not covered with the shell.

Most shelled creatures also have the Pondering and Ungainly Inferiorities.

Slippery: Gain the Slippery +3 Sympathy which adds to rolls to avoid and escape from holds and to squeeze through tight spaces. This Quality may be taken twice; this increases the Sympathy to +6.

Spiny: the creature is covered in spines; these grant a +2 bonus to Protection. If any opponent strikes at a Spiny creature with a bite, claw or fist attack, he inflicts damage as normal, but suffers +5 damage in return (the



attacker receives a Soak roll against this damage). Some creatures may envenom their spines (see Venomous Quality); in which case the attacker's own Attack Advantage is used against itself to determine the success of the Venom attack only

Stalker: Gain the Stalker +3 Sympathy which adds to all rolls to remain hidden while moving, although movement is restricted to half normal walking speed. If the animal has remained undetected when it attacks it gains this bonus to Initiative and the first Attack Total of the combat.

Stealthy: Add Stealth to list of permitted Abilities

Swift: gain the Swift +3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving speed of movement. This adds to Quickness when calculating speed.

Thick Hide: +1 to Protection; this Quality stacks with natural Protection and other Qualities affecting Protection except where noted. Certain animals can take this Quality more than once to represent particularly thick skins. Bears might have this Quality twice, boars three times, and hippopotamuses four times.

Thumbs: the animal has opposable thumbs, and can carry objects and manipulate simple tools.

Tireless: The animal has hidden depths of energy. Gain one fatigue level. This Quality stacks with other Qualities that grant extra fatigue levels.

Venomous: One of the creature's attacks (usually the bite) also delivers venom into the wound. Compare the Attack Advantage (rather than Damage Total) to the victim's Protection (rather than Soak). If the creature's advantage is higher, then the victim suffers the effect of the venom, regardless of whether the bite inflicts an actual wound. The Ease Factor to avoid damage from venom varies from 3 to 15 (see *ArM5*, page 180).

Vocal: the creature can produce impressive vocalizations, such as a powerful roar or howl, beautiful birdsong or the like. The creature can be heard twice as far as normal (30 paces at normal volume, 200 paces for the equivalent of shouting). Add Profession: Singer to list of permitted Abilities

Wall Walker: the creature can walk on vertical surfaces and even upside-down with ease.

INFERIORITIES

Negative Qualities are called Inferiorities. These mostly take the form of Minor Personality Flaws that are shared by the whole species.

Carefree: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Cold-Blooded: the creature is sluggish and slow in cold weather; gain Cold Blooded -3 Sympathy which applies to all Deprivation, Fatigue, and speed-related rolls made when the temperature is below 10°C.

Dominion of Adam: the animal has little sense of independence or self-will, and blithely accepts man as its master. It gains the Obedient to Man +3 Personality Trait, and cannot have the

Ferocity Virtue. Many domestic animals have this Inferiority.

Fear: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Flightless: taken by birds only, this Inferiority takes away their primary mode of movement (wings), leaving them with only two legs.

Greedy: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Harmless Appearance: the creature has the Harmless Appearance – 3 Sympathy which applies to all attempts to impress

Hatred: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Lecherous: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Light Blinded: Gain the Light Blinded –3 Sympathy which applies to all actions requiring eyesight during the day or in bright conditions.

Nocturnal: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Pondering: Gain the Pondering –3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving speed

Proud: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Pungent: the creature has a powerful odor. Gain the Pungent –3 Sympathy which affects its social interactions and possibly its ability to remain hidden.

Quiet: the creature has a weak voice and capable of little more than a whisper. The loudest noise it can make can be heard only 15 paces away, and its normal vocalizations travel only 5 paces at most.

Reclusive: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Slothful: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

Thin-Skinned: the animal's natural covering is insufficient to provide resistance against damage, and has a Protection of 0

NEW ABILITY: FLY

This Ability can only be possessed by creatures with wings. It is used by winged animals in a manner similar to Athletics. Rolls on this Ability do not need to be made for normal flight, but tricky aerial maneuvers, winged pursuits, and precision flying require Fly rolls. The Ability also assists in avoiding Fatigue level loss for long distance or strenuous flying.

Specialties: speed, acrobatics, silent flying, endurance

Timid: the animal has the Timid –3 Sympathy which applies to all aggressive actions including Attack Totals.

Ungainly: Gain the Ungainly –3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving balance or jumping

Weak Eyesight: Gain the Weak Eyesight –3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving the sense of sight.

Weak Hearing: Gain the Weak Hearing –3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving the sense of hearing.

Weak Sense of Smell: Gain the Weak Sense of Smell –3 Sympathy which applies to all rolls involving the sense of smell.

Weaponless: The animal's teeth, claws, or hooves are ineffective as melee weapons

Wrathful: As per the Minor Flaw. This grants a Personality Trait at +3

ABILITIES

As stated earlier, animal characters possess a limited number of Abilities, typically five plus any granted by Qualities or Virtues. They cannot even use an Ability untrained if it is not on their list of permitted Abilities, so an animal without the Swim Ability will probably drown if put in water in which

GRANTING QUALITIES WITH MAGIC

There are three ways to obtain or grant a Quality to a human using Muto Corpus, depending on the level of reorganization desired. A (free) Animal requisite is required because the target is taking on an animal's characteristic.

The Level 2 Muto Corpus guideline allows a Hermetic spell to “change someone to give them a minor ability.” The canonical example is Eyes of the Cat (*ArM5*, page 131), which in effect grants the Night Vision Quality. This can be used as a pattern for granting other Qualities that repurpose the limbs and organs already possessed by the target. This covers most of the Qualities that grant Sympathies such as Good Hearing, Swift, or Vocal.

For Qualities which provide specific body parts not possessed by humans (such as Dense Fur, Extra Natural Weapons, or Prehensile Tail), use the Level 5 Muto Corpus guideline published in *Magi of Hermes* (page 49): “add or remove human body parts from the target in such a way that he no longer looks human”; this requires Target: Part. The requisite allows for non-human body parts.

If the Quality invoked requires a major change to the target's physiology (such as acquiring functional wings or gills), then use the Muto Corpus guidelines for turning into the appropriate animal, but with Target: Part to acquire only the organs of interest and retain the other advantages of being human.

it cannot stand. Unlike human characters, animals cannot acquire new Abilities by finding a suitable Source Quality, and should not take training packages (see below) that include an Ability they do not possess.

Animals can gain new Abilities throughout their life, but only from Teaching or Training by an intelligent character (usually a human) who has the Ability. Even once the Ability is gained, they still need to receive experience points from a Teaching of Training source to increase the new Ability; they cannot use Practice or Exposure to improve it.

LANGUAGE ABILITIES

Animals cannot speak, but they can understand any human languages in which they have been trained or taught. Whenever receiving experience points in a human language the Source Quality is always (4 + Cunning). A creature without Intelligence cannot have a Language Ability greater than 2, and animals with a negative Cunning score takes that score as a penalty to any human Language Abilities when determining how much they understand (**ArM5**, page 66). Thus a creature with a Cunning of -1 and French 2 can only understand French as if its score was 1 and it can never improve this, since that would require having French greater than 2.

Animals can communicate with members of their own (and closely related) kinds, and this should be represented by a Language Ability with a score of 2, and is not modified by negative Cunning. This Ability costs the animal no experience points. Thus a dog has the Language Ability of Wolf at 2, a horse knows Horse 2, and so on. Closely-related animals share this Language Ability. This Ability should only be used to gauge the extent to which animals can communicate with one another (**ArM5**, page 66); it does not limit social Abilities on conspecifics, for example.

An example scheme of animal languages is given below. The groups are quite broad, and named (with Latin labels) after prominent members of the group. There are a few anomalies here, such as the fact that weasels speak the language of bears, or that hares and rabbits speak different languages. This is deliberate, in order to make most languages useful.

- Lupus (wolves, dogs, foxes, jackals)
- Ursus (bears, weasels, martens, badgers)
- Leo (cats, lynxes, lions and other big cats)
- Cervus (all deer, moose, cows, hares)
- Hircus (sheep, goats, antelopes, camels)
- Mus (rats, mice, rabbits, hedgehogs, moles)
- A p e r (p i g s , b o a r , hippopotamuses)
- Equus (horses, donkeys, unicorns/rhinoceroses, elephants)
- Simia (all monkeys)
- Salmo (all river fish)
- Phoca (all furred fish: seals, otters, beavers)
- Clupeus (all open-water sea fish, whales, dolphins)
- Cancer (all sea-bottom fish, lobsters, crabs)
- Cygnus (storks, herons, waders, ducks, geese, swan)
- Columba (all songbirds, pigeons, doves)
- Aquila (falcons, hawks, eagles, owls, bats, nightjars)
- Pavo (grouse, pheasant, partridge, peafowl, chickens)
- Corvus (raven, crow, magpie)
- Apis (all snakes)

- Lacerta (lizards, salamanders, frogs, toads, crocodiles)
- Apis (bees, wasps, flies)
- Araneus (spiders)
- Lumbricus (worms, snails, slugs, beetles)

Hyenas don't have a language of their own, rather they mimic and adapt the language of whatever they hear while growing up. This is true even of a human language, although in this case the animal does not understand what it is saying but uses a gobbledygook that sounds like a real language but has no meaning except to the hyena.

