

EVILNINATA

ARMED WITH LIGHTNING



JASON E. ROBERTS

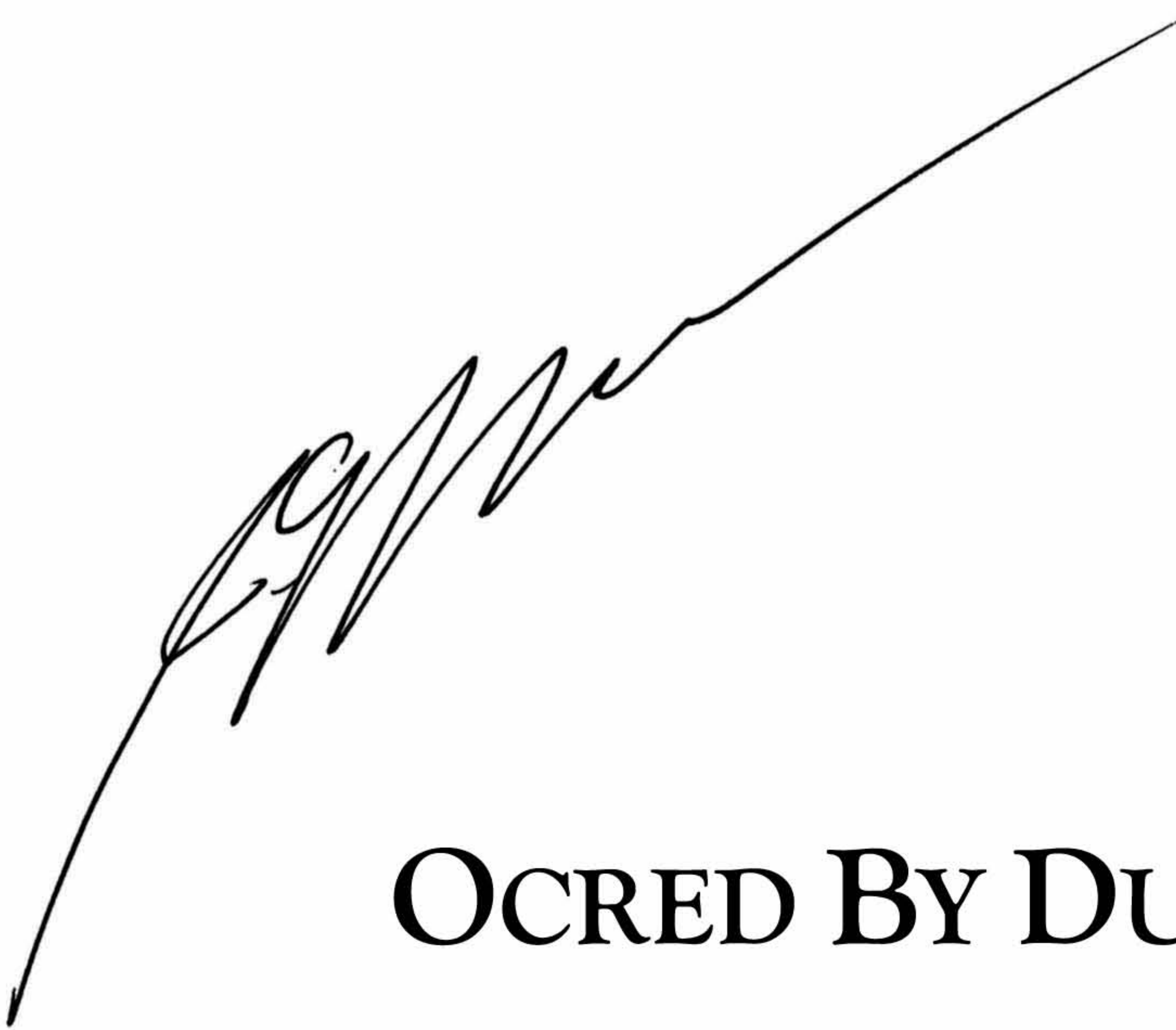
MICHAEL S. MILLER

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OCRED BY DUELIST

THYRSUS GAMES



NEW JERSEY, USA

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FVLMINATA:

Armed with Lightning, Second Edition

By Jason E. Roberts and Michael S. Miller

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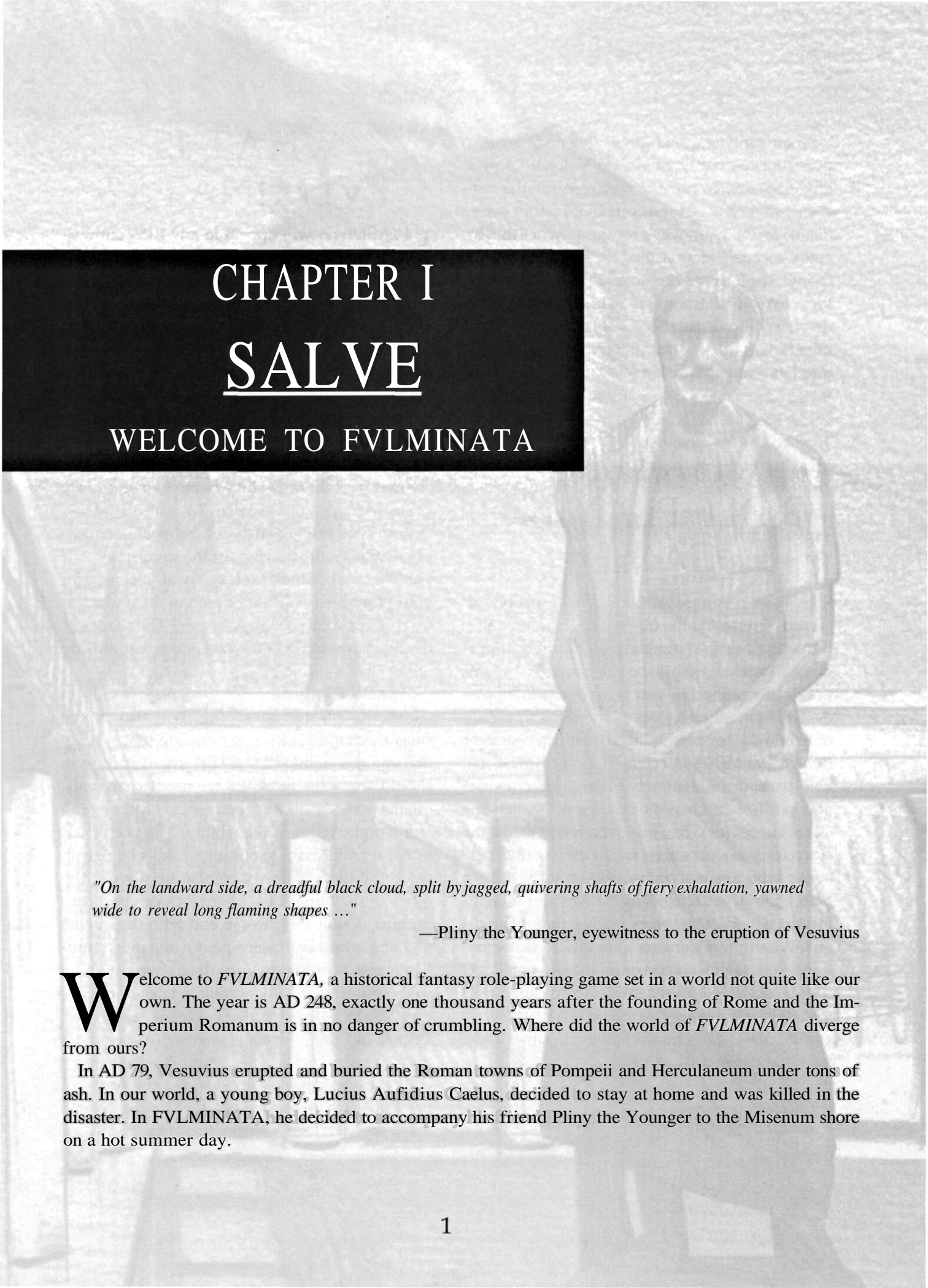
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CHAPTER I

SALVE

WELCOME TO FVLMINATA

"On the landward side, a dreadful black cloud, split by jagged, quivering shafts of fiery exhalation, yawned wide to reveal long flaming shapes ..."

—Pliny the Younger, eyewitness to the eruption of Vesuvius

Welcome to *FVLMINATA*, a historical fantasy role-playing game set in a world not quite like our own. The year is AD 248, exactly one thousand years after the founding of Rome and the Imperium Romanum is in no danger of crumbling. Where did the world of *FVLMINATA* diverge from ours?

In AD 79, Vesuvius erupted and buried the Roman towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum under tons of ash. In our world, a young boy, Lucius Aufidius Caelus, decided to stay at home and was killed in the disaster. In *FVLMINATA*, he decided to accompany his friend Pliny the Younger to the Misenum shore on a hot summer day.



Emotionally scarred, Caelus devoted his life to pursuing the secret of divine Volcanic power. His obsession led to the discovery of the substance that changed the course of history — *terra fulminata*, the Latin name for gunpowder that literally means, "earth armed with lightning." Although the Romans did not excel at pure science, they were quick to exploit technological innovations. Within decades of Caelus' discovery, fulminata was applied to military weaponry: cannon [*tormentum*], musket [*pilum*] and pistol [*has-tula*].

WHAT IS A ROLE-PLAYING GAME?

If you're reading this book, you probably already know. On the off-chance that you don't, think of a role-playing game as improvisational theater crossed with a board game. As in improvisational theater, you and your fellow players will be creating a story without a script. Each of you will be portraying a distinct character (which *FVLMINATA* refers to as your **persona**). One participant, somewhat like a director of a play, will be in charge of the game. Called the GameMaster (or GM), this person will shape the story for your personae and portray other personae who are not central to the story. Like a board game, you'll be sitting down and imagining the action of the story, rather than acting it out. When your persona attempts to do something that might succeed or might fail, you'll roll dice (*FVLMINATA* uses special dice called tali) to determine whether or not you achieve your goal. Gather some friends and enjoy a trip into a past that never was!

WHAT IS FVLMINATA?

FVLMINATA will appeal to any RPG enthusiast who likes to experiment with genres and game mechanics. Fantasy settings usually have a foundation in real world cultures and myths, while its details come from the imagination. Yes, Tolkien based the *Lord of the Rings* on Teutonic myths, but the unique characters that inhabited Middle Earth were his creation. *FVLMINATA* is different in that most of its details come from reality. Although some elements of *FVLMINATA* will seem unfamiliar, our version of Roman society makes sense as a whole *because Rome actually existed*. As written, *FVLMINATA* is historical low fantasy that aims to sustain a believable atmosphere while still allowing for the supernatural. If you are a fan of high fantasy, by all means, arm your personae for an expedition to the underwater ruins of Atlantis. Enjoy horror? The shades of the dead await you in the necropolis just outside of the city.

FVLMINATA breaks new ground not only in its alternate-historical setting, but also in the rules mechanics it uses to simulate that setting. Before you read CHAPTER III: TALI, you should know the priorities we used when crafting those mechanics: evocativeness of the setting and simple, efficient play ability. The use of tali rather than dice, the grouping of skills by patron deity and the lethality of combat help evoke the mood of the Imperium, where luck can be as important as skill and life can end with the impact of a single lead ball. Since plenty of games simulate ancient combat in gory detail, we wanted a rules system that could simulate tales of the ancient world just as effectively. We made the rules as easy and streamlined as possible to keep them from interfering with the story. Aficionados of hit locations, cover modifiers and the like will not find such things within these pages. What you *will* find is an exciting world, shaped by

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unique circumstances and governed by distinctive rules.