SEASON

Animals age at different rates, but do not learn at the same speed throughout their lives. Many animals cease learning when they reach adulthood, and gain experience points from only exposure for the rest of their life.

Rather than using age to determine Abilities (as for human characters), creatures gain a new statistic called

ANIMAL KEN

The rules for Animal Ken (**ArM5** page 62) make less sense if you adopt animal languages described in this article. By the rules, a character with Animal Ken can speak to any animal as if he had a Language score equal to the score in the Supernatural Ability. However, this overestimates the capacity of animals to share information, even with members of the same species, and will often result in the human character having a greater facility in an animal's language than the animal itself.

A suggested variant if using the rules above is to grant the character with this Supernatural Ability three animal languages per point in Animal Ken. Each language he knows is granted at a score of 2.

Season. The number of human-equivalent years of experience that an animal has is determined by its Season. Animals do not tend to gain any more experience points in adulthood once they reach the season normal for their species unless encouraged to do so by a trainer.

A Spring character is undeveloped; it is either a young animal or one with little curiosity about the world. Many herd animals are Spring characters. They have 120 experience points, or 8 years of training packages.

A Summer character is about as experienced as a young adult human. This is the typical season of a predator. They have 360 experience points, or 24 years of training packages.

An Autumn character is mature and worldly wise. They are typically leaders of their kind. They have 720 experience points, or 48 years of training packages.

A Winter character is amongst the eldest of creatures. It is unusual for a natural creature to be a Winter

character, but some birds and fish can reach a great age. They have 1200 experience points, or 100 years of training packages.

TRAINING PACKAGES

Groggs introduced the concept of Training Packages. These advance a character a certain number of years in age, and have pre-calculated experience points in different Abilities, allowing for the quick creation of characters. Add up all the experience points in each Ability from all chosen packages, then convert into Ability scores. Redistribute any excess points, or add individual years (at 15 xp each) to make up the difference.

Take a Type and a Role to get a typical Spring character. Each animal only takes one Type package and one Role package in its lifetime; use the Advanced packages to bring an animal character to the required age or season. Packages are still listed in terms of the equivalent age of a human character, but as described above, an animal may not be at the age indicated.



TYPE PACKAGES

Avis (Bird Quality)

5 years: +10 Area Lore, +30 Fly, +15 Awareness, +15 Brawl, +5 Survival

Piscis (Fish Quality)

5 years: +5 Area Lore, +5 Awareness, +5 Brawl, +30 Survival, +30 Swim

Quadrupedia (Hoofed or Clawed Animal Quality)

5 years: +15 Area Lore, +15 Athletics, +15 Awareness, +15 Brawl, +15 Survival

Serpens (Serpent Quality)

5 years: +10 Area Lore, +30 Awareness, +15 Brawl, +15 Survival, +5 Swim

Vermis (Worm Quality)

5 years: +5 Area Lore, +30 Athletics/Fly/Swim, +5 Awareness, +5 Brawl, +30 Survival

ROLE PACKAGES

Predator (Hunter Quality)

3 years: +15 Brawl, +30 Hunt

Herbivore

3 years: +15 Athletics, +15 Awareness, +15 Survival

Scavenger

3 years: +15 Area Lore, +30 Survival

ADVANCED PACKAGES

Ambusher (Stealthy Quality)

Stalker Quality highly recommended

5 years: +25 Brawl, +50 Stealth

3 years: +15 Brawl, +30 Stealth

Aquatic (Fish or Amphibious Quality)

5 years: +10 Area Lore, +50 Swim, +15 Awareness

3 years: +5 Area Lore, +30 Swim, +10 Awareness

Domesticated

5 years: +50 Area Lore, +25 Awareness

3 years: +30 Area Lore, +15 Awareness

Furtive (Stealthy Quality)

5 years: +25 Area Lore, +50 Stealth

3 years: +15 Area Lore, +30 Stealth

In Charge (Pack/Herd Leader Quality)

5 years: +25 Brawl, +50 Leadership

3 years: +15 Brawl, +30 Leadership

Physical

5 years: +45 Athletics, +25 Brawl, +5 Survival

3 years: +30 Athletics, +15 Brawl

Pursuer (Hunter Quality)

Hardy Quality highly recommended

5 years: +50 Athletics, +15 Hunt, +10 Brawl

3 years: +30 Athletics, +15 Hunt

Singing (Vocal Quality)

5 years: +75 Profession: Singer

3 years: +45 Profession: Singer

Territorial

5 years: +30 Area Lore, +20 Awareness, +25 Brawl

3 years: +20 Area Lore, +10 Awareness, +15 Brawl

Tracking (Hunter Quality)

5 years: +50 Hunt, +25 Survival

3 years: +30 Hunt, +15 Survival

Volant (Bird or Vermin Quality)

5 years: +10 Area Lore, +15 Awareness, +50 Fly

3 years: +5 Area Lore, +10 Awareness, +30 Fly

Wild

5 years: +25 Area Lore, +50 Survival

3 years: +15 Area Lore, +30 Survival

EXAMPLE BUILDS

A Rat: +30 Area Lore, +15 Athletics, +15 Awareness, +15 Brawl, +50 Survival (Quadrupedia, Scavenger + 5xp=125 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl 2, Survival 4

A Hawk: +15 Area Lore, +60 Fly, +25 Awareness, +30 Brawl, +30 Hunt, +5 Survival (Avis, Predator, Volant (3 yrs) =165 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 2, Fly 4(5), Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Hunt 3, Survival 1

An Asp: +30 Area Lore, +5 Swim, +40 Awareness, +70 Brawl, +30 Hunt, +50 Stealth, +15 Survival (Serpens, Predator, Ambusher (5yrs), Territorial (3 yrs) = 240 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 3, Swim 1, Awareness 3(5), Brawl 5, Hunt 3, Stealth 4, Survival 2

A Horse: +60 Area Lore, +75 Athletics, +30 Awareness, +40 Brawl, +35 Survival (Quadrupedia, Herbivore, Physical (5 yrs), Domesticated (3 yrs) = 240 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 4, Athletics 5, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Survival 3(5)

A Wolf: +30 Area Lore, +65 Athletics, +15 Awareness, +40 Brawl, +60 Hunt, +45 Survival (Quadrupedia, Predator, Pursuer (5 yrs), Wild (3 yrs), +15xp = 255 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 4, Hunt 5, Survival 4

Experienced wolves could add Territorial (3 yrs), raising Area Lore to 4 (10), Awareness to 3(5), and Brawl to 5. Pack Leaders should take Territorial (3 yrs) and In Charge (5 yrs), gaining the Abilities of experienced wolves plus Leadership 4 and, with 5 more experience points, Brawl 6

A Lion: +60 Area Lore, +45 Athletics, +35 Awareness, +95 Brawl, +30 Hunt, +50 Leadership, +45 Survival (Quadrupedia, Predator,

Territorial (5), In Charge (5), Physical (3), Wild (3) = 360 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 4, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 6, Hunt 3, Leadership 4, Survival 3

A Bear: +45 Area Lore, +55 Athletics, +25 Awareness, +55 Brawl, +60 Hunt, +30 Swim, +85 Survival (Quadrupedia, Predator, Aquatic (3), Physical (5), Tracking (3), Wild (5)=360 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 3, Brawl 5, Hunt 4(5), Swim 3, Survival 5(10)

A Salmon: +120 Area Lore, +105 Awareness, +55 Brawl, +60 Survival, +230 Swim (Pisces, Scavenger, Aquatic (20 yrs), Territorial (10 yrs), Wild (10 yrs) = 720 xp)

Abilities: Area Lore 6, Awareness 6, Brawl 4(5), Survival 5, Swim 9(5)

COMBAT STATISTICS

All animals have one natural weapon (unless they have an inferiority negating this): either teeth, claws, or horns. They may have additional and/or larger natural weapons depending on Qualities. The statistics for natural weapons are given in a nearby table.