DISCLAIMERS

While based on actual events and a culture that really existed, *FVLMINATA* is fiction and a role-playing game. If you are writing an academic paper on Imperial Rome, do not rely on the main text of this book as a resource. *FVLMINATA* is counterfactual history, which is a fancy phrase for a timeline that might have occurred if events had turned out differently. For example, what would have happened if Leonardo da Vinci had perfected a flying machine? What if Germany had won WWII? Our game began with the premise that a lone genius, the Isaac Newton of the ancient world, survived the Vesuvius eruption to eventually discover gunpowder. Counterfactual history also allowed us to create a larger role for women to add a female perspective to a traditionally male-dominated culture. In addition, *FVLMINATA* has elements of fantasy because it assumes the presence of

JASON'S MUSE

"I sing of arms and the man."

—Virgil, the *Aeneid*

My wife is my muse. One spring day (much to her regret), Kari inspired me to create *FVLMINATA*. In gaming, the Romans traditionally have been relegated to tactical games that emphasize the role of the military: tabletop miniatures, board games and strategic simulations. What I desired was a role-playing game set in Imperial Rome with enough detail to rival my small library of Roman books and copious notes. The few Roman RPG supplements (see APPENDIX C: SOURCES) that have been published did not fulfill my needs. Tired of hearing my grumbling, Kari simply said, "Why don't you just write your own game." I think she would like to take back those words.

Enter Michael Miller. It just so happened that Michael had a few game mechanic ideas of his own kicking around that fit the genre perfectly. I used to hate rolling dice in games, but now I look forward to tossing the knucklebones to see what the Fates have in store for my persona. I am indebted to Michael for his dedication and calming voice of reason. This book would not have been possible without his honest criticisms and brilliant suggestions.

The art of Jeremy Leach and Christopher Shy speaks for itself. They truly made *FVLMINATA* come alive. I continue to be awestruck by people who can put images down on paper as if they were words.

There are countless others to thank for their support and encouragement: friends, family and fellow gamers. I am extremely grateful to Joan Mathurin, Laura Mizii, Trevor Higgs, Matt Royko and all of our fantastic playtesters. I should probably thank my college professors but they might be horrified at what I've done with four years of a classical education.

magic and the supernatural.

On the other hand, we were determined to make *FVLMINATA* as authentic as possible; we spent many hours of research to offer a consistent and believable view of an alternate Imperial Rome. Since the past can only be gleaned from the remains of ancient texts, artifacts and archaeological sites, there are gaps in the historical record. However, lack of detail in a game world is frustrating, and ultimately unsatisfying, for the players. Since we didn't have access to a working time machine during development, we filled in the missing pieces of the puzzle by formulating educated guesses and borrowing from other times and other cultures.

The following disclaimers are corollaries to the above statements:

Religion

Most of the book is written from the viewpoint of a typical Roman. Participation in the state religion is simply a fact of life. Some of today's major world religions (e.g. Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism) are present in *FVLMINATA*.

NATA. The Jewish revolts, the trial and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth and the role of Zoroastrian priests in the Parthian royal court are historical facts and are reflected in the game. However, the game rules allow for followers of these groups to have supernatural powers. Regardless of your personal beliefs, these representations should be considered fiction. Michael and I briefly discussed removing all references to religion, but decided that the game was richer with these elements. We intend no irreverence or offense; we aren't mean-spirited.

Anachronisms

We've already admitted that we borrowed ideas and people from other times to populate the world of *FVLMINATA*. On top of that, we've purposely left in anachronisms because they are too firmly rooted in the public consciousness. For example, no Roman ever used the word "Colosseum" to describe the Flavian Amphitheater. The name is a medieval invention, yet we use it because it's part of the popular vocabulary. We have also continued to use the common names for Roman emperors (Caligula) instead of their longer, official names (Gaius Iulius Caesar Germanicus).

Mistakes

Despite our best efforts, mistakes happen, even in a second edition. We apologize in advance.

MICHAEL'S STATEMENT

It was almost two years ago that Jason said he was thinking of writing his own Roman role-playing game and asked for my advice on which of the many generic rules systems to use with it. I named some names but reminded him that a generic rules system is just that: generic. "If you want to do it *right*," quoth I, "it should be Roman through and through." By hook and by crook, Jason has seen to it that I lived up to that bold statement. What you now hold in your hands is simply the best Imperial Roman role-playing game that I've ever seen.

There have been many people who have shaped who I am, but I will name only a relevant few here. My parents, Joan and Charles Miller, always taught me to be the best at whatever I endeavored. It is for them that I made sure this game was done right. My wife Kathryn showed me that the story of an RPG should be more important than the rules. For her, I have made the rules simple and elegant. She has also put up with the long hours and many frustrations that writing this game has entailed. For that, and much more, I give her my love. My good friend Todd Purler taught me quite a bit about how to make rules serve the genre, mood and pacing of a game. Finally, none of this would have happened without the sweeping imagination, dogged persistence and organizational acumen of Jason Roberts. I'm glad I could be a part of this grand undertaking.

LATIN

If you've already flipped through this book, you probably have noticed that *FVLMINATA* makes extensive use of Latin. This is intentional. Latin is the official language of the Imperium and adds authenticity to the game. Like any language, Latin and its dialects varied by region, time period and the speaker's education. For game purposes, *FVLMINATA* assumes that Romans speak Latin as it is taught in modern college textbooks. Most of the Latin words in this book are in brackets, in italics and follow the English words. For example:

Casualties from the battlefield are rushed into a medical tent or a military hospital [*valetudinarium*].

In addition, there is a glossary in the back to help you with terms, some of which may be unfamiliar to those who

already know Latin (see APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY). However, not all Latin terms are italicized or translated. Words like forum, toga, villa and Senator are part of the English language.

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Other Latin words not italicized are used so often in *FVLMINATA*, they should become part of your gaming vocabulary:

persona	a fictional character
fabula	an adventure or story
fulminata	the short name for gunpowder
tali	knucklebones
gladius	the Roman short sword
pilum	the Roman musket
tormentum	the Roman cannon
magus	a magician or wizard

We are confident that you will learn these few terms. Part of the fun of a role-playing game is adopting the argot—"paladin", "nosferatu" and "Cthulhu" aren't exactly in everyday use by the general public.

In general, the ending of a noun will indicate its gender: "-a" is feminine, "-um" is neuter and "-us" is masculine. In plural, the suffixes change to "-ae" for feminine (e.g. personae), "-a" for neuter (e.g. pila) and "-i" for masculine (e.g. gladii).

The Latin alphabet has 23 letters, which are the same as ours minus the J, U and W. The "J" sound is not found in Latin and the "V" functioned as both a consonant and vowel. However, except in the name of the game, the letter U is employed for the vowel use of the letter V. Thus, *FVLMINATA* and fulminata. The following is a pronunciation guide to *FVLMINATA* Latin. Many of the intricacies of the real Latin language have been removed for play ability.

Vowels can be pronounced as long or short. While there are rules for this and we encourage everyone to learn real Latin, for any given word choose the one that's easier for you:

A	ah, as in <i>father</i> or uh, as in <i>syllable</i>
E	ay, as in <i>they</i> or eh, as in <i>pet</i>
I	ee, as in <i>ravine</i> or ih, as in <i>pin</i>
O	oh, as in <i>over</i> or o, as in <i>off</i>
U	oo, as in <i>rude</i> or u, as in <i>put</i>

Furthermore, Latin has several diphthongs or combinations of two vowels:

AE	aye, as in <i>aisle</i>
AU	ow, as in <i>house</i>
EI	ey, as in <i>pain</i>
OE	oi, as in <i>toil</i>
UI	ooey, as in <i>goosey</i>

Consonants are pronounced like they are English with the following exceptions:

C	hard, like <i>carrot</i> , never soft like <i>celery</i>
CH	hard, like <i>chord</i> , never soft like <i>cherry</i>
G	hard, like <i>grape</i> , never soft like <i>gem</i>
S	soft like <i>sea</i> , never hard like <i>please</i>
T	hard, like <i>tomato</i> , never soft like <i>nation</i>
I	before a vowel acts like the consonant "Y"
V	before a vowel acts like the consonant "W"

Thus, "Tulius Caesar" would be "Yoo-lee-us Ky-sar." And his famous saying "Veni, vidi, vici" would be "when-ee, weed-ee, week-ee."

ROMAN NUMERALS

FVLMINATA uses Roman numerals sparingly because they are awkward. When they are used, it is to add flavor to the game. For example, the names of legions include Roman numerals.

The remaining numbers are made from the repetition and combination of these symbols. Repeated digits are added together: III = 1 + 1 + 1 = 3. A smaller digit that precedes a larger digit is subtracted from the larger: IX = 10 - 1 = 9.

Roman Numeral	Number
I	1
V	5
X	10
C	100
D	500
M*	1,000
Q	500,000

* M was a medieval abbreviation. The Romans used the infinity symbol (∞) to represent 1,000.



THE CALENDAR

The Romans have an interesting system for measuring dates and time. Years are dated by the names of the two annually-elected consuls or from the founding of the city of Rome [*ab urbe condita*] or AUC for short. The year AD 130 was both the year of Q. Fabius Catullinus and M. Flavius Asper or 882 AUC. *FVLMINATA* uses the AUC standard followed by the modern year equivalent. The only named days are the Kalends [*Kalendae*], the Nones [*Nonae*] and the Ides [*Idus*]; all other days are counted retrospectively from the next named date. To a Roman, this makes perfect sense, but to those of us brought up using sequentially numbered dates, it is difficult to grasp. To add confusion, the day itself is broken into 12 hours of light and 12 hours of day regardless of the actual length of the day. The result is a variable definition of an hour; in the winter a daytime hour is 45 minutes, while one in the summer could be over 90 minutes. In *FVLMINATA*, the days of the week and the hours of the day follow the contemporary calendar. For the same reasons, we use U.S. standard weights and measures not the Imperial mile or "snail shell" [*cochlea*].

THE ROMAN WAY

So you've watched *Ben Hur* or *Gladiator* for the umpteenth time. You can recite from memory the emperors of Rome, *in order*. Much of the entertainment value in a role-playing game comes from taking on the behavior of your fictional persona. But how do you try to think and act like an ancient Roman? Is it as simple as forgetting the comforts of modern technology? Not quite. Your persona in *FVLMINATA* may fall in love, become angry or weep in response to pain or loss. After all, the Romans are human beings. However, your persona has been raised in a world where class distinctions, slavery, lethal violence and cruelty are the norm. Even though elements of Roman culture have their parallels in contemporary society, a boxing match in *FVLMINATA* is far more brutal and dangerous than a modern heavyweight bout with padded gloves.

Before we explore this further, let's remember the prime directive of role-playing games—you and your persona are *not* the same. Adopting a Roman worldview in *FVLMINATA* is good role-

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playing; in actual life, it's eccentric at best and anti-social or criminal at worst.

Virtues are those behavioral patterns that a society holds in the highest regard. In Western Judeo-Christian society, the chief virtues are Faith, Hope, Love, Tolerance, Wisdom, Justice, Forgiveness, Courage, Moderation, Integrity and Perseverance. In *FVLMINATA*, the primary virtues for a good Roman are Duty, Respect, Dignity, Nobility, Harmony, Culture, Courage, Piety, Tenacity and Hard Work. While similar in some respects, note the lack of Faith, Hope, Love, Tolerance and Forgiveness in the Roman ideal. The Roman virtues match the outlook of the Imperium and its citizens: Rome's destiny is to rule the world. Only the Roman way can civilize the barbarians and ensure lasting peace.