Animals without natural weapons, particularly small animals, tend to use Evasion rather than a Brawl Defense. This is calculated as Quickness + Athletics – Size + stress die; Size is included in this total even though an animal's Quickness has already been adjusted by Size once. The benefit of being very small cannot be overstated in combat! However, an animal that uses Evasion cannot attack on its next turn.

Most animals have a Protection of 1 provided by their hide, fur, scales, or feathers (unless they are Vermin or have an inferiority negating this). They may have additional Protection depending on Qualities.

Wound ranges are based on the animal's Size, as usual

Natural Weapons Table

(NB: this table is different from that in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*; these are better balanced with respect to manufactured weapons)

Weapon	Init	Atk	Dfn	Dam
Grapple	0	0	0	n/a
Dodge	0	n/a	0	n/a
Claws	-1	3	2	2
Large Claws	-2	4	3	4
Horns	1	5	-1	5
Large Horns or Antlers	-1	5	0	7
Hooves	-1	3	3	0
Teeth or Beak	2	3	1	1
Large Teeth	1	4	2	3
Large Tusks	-1	4	2	5
Sting*	1	6	0	-2
Tail or trunk**	0	3	3	4

*venomous bite of a snake or spider as well as sting of a scorpion or wasp

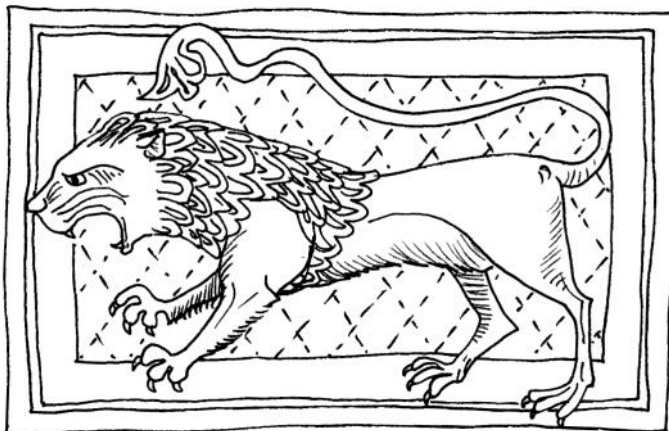
**Muscular tail like that of a crocodile, or else an elephant's trunk

Most animals have the standard 5 Fatigue levels. However, some Qualities can grant additional Fatigue levels. Extra Fatigue levels are added to each category in turn, so an animal with two extra Fatigue levels has 2 Fresh and 2 Winded levels, and this is represented in the character array as follows: 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Unconscious

All natural weapons use the Brawl Ability. Strength, Load and Cost are not applicable.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

Constrict: an animal capable of constricting must be long and sinuous, or else have enveloping limbs. An animal can only constrict a victim whose Size is less than its own. Constriction is based on the grappling



COMBAT OPTION: BEING PRONE

A prone character has been knocked off his feet or tripped. If a prone character attacks on his turn then he cannot parry or evade as reactions, but must use his Brawl Defense Total instead. A prone character who does not attack in his action but does something else (such as try and fail to stand, or dithers) can continue to parry (but still not evade) his opponent's attacks. Note that a Trample attack cannot be parried even if the character does not use his action to attack.

A prone character must spend his turn regaining his feet, which is only automatically successful if he is disengaged from combat. If a prone character is still engaged by an enemy, then in order to regain his feet on his turn he must make a Dex + Brawl roll, which is opposed by his opponent's own Dex + Brawl reaction roll. If the prone character's roll is equal or higher than his opponent's then he stands up and is no longer prone.

rules (see Non-Lethal Combat, **ArM5**, page 174). As long as the animal maintains the grapple, its opponent is considered deprived of air (see **ArM5**, page 180). The victim must make a Stamina check every five rounds, or suffer the normal effects of deprivation; add half the grapple strength to the Ease Factor for these rolls. Once the animal has successfully grappled an opponent (and begun constricting), on subsequent rounds it can continue constricting and still attack with its bite. These attacks may be directed at the grappled victim, or at another opponent.

Pounce: In a pounce attack, an animal makes an attack with its claws while leaping onto its target, intent on knocking it prone. It then usually attacks with a bite. To conduct a pounce, the creature rolls Dexterity + Athletics stress roll to attack, and if the opponent is aware of the attack it can make an Evasion roll to get out of the way. If the attacker gets a three point advantage over its opponent, then the victim is knocked prone and the attacker may use the remaining Attack Advantage in a bite attack or as a grapple strength.

Overrun: Overrun attacks are typically made by large hoofed animals. This effect only applies if the creature has charged into combat, exerting itself into this attack. If the attack is successful, the opponent must make a Dexterity + Athletics stress roll against an Ease Factor equal to (Damage Total (before soak) + creature's Size - opponent's Size). If the roll fails, the opponent lands prone on the ground a number of feet away equal to the creature's Size. Calculate Damage Total without any Attack Advantage to simulate damage from the blow and subsequent fall; the creature uses antlers, horns, or tusks, or if none, then a buffet doing Strength damage only. The opponent must spend an action regaining his feet, although the creature normally follows up with a trample.

Render: the animal leaps at the opponent, attacking with two weapons (usually two claws) simultaneously, and attempts to tear its opponent apart. It can only be used against an opponent with whom the animal is not already engaged in combat. Make two attack rolls at a -3 penalty, opposed with a single defense roll. Calculate the attack advantage separately for each attack, then add together to calculate a single Damage Total (adding the Damage Bonus only once; if the weapons are different then use the highest). The animal must disengage and reengage to use this attack again.

Suffocate: the animal must first succeed in a grapple, targeting the

mouth or throat of the prey. As long as the animal maintains the grapple, its opponent is considered deprived of air (see **ArM5**, page 180). The victim must make a Stamina check every five rounds, or suffer the normal effects of deprivation. This attack is usually employed after a chase, so the opponent is already fatigued; use the Ease Factor of the last Fatigue roll as the starting Ease Factor of the Deprivation rolls.

Swallow Whole: an animal can swallow whole any creature that is at least five points of Size smaller than it. If the creature has not first been subdued with a Constriction attack (see above) or grapple it can struggle to escape, but it continues to be affected by constriction while swallowed. It is impossible to breathe inside the animal, requiring deprivation rolls (**ArM5**, page 180) even if the victim escapes the grapple. Three rounds after being swallowed, the victim reaches the stomach. The powerful acids inflict +9 damage every round, complete immersion quadruples this to +36 (**ArM5**, page 181). A character may be able to brace himself and avoid complete immersion: make a Strength + Athletics roll each round; Ease Factor 6 results in only half immersion (triple damage), Ease Factor 9 results in immersion of a limb (double damage), and Ease Factor 12 means just a splash (normal damage). The animal cannot swallow a second creature until the previous one has reached the stomach.

Trample: This is a hoof attack made against a prone target. Trample attacks cannot be parried, only evaded. Double

the creature's Damage Bonus to reflect strikes from multiple hooves.

Trip: A trip attack is made with a normal attack roll, but the defender must make a Brawl Defense or Evasion. If the attacker gets a three point attack advantage then the defender is tripped and left prone; this is instead of inflicting damage. A trip attempt may not be made on an opponent with a Size two or more points larger than the attacker.

Venomous: When the animal attacks, compare its Attack Advantage to the victim's armor Protection (not his Soak). If the animal's advantage is higher, the victim suffers the effects of the venom, regardless of whether the bite inflicts an actual wound.

MOVEMENT

All animals have a primary movement type:

- Clawed Beasts use four legs
- Hoofed Beasts use four legs
- Birds use wings, unless they have the Flightless Inferiority, then two legs
- Serpents crawl, unless they have the Legged Quality, then four legs
- Fish use fins, unless they have the Legged Quality, then four legs
- Worms crawl; regardless of whether they have legs, wings or fins, their movement rate is the same as crawling

	Walk / Amble	Hurry / Trot	Run / Canter	Sprint / Gallop
Four legged gaits	×1	×2	×4	×6
Two legged gaits	×1	×2	×3	×4
Flying	×2	×4	×6	×8
Swimming	×1	×2	×3	×4
Crawling/burrowing	×1	×2	n/a	n/a

Animal	Average Lifespan	Starting age	Begin aging at	Modifier to Aging Total	Aging roll frequency
Clawed Beast	9	1	6	+1 per 2 years	5 per year
Hoofed Beast	27	3	20	+1 per 5 years	2 per year
Bird	81	8	55	+1 per 15 years	1 per 2 years
Fish & Serpent	243	24	170	+1 per 50 years	1 per 5 years

HOW FAST CAN I RUN?