The following exercise will help you attune your persona to the Roman mindset. It presents hypothetical moral and ethical dilemmas that your persona could face in *FVLMINATA*; each textbook answer for a good Roman is supported by an example from legend or history:

Duty [*Officium*] and Respect [*Aequitas*]

During a civil war, your persona takes part in a bloody battle. Each side incurs heavy losses, including your sister's fiancé, who happens to be fighting for the opposition. She does not show up for your victory celebration, opting instead to attend the funeral of her betrothed.

Question: What should be your reaction?

- (a) Sympathize with her loss and ignore the incident
- (b) Scold her privately for her unwise choice
- (c) Refuse to address her in public for one year
- (d) Run her through with your gladius for being unpatriotic

Answer: (d)—Run her through. One of Rome's early kings was Tullus Hostilius, who made war against the Albans (from Alba Longa). During the fighting, three Roman warriors challenged three Albans to personal combat as a way to set-

tle the conflict once and for all. Only Publius Horatius, a Roman warrior, survived. Horatius returned home, planning to celebrate the Roman victory. However, one of the Alban champions that Horatius slew was his sister's betrothed. His sister decided to mourn his death instead of participate in the victory celebration. On hearing this, Horatius promptly killed her. As an illuminating aside, when Tullus Hostilius eventually captured the Alban leader Mettius Fufetius, he had the Alban dismembered by teams of horses.

Dignity [*Gravitas*] and Nobility [*Nobilitas*]

You are a local town councilman [*decurio*] and barbarian invaders have overrun your defenses. Recent reports indicate that the marauders are headed towards your assembly hall [*curia*].

Question: What should your next move be?

- (a) Flee to the countryside
- (b) Hide behind a curtain or statue
- (c) Calmly wait on your chair of office
- (d) Find a weapon and go down swinging

Answer (c)—Calmly wait. When the Gauls sacked Rome in 363 AUC (391 BC), the Senators awaited their fate with Roman dignity. They sat on their ivory chairs in eerie silence. The Gauls had to poke one of them to prove that the elderly man was not a statue. Of course, the Senators were slaughtered but they maintained the proper noble demeanor.

Harmony [*Concordia*] and Culture [*Humanitas*]

As the governor of Achaea, you have been finding great pleasure participating in the artistic and scientific community in Athens. However, you have learned that several key cities are on the brink of rebellion, urged on by the very talented poets and philosophers that entertain you.

Question: How should you prevent an insurrection?

- (a) Engage the ringleaders in scholarly debate
- (b) Quietly round up the instigators and have them strangled

- (c) Declare martial law immediately
- (d) Send for the nearest legion

Answer: (b)—Round them up. In 817 AUC (AD 65), The emperor Nero was made aware of a plot to overthrow him. Many of the conspirators were members of his inner circle—Petronius, Lucan and Seneca the Younger. Despite their talent and possible future literary contributions, they were all forced to commit suicide. To a Roman, duty is more important than the pursuit of knowledge or the creation of art. In order to preserve the peace, it is often necessary to remove troublemakers.

Piety [*Pietas*] and Courage [*Virtus*]

You are the brave commander of an entire legion ready for combat. The morning before a battle, augurs rush into your headquarters to inform you that the sacred chickens have refused to eat. They say that such an ill omen precludes engaging the enemy.

Question: What do you do?

- (a) Postpone the battle until the omens are right
- (b) Ask the augurs to try feeding the chickens again
- (c) Perform a sacrifice of a sheep to verify the prediction
- (d) Kill the chickens and prepare for war

Answer: Anything but (d). The consul Publius Claudius Pulcher was in a similar situation and made the mistake of drowning the sacred chickens before a critical sea battle. The Carthaginian

navy soundly defeated him, sinking 75% of his ships. Courage is a virtue, but only when tempered with prudence. The pious Roman does not ignore the will of the gods.

Tenacity [*Firmitas*] and Hard Work [*Industria*]

You are a senior intelligence agent who has been asked by the Emperor to come up with a plan to conquer the Parthian Empire. Your best clerks and spies have come up with four plans, but you may only present one to the Imperial court.

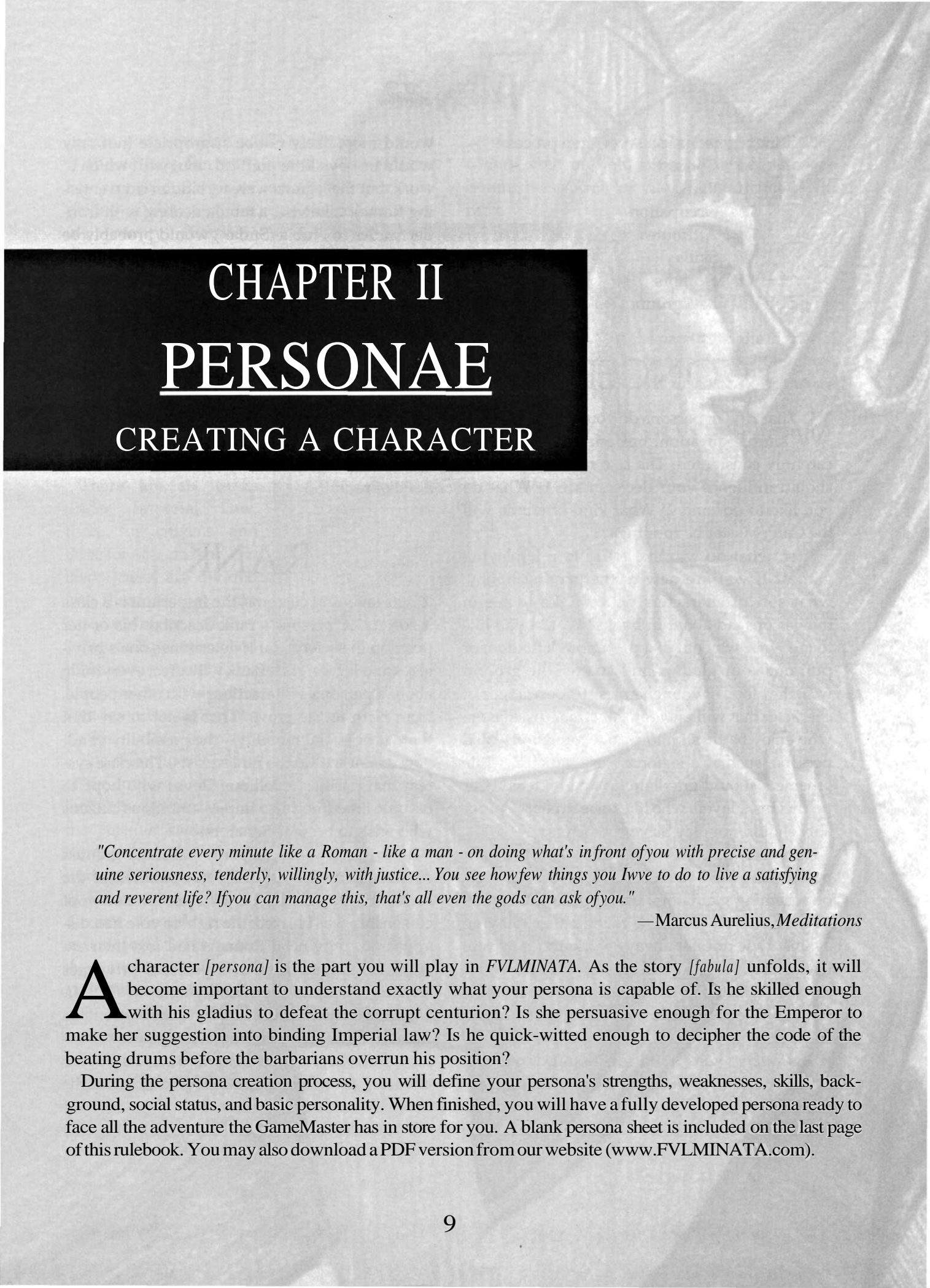
Question: Which plan do you choose?

- (a) Slowly extend the frontier as weaknesses present themselves
- (b) Infiltrate and assassinate key Parthian nobles
- (c) Mobilize for a massive invasion on all fronts
- (d) Drive towards

the Parthian capital with surgical precision to demoralize the enemy

Answer: (a)—Slowly extend the frontier. While the other tactics have been used in successful invasions, the slow and steady weakening of resistance is what Romans do best. Once, a city under siege informed the Roman commander that his efforts were pointless since the city had enough supplies to last ten years. The Roman commander merely reminded them that they would taste defeat in the eleventh year. Victory is guaranteed to the patient, for the stubborn Roman is a formidable enemy.





CHAPTER II

PERSONAE

CREATING A CHARACTER

"Concentrate every minute like a Roman - like a man - on doing what's in front of you with precise and genuine seriousness, tenderly, willingly, with justice... You see how few things you have to do to live a satisfying and reverent life? If you can manage this, that's all even the gods can ask of you."

—Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*

A character [*persona*] is the part you will play in *FVLMINATA*. As the story [*fabula*] unfolds, it will become important to understand exactly what your persona is capable of. Is he skilled enough with his gladius to defeat the corrupt centurion? Is she persuasive enough for the Emperor to make her suggestion into binding Imperial law? Is he quick-witted enough to decipher the code of the beating drums before the barbarians overrun his position?

During the persona creation process, you will define your persona's strengths, weaknesses, skills, background, social status, and basic personality. When finished, you will have a fully developed persona ready to face all the adventure the GameMaster has in store for you. A blank persona sheet is included on the last page of this rulebook. You may also download a PDF version from our website (www.FVLMINATA.com).

Crafting a persona is a seven-step process:

- I Concept
- II Rank
- III Occupation
- IV Attributes
- V Skills
- VI Humors
- VII Background

CONCEPT

What kind of persona do you want to play? A simple question, but one that should be carefully considered. The two main factors that should influence your decision are 1) What do you like to do? and 2) What kind of fabula will the GameMaster be running?

First, what do you like to do in role-playing games? If you are new to the gaming hobby, what sort of characters do you like to see in movies or read about in books? Would you like to talk your way out of a precarious situation, or pull out your gladius and spatter the ground with the blood of your enemies? Choose a type of character that will play to your strengths. Players who enjoy battle should play a combat-oriented persona, such as a legionary or gladiator, while schemers should gravitate toward merchants or politicians. Players who like to be in charge probably should not play Slave characters.

However, don't let this advice confine your persona to a mere stereotype. There can certainly be scheming gladiators, battling merchants and charismatic slaves. Just realize that playing against type doesn't always work and may ruin the fun for everyone. If every Senator persona resorts to fisticuffs at the first sign of trouble, the flavor of the game is lost and everyone's enjoyment suffers.

Secondly, what kind of fabula does the GameMaster have in mind? If the fabula will revolve around the delicate political intrigue of the Imperial Court, a common legionary foot soldier

would most likely not be appropriate (not only would he have little political clout with which to work, but the legions were forbidden from entering Rome). Likewise, a fabula dealing with frontier battles in Nubia (Sudan) would probably be inappropriate for a Hibernian (Irish) chieftess seeking to return home. However, a good GameMaster can often work in personae that don't seem to fit. Don't hesitate to propose your persona concept; just don't be upset if the GameMaster says, "No." Remember that a GM may have concepts of her own. Don't hesitate to collaborate.

Once you have a basic idea of what type of persona you'd like to play, you must address the issue of rank.

RANK

In its laws and customs, the Imperium is a class society. A persona's rank describes his or her position in society. Rank determines one's privileges and legal rights. Rank will affect everything about a persona's interactions with other people, from birth to the grave. That is not to say that there is no social mobility—the possibility of advancement within the ranks exists. The class system that pacifies rebellious Slaves who hope to become Freedmen also impels ambitious citizens who wish to become Senators.