A human with a base move of 11 could achieve 44 paces per round at a gallop, enough to sprint a 4 minute (40 rounds) mile. However, this would require 40 Fatigue rolls, and at the half-way point the Ease Factor for these rolls would reach 21. Instead, a character is more likely to complete a 4 minute mile with a Quickness of +5 at a run, or else with a Quickness +3 and interspersing 16 rounds at a sprint (16 Fatigue rolls, covering 832 paces) with 24 rounds at a run (4 Fatigue rolls, covering 936 paces). This would still require a remarkable Athletics and Stamina to complete.

Paces per Round	Miles per Hour	Minutes per Mile
4	1.4	44
6	2	29.3
8	2.7	22
10	3.4	17.6
12	4.1	14.7
15	5.1	11.7
20	6.8	8.8
30	10.2	5.9
40	13.6	4.4
50	17	3.5
60	20.5	2.9
80	27.3	2.2
100	34.1	1.8
120	40.9	1.5
150	51.1	1.2

Animals with more than one mode of movement should choose their primary mode; this is usually the one appropriate to their type. Thus an otter is a Fish but has four legs. It is a more adept swimmer than it is a runner, so swimming is its primary movement mode.

Rate of movement for the primary mode is $(10 + \text{Quickness} - \text{Encumbrance} - \text{Fatigue penalties} - \text{Wound penalties})$ paces per round. For any secondary mode of movement, the rate is $(5 + \text{Quickness} - \text{Encumbrance} - \text{Fatigue penalties} - \text{Wound penalties})$ paces per round.

This is multiplied by a modifier according to the type of locomotion and the gait of the animal (see the nearby table).

Note that specialties and Sympathy bonuses add to their base movement before multiplying for gait.

Fatigue rolls have to be made every five minutes for a hurry, every minute for a run and every round for a sprint. These start at an Ease Factor of 3, but increase by one each time up to a maximum of 21. The character may add their Athletics, Swim, or Fly Ability (as appropriate) to their Stamina for the purposes of making these Fatigue rolls.

AGING

Aging can be mostly ignored for creatures designed as antagonists; simply choose an appropriate Season and apply the appropriate number of experience points. For animal characters on the other hand, you may wish to keep track specifically of the animal's age.

Animals age at a different rate to humans, and to each other. In Mythic Europe, birds, serpents, and fish have remarkably long lifespans, averaging nearly a quarter of a century in the latter's case. *Grogs* (page 138) provides a simple mechanic based on the usual aging rules but altering the age at which aging begins, the modifiers for age to the Aging Total, and the frequency of the rolls.

CARPENTER FISH

BY GUY LEOPOLD

For centuries mariners have heard a strange tapping sound emanating from the depths of the ocean. When the winds drop and the seas are calm, the sound like tiny hammers upon wood wells up from unseen source, the sound of carpenters at work beneath the surface. Some aged salts describe rare encounters with shoals of faerie fish, skilled carpenters and shipwrights, able to repair damaged ships without the need for them to set into dry dock.

These carpenter fish manifest as a shimmering shoal of silver fish. The shoal normally takes on humanoid shape, although it may disperse and reform at will. Suspended within the shoal, as though hung from a belt at its

middle, are a hammer and a chisel, the tools the fish use to go about their work. A shoal of carpenter fish are incognizant faeries able to communicate and bargain.

A covenant at sea, or passengers aboard a stricken ship, might seek out these carpenter fish and barter for their services. However, unscrupulous forces might seek to entrap them, enslave them, and put them to work.

HABITAT

Carpenter fish, unsurprisingly, are found only at sea. They are normally deep-sea fish only rarely coming to the surface.

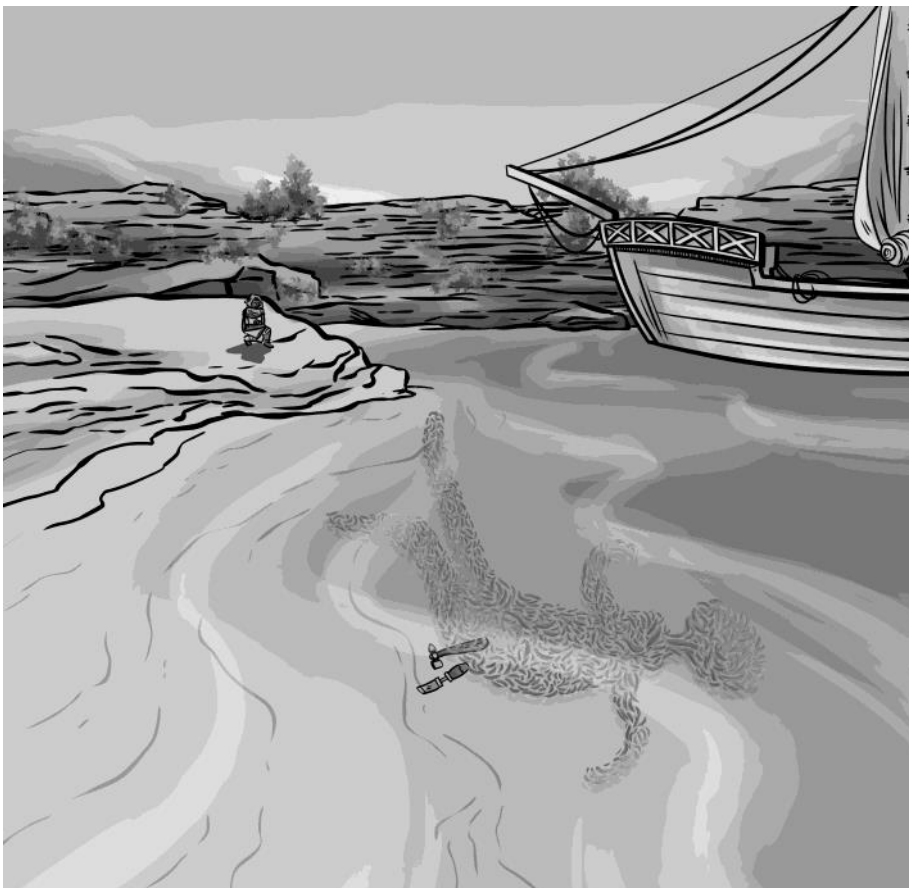
They are attracted to vessels in distress and at risk of imminent sinking and in such cases they might be encountered anywhere at sea. A crew purposefully seeking them out needs to find a faerie aura, however, and this might be identified by strange phenomenon on the surface of the sea, such as an area of calm water amid the waves, or a reflection of a full moon on the ocean during a new or crescent moon.

Once such a phenomenon has been located, the confirmation of the presence of the carpenter fish comes when the crew fall silent; only then can the sound of otherworldly tapping coming from far below the ship's hull be heard. Once located, the crew may then ask for their aid.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Carpenter fish are benevolent in terms of their behavior towards sailors and those who approach them for their services. For instance, they spontaneously help those in danger by patching-up ships taking on water and at risk of going down. In game terms (and we'll assume you're using the Damaged Goods rules from *City & Guild*, page 77) when a ship has lost all Damage Levels, the carpenter fish will repair a single Damage Level using their Ritual Power as described below.

The fish do this out of altruism but woe betide the crew who fail to show gratitude. A crew who take the saving of



their ship for granted never again benefit from the kindness of the carpenter fish. Gratitude is shown typically through sending some kind of offering down to the bottom of the sea. There is no set ritual or item that the carpenter fish require, simply that the offering is a genuine expression of gratitude.

A crew seeking out the carpenter fish may send down an offering in return for the repair of a single damage level to the hull below the water line. Anything more, including repairs above the water line, requires negotiation, which means visiting them deep below the surface.

The shoal of carpenter fish has the ability to speak so assuming that the envoy has the ability to breathe and speak under water, the carpenter fish are open to discussions.

The carpenter fish may repair more than one Damage Level but they always require special service in return. For instance, this service may be to hunt a shark that has been threatening the

shoal, or to retrieve one of their tools caught up in a fisherman's net.

Magical repairs are completed over night and must be completed without being observed, this restriction a result of their Traditional Ward. But they are also able to complete repairs using their pretenses, in which case the repairs are completed over the course of a week.

STORY SEED

After a battle with a raging sea monster, the covenant's ship is damaged and taking on water. Then the sound of tapping can be heard coming from below the water, heralding the arrival of the Carpenter Fish. This would normally be welcome, but this time the Carpenter Fish cannot help. Their enchanted tools have been swallowed by a great shark. If the ship is to be repaired, the tools must be retrieved from the belly of the shark.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

Their ability to repair ships overnight without the need for setting into port is service enough worth seeking out the Carpenter Fish. They might also have knowledge of other ships that have used or sought their services, or have noticed ships recently passing through their waters.

The hammer and chisel used by the shoal of Carpenter Fish contain a pawn of vis. They also grant their user the Puissant Carpenter Virtue.