In our reality, the emperor Caracalla granted citizenship to the entire free population of the Imperium in AD 212, but by then the notion of citizenship was blurred: the right to vote had disappeared, provincial Romans had lost their exemption from taxation and personal privileges were restricted to the wealthy elite. In *FVLMI-NATA*, the institution of rank remains strong as Roman emperors, beginning with the wise Avidius Cassius, used citizenship as a societal tool to reward proper behavior within the limits of the class structure.

While the choice of rank does not cost any

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points, your selection might be limited by what is appropriate for the fabula the GameMaster has prepared. A mix of ranks makes for compelling role-playing, but runs the risk of bending reality. Senators do not often interact with Slaves, unless they are ordering them about. However, an industrious GameMaster will be able to make this happen. In a typical campaign, each persona will be within one rank of each other.

There are six ranks under Imperial Law: three for citizens and three for non-citizens. Citizens [dues] are divided into three distinct ranks based mainly on wealth—Senators, Equestrians and Plebeians; non-citizens [peregrini] are divided into Freedmen, Foreigners and Slaves.

The free citizens [cives] of the Imperium are collectively referred to as the *populus Romanus* or Roman people. Being Roman does not necessarily mean being of Italian descent; it entitles one to specific legal rights under the Imperium, such as voting and eligibility for political office. In the provinces, being a citizen will exempt you from the absolute dominion [imperium] that Roman magistrates have over foreign subjects. Although

women are not technically full citizens (they cannot vote or hold office), female personae retain the social privileges associated with rank.

WOMEN IN THE IMPERIUM

"On the day women are our equals, they will be our masters."

—Cato the Elder

In *FVLMINATA*, women have made significant progress in society, mainly through the efforts of Empress Nonia Gellia, the second wife of Avidius Cassius. Using her influence, she was able to persuade the Senate and her husband to grant limited property rights to female citizens, to set aside certain priesthoods for women and to establish the Amazonian Guard [Cohors Amazona] (see CHAPTER VIII: BELLUM, p. 156-157). Her political maneuverings set the standard for ambitious women in the Imperium.

Despite these gains, women are still unable to vote or hold government office. The goal for a proper Roman lady [matrona] is marriage and a life of leisure in the home, where the only duty is bearing healthy children and managing the servants. Any business or political schemes are executed in private. The "Fair Birthers" [Calligeniae], a secret society of subversive Senatorial women, indulge in learning and philosophy and even espouse the view that females are inherently superior to males, since men can only take life, where women can create it. Women initially have the rank of the head of the family [pater familias] or their parents. Married women automatically take the rank of their husband (even a lower one!). Women with no male guardian may advance in rank by meeting the eligibility requirements of the next rank.

SENATORS [Senatores]

Apart from the Imperial family (whose members sit at the apex of the social pyramid outside of the six rank hierarchy), Senators are the most elite citizens of the Imperium Romanum. Since Augustus, the size of the Senate has been fixed at 600 members, which means that the Senatorial rank is wholly comprised of the men who are or have been Senators and their immediate families. Patricians [Patricii] make up an aristocratic subclass of the Senatorial rank that traces its family's genealogy to the beginnings of Rome or even to divine origin (Iulius Caesar claimed Venus as an ancestor).

Senators must maintain an estate value (money and property) of one million sesterces. If a Senator's wealth falls below this minimum, he and his family are in danger of being expelled from the Senatorial rank

by the censors, who administer the record [album] of free citizens and their rank. Senatorial

EQUESTRIANS [*Equites*]

families retain their rank through inheritance. A Senator's son is automatically qualified to be elected into the 600. However, not all Senators have a male heir that survives or wishes to pursue a career in the Senate; some lacking talent and ambition even fail to become elected to be a financial deputy [*quaestor*], the minimum magistracy for Senate membership. In addition, Senatorial families can fall out of favor. To fill the depleted ranks of the Senate, the Emperor may approve new men into the Senatorial rank by granting immediate membership by bestowing the *latus clavus*, literally "the broad purple stripe", which allows an individual to run for *quaestor*.

Since 536 AUC (218 BC), the Lex Claudia has prevented Senators from engaging in commerce. Thus, the vast wealth of Senatorial families is invested in real estate; Senators are the primary landowners in the Imperium's agrarian economy. Senators are not farmers, however, and are not expected to till the land or even actively manage a slave plantation [*latifundia*]. Senators are supposed to pursue a career in public service. The preferred career path [*cursus honorum*] for a Senator is a political one with the ultimate goal of the Imperial throne (see CHAPTER V: RES PUBLICA, p. 93). To reach that lofty height, a Senator must usually hold (and perform well in) various military and political offices. Men of the Senatorial rank who forsake a public career are demoted to the Equestrian rank.

Senators enjoy many privileges in the Imperium. Choice seating is reserved for them at entertainment venues and civic ceremonies. They are entitled to wear the broad purple stripe [*latus clavus*] on their tunics and togas. Only members of the Senatorial rank are eligible for certain honorary priesthoods.

The Equestrians were originally those Roman citizens who owned a horse and formed the cavalry, hence the term *equites*, "horsemen". In the Imperium, the Equestrians constitute a privileged class that ranks only below the Senators. To indicate their status among Roman citizens, Equestrians wear togas or tunics with a narrow purple stripe and a wide gold ring.

The Lex Claudia, the same law that prevents Senators from business affairs, creates lucrative opportunities for Equestrians throughout the Imperium in the areas of finance, industry and trade. While most Equestrians are prosperous merchants (in fact, some are many times more wealthy than Senators), several key governmental posts are available to them such as the command of the Praetorian Guard [*praefectus praetorio*] and the governor of Aegyptus [*praefectus Aegyptii*]. Like Senators, Equestrians must maintain a minimum estate value; for this rank the amount is 400,000 sesterces. Interestingly, there are two special ways to acquire Equestrian rank where the 400,000 sesterces rule is forever waived: on appointment, each senior centurion [*primi pilus*] of a legion and Imperial treasury legal adviser [*advocatus fisci*] automatically qualify as Equestrians.