A shoal of Carpenter Fish is unlikely to make a suitable familiar.

CARPENTER FISH

Faerie Might: 5 (Animal)

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

Size: 0

Virtues and Flaws: External Vis (Major), Ritual Power; Lesser Power x 2, Faerie Speech, Positive Folktales; Enemies (Sharks, Fishermen), Slow Might Recovery; Incognizant, Slow Power (Running Repairs), Slow Power (The Unseen Shipwright), Traditional Ward (being watched while they work)

Personality Traits: Long Memory +3, Helpful +2, Easily Spooked +1

Combat:

Dodge: Init+0, Attack n/a, Defense +2, Damage n/a

Bite: Init+0, Attack +4, Defense +1, Damage +2

Soak: +0

Fatigue Levels: N/A

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

Pretenses: Awareness 3 (looking out for predators), Bargain 4 (cost of repairs), Brawl 1 (dodge), Craft: Carpenter 5

(repairs), Faerie Speech 5 (sailors), Northern Seas Lore 4 (trade routes), Swim 5 (escape)

Powers:

The Unseen Shipwright: 2 points, Init -12, Herbam (4 intricacy points reduce Might cost). As per the effect described in Hermetic Projects, page 64. With appropriate materials to hand, such as the wreck of a sunken ship, the Carpenter Fish are able to repair a single Damage Level to a single ship.

Running Repairs: 5 points, Init -10, Herbam (Ritual Power). Instantly repairs a single Damage Level suffered by a vessel. This does not include any non-Herbam components, however, so inspection of the repair by a carpenter or shipwright immediately reveals the repairs to be magical in nature.

Equipment: Hammer and chisel containing the shoal's external vis. Those using the hammer and chisel gain the Virtue Puissant Carpenter.

Vis: 1 pawn of Animal, contained within the hammer and chisel carried within the shoal.

Appearance: A shoal of shimmering silver fish. The shoal adopts a humanoid form when in contact with those who seek its aid. This might be a fully-humanoid shape with arms and legs, or it might be a face whose expressions are formed by the fluid movements of the fish within the shoal. The shoal also contains a single hammer and a single chisel, the tools it uses to carry out its work.

THE DEVILFISH

BY GUY LEOPOLD

The dreaded Devilfish, cunning and stealthy, is a scourge of the oceans. Its huge bulbous head is trailed by eight large prehensile tails and its mouth is buried deep beneath it where its underside should be. The Devilfish is greedy and voracious and takes food wherever and whenever it can, which includes potentially attacking ships at sea or even lumbering ashore.

This magical monster may be tamed as a familiar but is more likely to be encountered as a silent hunter at sea, stalking a vessel and looking for the chance to snatch one or more of the crew and take them to the depths where it can feed upon them.

HABITAT

The oceans are the natural home of the Devilfish and they can be found all across the northern seas, the Mediterranean, and beyond. They are also equally at home in deep water or along the coast, although their natural cunning means that they tend to avoid witnesses where possible.

While ocean-going creatures, they possess the ability to move on land for short distances. If they do, they rarely stray far inland, preferring to stay within reach of the sea.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Though creatures of magic and lacking the need to eat for nourishment, the Devilfish is a greedy creature and is compelled to eat. It is a pursuit predator, attempting to ambush its prey but preferring to hunt them down over the long distance.

The Devilfish is so compelled to eat that it cannot pass up a meal where one is offered and the smell of cooking coming from a ship on the water is enough to coax the creature to attack. Due to its large size and the way it uses its many tails as limbs, the Devilfish can reach up over the side of a ship, where it becomes a danger to the crew and even the ship itself. There are even times when the Devilfish takes to land, climbing up cliffs even, in order to get at livestock that farmers might have thought safe.

Despite its need to eat, the Devilfish is not reckless. It is by turns aggressive in getting what it wants, but also cautious where it is caught off-guard or outnumbered. Where it strands itself on land at sunrise, or a fight at sea is going against it, the Devilfish is able to turn itself to stone. It does this to escape detection and also as a means to plummet to the depths of the ocean at great speed.

STORY SEEDS

Fish in a Barrel: A fishing village that makes money by salting fish for sale at the nearby market town has been set upon by a thief that took their supply of fish three nights running. Setting out to catch the thief, the villagers laid in wait. What they saw was extraordinary; a Devilfish dragging itself up the beach with its eight tails and then using them to prize open the barrels of fish. The villagers feared to face the beast and even the dogs wouldn't go close because of the smell of the thing. Can the covenant send men prepared to face the Devilfish?

The Hunger of the Devilfish: Sailing into the wreckage of a ship floating on the calm windless waters, the player characters find a lone survivor from the crew. He tells a tale of a huge beast that tore into his master's ship and then took the crew one-by-one. They tried to fight it off, wounding it in the process, but it always returned and always took its revenge. As night falls, the beast is due to rise again.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS /SERVICE

The venom of a Devilfish of Virtue is naturally untraceable. No means, magical or mundane, can

determine the nature of the venom, where it came from, or how old it is. The only thing that may be learned by examining the venom or its victim is its venomous nature and its potency.

By the rules in **ArM5**, page 180, the venom of the Devilfish has an Ease Factor of 12 and inflicts an incapacitating wound. If bitten during combat, the venom takes its time to work and effects are experienced at the end of the combat encounter.

The beak of the Devilfish of Virtue, which contains the animal's vis, can be enriched (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124) and its bearer gains the Ways of the Sea Virtue. The beak is quite large so this may be worn tied to a belt and it does not need to be in contact with the bearer's skin.

To enrich the Devilfish's beak, it must be fed to a shark where it stays in the belly of the beast for a season while the beast swims the ocean. At the end of the season, the shark

must be caught and the beak retrieved.

SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

The Devil Fish can be harvested for the following shape and material bonuses:

Beak: +10 to create poison

Tentacle: +10 to effects enhancing strength

Skin: +5 transform to stone



THE DEVILFISH

The statistics below take account of the bonuses granted from the various Virtues, Qualities, and Inferiorities.

Magic Might: 20 (Animal)

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per -2, Pre -6, Com -6, Str +12, Sta +4, Dex 0, Qik -8

Size: +4

Virtues & Flaws: Magic Animal; Essential (Minor) Virtue: Master of the Water (+3 to attack and defense rolls while in the water), Tough X 2; Magical Monster, Greedy (major)

Animal Qualities & Inferiorities: Aggressive, Aquatic, Camouflage, Crafty, Grapple, Loathsome Appearance, Pursuit Predator, Slippery, Venomous (Ease Factor 6, Medium Wound)

Magical Qualities & Inferiorities: Gigantic X 4; Improved Attack (grappling) X 3, Improved Damage X 2 (bite), Personal Power

Personality Traits: Greedy +6, Master of the Water +3, Aggressive +2, Cautious +1,

Combat:

Grapple: Init -8, Atk +12*, Def -2*, Dam n/a

*Bite**:* Init +0, Atk +8*, Def -2*, Dam +18

Clubbing Tentacle: Init -8, Atk +7*, Def -3*, Dam +14

* Gains an additional +3 if fighting in water (yes, hanging off the side of a ship counts)

** The Devilfish is venomous so a character suffering a Light Wound or worse due to the Devilfish's bite must also make a Stamina Stress Roll against Ease Factor 12 or take a further Incapacitating Wound *at the end of the combat.*

Due to its slippery nature the Devilfish has a bonus of +6 to its defense against grappling attacks

Soak: +10

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

Wound Levels: -1 (1-9), -3 (10-18), -5 (19-28), Incapacitated (28-26), Dead (37+)

Abilities: Athletics 5 (climb), Awareness 2 (food), Brawl 5 (grapple), Home Territory Lore 4 (hunting grounds), Hunt 4 (prey), Ledgerdemain 5 (careful actions), Stealth 5 (underwater)***, Survival 3 (home terrain), Swim 5 (home terrain)

*** Has a bonus of +3 to hiding rolls when not moving

Powers:

Petrification of the Stranded Devilfish (Personal Power), 3 points, Init -11, Animal: The Devilfish can ball itself up and turn itself into stone in the form of a giant rock. It can maintain that form indefinitely until it moves, chooses to retake its normal form, or until some damage is done to its rocky form.

Equipment: None

Vis: 5 pawns of Perdo in its beak

Appearance: A great slippery bulbous head with two large eyes below which is a skirt of flesh and from which trails eight long prehensile tails all knotted with lumps of flesh. Buried beneath its fleshy skirt is its mouth in the form of a bird's beak, although it drips with corrosive venom. The creature smells foul, a noxious combination of venom, brine, and mouldering food collected around its beak.

The Devilfish first attempts to grapple its enemy and then, if successful is able to add its grapple advantage to subsequent attempts to bite that same enemy. If the bite is unsuccessful, it may attempt to build its grapple advantage over a number of rounds before attempting the bite a second time. It may also retreat to the water and attempt to drown its enemy by maintaining its grapple and waiting for its enemy to succumb to deprivation. Remember, the Devilfish is greedy but cunning; it is more likely to fixate on a single target rather than attempting to spread attacks/actions against a number of opponents.

THE GIANT SEAHORSE

By ROBIN BLAND

The Giant Seahorse is a creature of the oceans, with the forequarters of a horse and the hind parts of a large fish. By nature the beast tends to placid but it is loyal to those who befriend it and capable of fighting in defense of its herd. The Giant Seahorse is rarely encountered as a foe and is inclined to help those in distress, even allowing men and women to ride upon its back.

Of note to magi of the sea, these creatures may be easily befriended whereupon they make excellent familiars. While they are naturally confined to the sea, they can be

empowered to take on a fully-equine form and keep all their powers intact and able to use them on land.

HABITAT

The Giant Seahorse is a creature of the sea and can be found in any of Mythic Europe's oceans. They are not often encountered as the herd is watchful of predators and is easily spooked. Those looking for a herd of Giant Seahorses would do best to search around coastal waters.

Giant Seahorses are diurnal creatures and are most often sighted during the day, preferring to sleep at night. There is always a stallion on guard, however, to warn the herd of possible danger.

As a magical beast that must avoid Acclimation (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 52), the Giant Seahorses must make frequent visits to a strong Magic Aura and their territory always includes such a place. Many of the auras that they retreat to are aligned, as per *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 15. Most commonly,



they are Respectful auras, which affords them a degree of grace and security.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Giant Seahorses live in herds that follow the currents through their home territories. They do their best to avoid predators and are ever watchful. This includes giving humans a wide berth and unlike dolphins that are content to play in the bow-wake of a ship under sail, Giant Seahorses take flight.

They spend their time in grazing on the seaweed at the bottom of the sea, coming up to play and race upon the surface. There is always a large stallion protecting the herd, but even he is subservient to a queen who leads the herd.

The herd is easily spooked and tends to flee conflict rather than face it. Only the stallion is likely to fend off a predator that takes the herd unawares, defending the others while they make their escape.

TAMING THE GIANT SEAHORSE

A magus who wishes to take a Giant Seahorse as a familiar must first tame the beast as it has Cunning rather than Intelligence and while non-hostile is still a wild beast. This is done following the guidelines given in *Hermetic Projects*, page 135. In short, the magus spends a season or more accumulating points.

Magus Taming Points

(Accumulated each Season):

Re(Form) Lab Total – Creature's
Might

Once the magus has points equal to or exceeding the beast's Might Score, then the beast has been tamed. In the case of the Giant Seahorse, a ReAn Lab Total is required.

The Giant Seahorse maybe bound as a familiar to the magus who tamed it and to no other. A Giant Seahorse that has already been tamed will not allow itself to be bound to another.

To be a capable mount, the Giant Seahorse should be taught Profession (Mount), which allows it to act and react appropriately when being ridden.

STORY SEEDS

Caught in the Net: A Giant Seahorse is caught in a fisherman's net and taken back to port where it causes a stir. As a creature clearly not of the mortal world, the town's council sends for the magi to inspect the beast, to determine what danger it and its kind pose to the town's fishing waters. Apart from anything else, the fisherman who caught it wants recompense for his torn nets and the town council are prepared to sell the beast to the highest bidder.

Sunk: The precious Magic Aura needed by the Giant Seahorses is threatened by the wreckage of a ship sunk in a storm. On hitting the sea floor, the wreck threw up a thick cloud of silt that is masking the natural beauty that anchored the aura. The Giant Seahorses need help to clear the wreck and restore the aura and one of the herd is prepared to make the sacrifice and give himself over to a magus in return for that help. But the storm was not

natural and those who sunk the ship are on their way to retrieve their spoils.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS / SERVICE

There is little of value in the Giant Seahorse that can be extracted or enriched to those of a magical persuasion other than a little raw vis. Their true value lies in how well they are inclined to bond to a magus as a familiar.

Once tamed, they are loyal to the end. A tamed Giant Seahorse automatically gains the True Friend Virtue with its tamer being the object of that friendship. A Giant Seahorse turned familiar gains an additional +1 to positive Personality Traits representing friendship or loyalty towards its bound magus. A tamed Giant Seahorse maintains its ties with its herd – it is always accepted when it returns to them even where the returning Giant Seahorse takes strangers with it.



THE GIANT SEAHORSE

Magic Might: 10 (Animal)

Season: Summer

Size: +2

Characteristics: Int -2, Per +0, Pre 0*, Com -5**, Str +2, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +2

* Increased from -4 to 0 due to the Imposing Appearance Animal Quality

** -4 for herd matriarch and stallion

Virtues & Flaws: Magic Animal; Improved Characteristics (+6 points to spend, as per Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults, page 40), Long-Winded; Fear (loud noises).

Animal Qualities: Aquatic, Herd Animal, Imposing Appearance, Fast Runner, Tireless. (choleric with melancholic aspect). The Matriarch and the Stallion both also have the Pack/Herd Leader Quality, which adds +1 to Communication and grants Leadership 5 (own species) for free.

Magical Qualities & Inferiorities: Greater Power; Improved Attack (hooves), Improved Defense (hooves), Improved Damage (hooves), Personal Power

Personality Traits: Horse +3, Skittish +2, Free-Spirited +1 (The herd's matriarch replaces Free-Spirited +1 with Leader +3 while the stallion replaces Skittish +2 with Brave +3)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +2, Atk n/a, Def +6, Dam n/a

Bite: Init +2, Atk +8, Def +7, Dam +3

Hooves: Init +4, Atk +10, Def +11, Dam +6

Soak: +3

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (16-21), Incapacitated (22-28), Dead (29+)

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

Abilities: Area Lore: Home Territory 5 (magic auras), Athletics 4 (flee from predators), Awareness 3 (predators), Brawl 4 (hooves), Charm 3 (respecting authority), Folk Ken 2 (sailors), Leadership 5 (own species)*, Living Language 4 (sailor-speak), Stealth 3 (avoiding predators), Survival 3 (home terrain), Swim 5 (speed)**

* Herd matriarch and stallion only

** Free as granted by Animal Qualities

Powers:

The Devil of a Sea, 3 points, Init +3, Aquam: As *Chaos of The Angry Waves* but at Touch range and in an arc originating at the Giant Seahorse's hooves and extending out towards a target. The arc is about 30 paces long and 20 paces at its widest point. The turbulence and wake kicked up by this power can be used above and below the ocean surface. Four Mastery Points spent

on increasing the Initiative of this power.

Sprint of the Zephyr, 2 points, Init +1, Animal: The horse may gallop at amazing speeds for relatively short distances. Unencumbered, it can travel three and a half miles in the Diameter duration. This drops to a little below two miles in the Diameter duration of the effect if the Giant Seahorse is carrying a rider. One Mastery Point has been spent on increasing the Initiative of this power.

Natural Weapons: The Giant Seahorse's hooves are Init +2, Atk +2, Dfn +2, Dam +1 and its bite is Init +0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1

Vis: 2 pawns of Animal in its hooves

Appearance: The Giant Seahorse has the head and forequarters quarters of a normal horse, but its rear is that of a long, muscular, scaly fish-like body complete with translucent vertical tail fins. Its scales are slightly iridescent and catch the available light.



THE OILLIPHÉIST

By GERALD WYLIE

Once native to Ireland before being driven out by Saint Patrick when he purged the land of serpents, The Oilliphéist is a vast magical sea serpent that now swims the northern seas. It is so large that it cut the course of the River Shannon in Ireland when it fled from Saint Patrick.

Rumors of the beast abound across Northern Europe; a serpent that encircles the world, a monster able to

swallow ships whole, the sea beast with a love of poetry and of music that once swallowed a bard named Ó Ruairc but was so enchanted with his voice that he let him go.

Though fickle by nature it can be bargained with to provide service, either knowledge of ancient and hidden vis sources in Hibernia, or instantaneous travel to any point in the seas across Northern Europe.

With its huge size and high Magic Might, the Oilliphéist makes for a powerful foe and one that is easily angered. It thinks nothing of devouring entire ships if they disturb or trouble it but a careful crew can negotiate safe passage.



HABITAT

The Oilliphéist can be found only in the cool seas surrounding Northern Europe. It lives deep beneath the surface in a Magical Regio but must venture out to feed. This makes finding the Oilliphéist difficult. Other sea creatures, such as whales and sharks, know of the Oilliphéist and while they do not understand the nature of regios, they can lead a ship to where the beast most frequently appears. Once there they do not wait around, fearful of becoming the beast's prey.

An unfortunate ship may chance upon the beast as it sometimes rests just below the surface of the water, lifting its head to breach the surface so that it may breathe. Or a ship might beach itself upon the slumbering creature's back and the crew's attempts to free the vessel might awaken the Oilliphéist with disastrous consequences.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

Frustrated and wrathful, the Oilliphéist spends its days in fitful sleep or in scouring the seas for food. Cursed with intelligence, it has no companion with which to pass the time. Only the other creatures of the sea who offer little by way of conversation.

Despite the many centuries that have passed since its exile, the Oilliphéist still yearns for its home in Ireland. So complete is its Divine exile that the Oilliphéist is even denied the comfort of any vestige of Ireland in the Magic Realm. Stories of its homeland would make good currency for those able to communicate with it.

As a being with a high Magic Might, the Oilliphéist must spend the vast majority of its time slumbering in a deep Magical Regio adjoining the Magic Realm at the bottom of the ocean, venturing outside for perhaps a week each season. A magus willing to help

free it from such confinement would be looked upon kindly by the beast.

It knows the location of three sources of vis, although you can assume that one of these has since been found and claimed by a covenant, another might be under threat from mundane activity, while the last is so far undiscovered and bountiful.

STORY

Run Aground: While on a sea voyage representatives of the covenant suddenly and unexpectedly run aground. But they haven't struck a sandbank or an uncharted island; stretching out beneath the hull of their vessel is the Oilliphéist slumbering at the surface. With the ship on its side and dissent fermenting within the crew, the player characters must take charge and decide how to right the ship and return it to the sea without waking the Oilliphéist. But is there any opportunity to study the beast? An opportunity to talk with it, even?

Lost with all Hands: A merchant comes to the covenant asking for aid. One of his ships has gone missing. It was bearing a most precious cargo – his wife and their young daughter. Their ship was swallowed at sea by the Oilliphéist but they still live while the serpent considers whether to release them or eat them. Inside the Oilliphéist's cavernous mouth, the young girl beguiles the great beast with her entrancing music, a manifestation of her Gift, which her father knows nothing about.

The Loss of the Regio: The regio in which the Oilliphéist resides is starting to collapse, reducing in power. Fearful of losing its power through acclimation, the Oilliphéist takes to the ocean surface searching for a magician of some kind that it might strike a bargain with – it will provide service and guidance to the magician in return for beneficial magical effects used upon the Oilliphéist to stave off the harmful effects of the mundane world.

The Well-Travelled Bard: A faerie inhabiting the role of the bard Ó Ruairc tells the covenant of his encounter with the Oilliphéist off the coast of Donnegal and how it swallowed him and his ship only to release him a day later off the coast of Bruges. The thing that saved him from the beast? His songs and tales of old Ireland.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS / SERVICE

If the Oilliphéist becomes a threat to ships across the Northern Seas, the beast would make a challenge for any monster hunter. There's fame to be had in ridding the oceans of such a dangerous scourge. And of course, there's a huge haul of vis as part of the bargain.

Those not intending to kill the Oilliphéist can instead find and bargain with it for knowledge of ancient magical resources and traditions found in old Hibernia. Those following the legend of Ó Ruairc, perhaps encountering a faerie claiming to be Ó Ruairc himself, could find the serpent to explore its powers of instantaneous travel through the oceans.

It may also be the case that the Oilliphéist goes looking for a magus or a covenant, seeking a new magical bond to sustain him in the mundane world. But how does the beast find such a person and where? Does it take to the land? Does it investigate every passing ship? How long before it causes damage or worse? If it can find a guide, perhaps the Oilliphéist could learn as much as it can teach.

THE OILLIPHÉIST

Magic Might: 50 (Aquam)

Characteristics: Int +5, Per +4, Pre +8, Com +3, Str +30, Sta +8, Dex +3, Qik -13

Size: +15

Season: Winter

Virtues & Flaws: Magic Animal; Magical Monster; Improved Characteristics (x35), Second Sight; Blatant Magical Air, No Hands; Magical Air, Oversensitive, Offensive to Animals

Magical Qualities & Inferiorities: Ritual Power (x3); Gift of Speech, Improved Attack (x4), Improved Damage (x4), Improved Defense (x4), Improved Fatigue (x2), Improved Initiative (x4), Improved Powers (x2), Improved Recovery, Improved Soak (x8), Lesser Power, Personal Power; Monstrous Appearance; Reduced Abilities X 4

Personality Traits: Sensitive to insults +6, Swayed by poetry, story, or song +3, Inquisitive +2, Selfish +1

Reputations: Serpent who can swallow a ship whole 4 (sailors of the northern seas)

Abilities: Area Lore: Hibernia 5 (history), Area Lore: The Northern Seas 5 (geography), Awareness 4 (scents on the currents), Brawl 6 (bite), Charm 2 (bards), Concentration 4 (staying still), Dominion Lore 3 (saints of Ireland), Faerie Lore 1 (faeries of the sea), Swim 7 (depth), Folk Ken 4 (bards), Guile 5 (concealing intentions), Hunt 5 (sharks), Irish 5 (large vocabulary), Leadership 4 (intimidation), Magic Lore 6 (ancient magic), Penetration 3 (Imaginem), Second Sight 5 (invisible things)

Combat:

*Bite**: Init -9, Atk +18, Def -4, Dam +33

*Crush****: Init -9, Atk +18, Def 0, Dam +46

* The Oilliphéist's bite is treated as having a Group target. Any contiguous group of up to ten individuals each suffer the same damage. The target with the greatest defense rolls against the Oilliphéist's attack.

** As with the bite, crushing attacks may target groups of individuals. However, the Oilliphéist may only attempt a crush attack every third round as it must raise its head clear of the water before pummeling it down.

Attacks against ships are resolved using the Damaged Goods rules from *City & Guild*. The Oilliphéist's attack succeeds in hitting the vessel automatically, forcing the captain or the pilot to roll to avoid damage. The roll suffers a -3 penalty with failure resulting in the loss of a damage level. Any non-botching bite or crush attack against crew on a ship or boat requires a roll to avoid damage to that vessel.

Soak: +24

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

Wound Penalties: -1 (1-20), -3 (21-40), -5 (41-60), Incapacitated (61-80), Dead (81+)

Powers:

Reach the Distant Shore, 9 points, Init -37, Animal (Ritual Power). The Oilliphéist is able to instantly travel to any waters that it has previously visited. Anything clinging to its hide and anything that it has swallowed is carried with it. This power costs three Ritual Power slots, with the fifteen remaining levels converted to Mastery Points and spent on reducing the power's Might Cost.

Inspect the Swallowed Vessel, 2 points, Init -14, Imaginem (Lesser Power). Like the common Prying Eyes spell except this effect allows the Oilliphéist to instantly see inside an entire ship.

Inner Speech, 0 points, Init -X, Imaginem (Personal Power). As a constant effect, the Oilliphéist may project his words inwards so that they sound inside his massive cavernous head instead of outside.

Vis: 10 pawns of Animal in its skull

Appearance: Eleven-thousand tons of serpent with a huge draconic head filled with teeth, each as tall as a ship's mast.

THE SHAMIR

By **NORMAN ASHBY**

Brought into existence by God on the sixth day of creation, the Shamir is a small green worm with the power to burrow through stone and metal with just the merest touch.

Adhering to the Divine proscription against using iron tools in the construction of the Temple, Solomon sought a means to carve the necessary stone in accordance with God's law. The captive demon Asmodeus taught Solomon about the Shamir and went on to help Solomon retrieve it from the clutches of the Hoopoe, a great and ferocious bird. In the hands of

Solomon's craftsmen, the stones for the Temple were justly formed and the Temple built.

In addition to the construction of this most holy of sites, the Shamir was used to carve the Urim and the Thummim, two magical jewels that could be placed into the Hoshen, a breastplate worn by the High Priest of the Isrealites. These Divine gemstones conferred the powers of prophecy and divination to those who wore them.

The Shamir can eat through almost all wood, stone and metal, including

gemstones, crystals, and glass. It cannot eat through anything that might be considered to belong to the forms of Corpus or Animal. Solomon and his craftsmen kept the Shamir in a leaden box that was lined with a mat of sheep's wool so thick that no part of the worm could come into contact with the lead.



SUB ROSA

HABITAT

The Shamir is a Divine creation and is most probably unique; only one has ever been known to exist. As such, it has no natural habitat. In fact, it may be more accurate to say that it was removed from its natural habitat so long ago as to make it entirely consequential.

The Shamir might be found by chance, or tracked down through studying Dominion Lore or Theology (Judaism), following the clues from the destruction of the Temple through to the present day.

It may be in the hands of an esoteric collector, a Rabbi entrusted to look after the creature, back in the clutches of the Hoopoe, or held under infernal lock and key by the demon Asmodeus.

MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR

The Shamir itself has little motivation and exhibits little by way of Behavior more than might be expected of a worm. If it wants anything, it is simply food and safety.

The motivations of those who might possess the Shamir are more interesting. It is a unique creature created by God in the earliest days of creation; it was there in the Garden of Eden and in the presence of Adam and Eve. This makes it a thing most Holy and a thing to be protected from exploitation, abuse, and destruction.

Others might want to acquire the Shamir for what it can give them, namely the ability to recreate the Urim and the Thummim and thereby grant powers of divination and prophecy.

If the tempter Asmodeus gained control of the Shamir, he might once again use it as a bargaining tool. He lacks interest in those without faith (for they damn themselves already), but he offers knowledge of the Shamir, its Divine provenance, and hints to its

location to those who might take it upon themselves to steal it away and protect it – committing sin so that they might do good.

STORY SEEDS

The Temptation: In disguise, the tempter demon Asmodeus approaches a young craftsman companion or ally to the covenant and offers a trade. Asmodeus can tell the craftsman the location and the secrets of the Shamir in return for an appropriate tool or product of excellent quality. The Shamir is in the possession of a local Jewish man, already persecuted by local nobles who owe him money, who sees the Shamir as a sacred trust. Can the craftsman really go through with the deal and take the Shamir from him?

New Prophecies: The covenant, home to a magus with an interest in divination, hears of people consulting a Jewish scholar in the nearby city. The scholar's predictions are proving accurate and his fame is growing as fast as his wealth. The source of his power are the Urim and the Thummim, carved using the Shamir.

INITIATION / ITEM OF VIRTUE / EXTRAORDINARY VIS / SERVICE

On its own, in the hands of a stonemason, metalsmith, or jeweler, a live Shamir acts as a +3 workshop Innovation score (see *City & Guild*, page 63). This is applied regardless of the current workshop Innovation score and the craftsman does not need to buy the score with Labor Points as would be normal.

If used within a Hermetic Laboratory (or similar), the Shamir provides a +3 specialization bonus towards Terram projects. This unique

feature does not require the Greater Feature Virtue described in *Covenants*, takes up effectively zero space, and does not take time to install. All the while the Shamir is present within the laboratory and used with a given project, it contributes the +3 bonus towards Terram projects.

The Urim and Thummim are gemstones mentioned in Hebrew lore. They are placed within the Hoshen breastplate and they confer divinatory powers. While they are not unique items they are Divine in nature and can only be crafted by a skilled craftsman using the Shamir. It is the ritual act of crafting and shaping these gems with the Shamir that bestows their powers. Several sets of Urim and Thummim have been made and then lost across the centuries. Any that now exist are likely separated from each other and their powers either lost or not understood. A skilled craftsman in possession of the Shamir, however, could follow the old rituals and create a new Urim and a new Thummim complete with their Divine powers.

SHAPE AND MATERIAL BONUSES

The creature itself has the following shape and material bonus:

Blood of the Shamir: +7 to destroy stone

THE SHAMIR

Divine Might: 50 (Terram)

Characteristics: Cun 0, Per 1, Pre -3, Com -4, Str -18, Sta +1, Dex +3, Qik +8

Size: -10

Virtues and Flaws: Piercing Gaze, Strong-Willed; Noncombatant, Poor Eyesight

Qualities and Inferiorities: Slippery (+6 defense against Grapple)

Personality Traits: Worm +3, Wilful +2

Reputations: Ancient and Unique 3 (scholars of the Dominion)

Combat:

Dodge: Init +8, Attack n/a, Defense +5, Damage n/a

Soak: +1

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

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

Abilities: Athletics 4 (burrowing), Penetration 4 (Terram), Stealth 3 (hiding)

Powers:

To Show a Thing to the Shamir, 2 points, Init +0, Terram, R: Touch, D: Momentary, T: Part

The Shamir destroys any part of any Terram or Herbam object that it comes into contact with, whether that is soil, sand, clay, stone, metal, crystal, or gemstone. In a single round, the Shamir destroys one standard individual's worth of material (as appropriate for the type of material). This can be controlled, however. If the creature is somehow contained and used by a craftsman in the manner of a tool, the degree of destruction can be controlled to a minute level.

(Base PeTe(He) 5, +1 Touch, +1 Part, +1 Herbam Requisite, +1 intricacy)

Vis: 10 pawns of Terram

Appearance: The Shamir looks very much like a large maggot. The size of a mouse, it has a pale languid glistening green fleshy body with two expressionless black dot eyes above a four-jawed mouth. Each jaw is lined with tiny sharp teeth.

Notes: The Shamir does not suffer the effects of deprivation and is effectively immortal. It is still, however, susceptible to injury and it can be killed.

Despite being almost completely blind, the Shamir has Piercing Gaze, which it uses completely involuntarily.

The Shamir does not always want to be put to work and it may withhold the use of its power in such moments. It can be coerced, but its Strong-Willed nature comes into play.

MAPPA MUNDI

The internet is awash with sources of inspiration to help with for creating your own creatures. You're left with the job of creating stats, of course, but we can easily find descriptions of monsters that roughly fit the **Ars Magica** thirteenth century world view.

For instance, if you wanted to include creatures described in the bible, then you could use resources such as the following:

- <http://www.gotquestions.org/mythological-creatures-Bible.html>
- http://freethoughtpedia.com/wiki/Monsters_in_the_Bible
- <http://ministerfortson.com/?p=34228>

You'll find brief descriptions and also appropriate bible passages to provide context.

Creatures arising from Islamic tradition can be found online too, as the following Wikipedia page shows:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Islamic_legendary_creatures

Unsurprisingly, there is a similar page for Jewish folklore:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Jewish_legendary_creatures

There's plenty of information on regional legends and the creatures they concern. The Celtic world (for which we'll include Breton, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, etc.) is covered by these links:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Celtic_legendary_creatures
- <http://www.irishcentral.com/culture/craic/the-scariest-monsters-and-demons-from-celtic-myth-67305337-237784881.html>
- <http://www.medbherenn.com/supernatural-beings-ireland.html>
- www.mythcreatures.co.uk/celtic/celtic.asp

The last link there is particularly useful as mixed in with the list of legendary creatures you'll find Celtic and British pagan gods, which may be of interest for magi and hedge wizards in search of powerful patrons. It also has a little information on Egyptian and Norse gods and monsters, certainly enough to serve as inspiration.

If you need something for the European continent, you have the following:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Germanic_legendary_creatures
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:European_legendary_creatures
- www.mythicalcreatureslist.com/menu/European

If you want something for the Mediterranean then we can recommend the following:

- legendaryquest.net/firms.com/books/LQ_Monsters_ed7.pdf

This free RPG supplement collects Mediterranean monsters and animals, suggests where they might be found, and what kind of abilities and attributes they have. A little work needed to translate to **Ars Magica** terms, but a useful little resource nonetheless.

With recent **Ars Magica** supplements opening up the African continent, storyguides may want further inspiration for creatures to populate their stories set there. Again, Wikipedia comes to our aid:

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:African_legendary_creatures

Clearly, this is just the start, but we can imagine such creatures being brought from the far continent into Mythic Europe by curious and enterprising explorer magi.

But let's finish on a map:

- https://figshare.com/articles/Mythical_creatures_of_Europe/963443

This huge PDF file not only lists over 200 mythical creatures along with brief descriptions, but also locates them on the map of Europe and the near east. Frankly, if you wanted to run a monster-hunting saga, this is the prime resource. There are monsters-galore on this map and with a little creativity, they can all feature in your **Ars Magica** saga.

Happy hunting!



COMING SOON

COMING SOON

ARS MAGICA:

NEW WORLDS

SUBSCRIBE TO SUB ROSA

Sub Rosa relies on subscriptions to continue and thrive. If you enjoyed this issue, encourage your friends to subscribe, or take out a troupe subscription. Check our website for details.

CONTRIBUTE TO SUB ROSA

Sub Rosa is looking for articles and illustrations for future issues. All contributors receive a free copy of the magazine their work appears in. Unsolicited contributions are welcomed.

See our website for details on how to contribute.

CHECK FOR UPDATES

The Sub Rosa website is updated regularly with news about the magazine and exclusive web-only content. You can also email Sub Rosa for more information.

WWW.SUBROSAMAGAZINE.ORG

@SUBROSAMAGAZINE