A Plebeian who wishes to enter the Equestrian rank must also have the Emperor's approval, symbolized by the granting of the public horse [*equus publicus*]. Each year, on the July 15, the Emperor holds a parade [*transvectio*] to examine the physical and moral fitness of the Equestrians. At this ceremonial event, citizens ride by the Emperor who renews, confers or removes their *equus publicus*. If the Emperor has designated a crown prince [*princeps iuventutis*], the prince presides at the *transvectio* since he is officially the first citizen of the Equestrian rank. Equestrians can be elevated into the Senatorial rank by the Emperor. The ones who prefer the affluent life of successful businessmen do not always accept.

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PLEBEIANS [*Plebs*]

The majority of the Imperium's citizens is of the Plebeian rank. Plebeians do most of the working and paying of the Roman people [*populus Romanus*]. While their lives and deaths are not normally recorded in the annals of Imperial history, the men and women of the Plebeian rank lead interesting lives, full of triumph and tragedy.

To become a Plebeian, one must be born from a mother of Plebeian or Freedman status or be granted citizenship by Roman law. The latter process is conferred upon individuals as well as large civic populations. For example, auxiliary soldiers [*auxilia*] who complete 25 years of military service to Rome are raised into the Plebeian rank along with their entire family. As a special reward for aiding the Imperium, the Emperor himself might bestow Roman citizenship to an entire town. Through hard work, luck or help from a patron, Plebeians can become Equestrians. Pliny the Younger gave a close friend 300,000 sesterces as a gift so that he was eligible for the Equestrian rank.

Most Plebeians earn a decent living as storekeepers, tradesmen or professional soldiers. Others are common laborers, farmers or porters who struggle to make ends meet. Many are destitute, saved from starvation by the public distribution of free grain [*annona*]. Despite the fact that Plebeians are excluded from the most powerful and prestigious political offices and military command, Plebeians are eligible to be a town magistrate [*decurio*], a public commissioner [*aedilis*] or a legionary centurion [*centurio*].

FREEDMEN [*Libertini*]

Freedmen were once Slaves. They are free, but lack the full rights of Roman citizens. Manumission is the most common way to attain the rank of Freedman. By one of four methods, a Slave may be released from bondage. First, a Slave might appeal to a Roman magistrate directly [*manu misit vindicta*] and be granted freedom through the magistrate's direct power [*imperium*]. Second, a Slave might be ordered by his master to present himself to the censor's office [*manu misit censu*] for registration as a Freedman.

Slaves freed from Roman citizens automatically become clients to their former masters, who, in turn, become their patrons. As a condition for early release from slavery, a Freedman is often obligated to continue the duties he or she performed while a Slave. These arrangements hold up under Roman law; a Freedman who shirks his duty to his former master is severely punished or even returned to slavery. Third, a Slave might be set free by his master's will [*manu misit testamento*]. In such cases, the new Freedmen

march in the funeral procession wearing tall red caps to symbolize their recent emancipation; it is a final duty that honors a former master by displaying his or her generosity to the public. Fourth, a Slave may purchase freedom from his owner; gladiators and chariot drivers often earn enough private money [*peculiam*] in their careers to accomplish this. In any event, criminals are ineligible for Freedman rank.

The children born of Freedmen are full citizens, although the social stigma of being descended from Slaves is often remembered for several gen-



erations. While excluded from high-level political and military service, Freedmen hold numerous local public offices and priesthoods. Many Freedmen engage in trades and crafts, continuing the work that they performed as Slaves for payment. Those freed from wealthy households often inherit small fortunes from their master's will as well. In the Imperium, the rich are expected to make lavish donations to the public. Freedmen who wish to emulate upper-class behaviors to gain social acceptance sponsor games [*ludi*] and erect public monuments. In Roman society, rich Freedmen have a reputation for being snobs, second only to Patricians of Senatorial rank.

FOREIGNERS [*Externi*]

Foreigners are immigrants from other nations or the conquered subjects of the Imperium, like the people of Iudaea and Germania. These Imperial subjects are denied the rights to vote, to marry a Roman citizen and to be tried by a Roman court. While a Roman citizen may appeal to the Senate for justice (or to the Emperor himself if in an imperial province), a Foreigner is subject to the local magistrate's power [*imperium*]. During times of crisis, Foreigners are subject to harsh measures imposed by martial law, such as arrest and expulsion from Roman territory.

A Foreigner can also refer to an outsider who lives in a territory not under Roman rule. Although Parthians are Foreigners and enemies of Rome, they are still respected for being civilized. Other peoples are not as fortunate; they are marked for eventual subjugation, enslavement or extinction. The average Roman has a prejudice against certain cultures. He stereotypes individuals based on their ethnicity, but without being racist in the modern sense: Hibernians are quick-tempered, Iudaeans are irrational, Germans are aggressive and Parthians are crafty. After a preliminary judgment based on ethnic background, a Foreigner is labeled a good person or an unruly

savage by observing behavior, not complexion. Different skin colors are noted primarily for their difference, not for any associated judgment: the white of the Germans, the bronze of the Mauretanians and the black of the Aethiopians.

Foreigners, especially in the Greek-speaking eastern provinces, represent the majority of the population. Many Foreigners are involved in the arts or in commerce as merchants and tradesmen. Defense of the Imperium relies on auxiliaries [*auxilia*], uniformed foreign soldiers in the paid service of Rome who protect many of the frontiers. Even though they are not armed with *fulminata*, these auxiliary troops are disciplined, formidable and flexible in battle.

SLAVES [*Servi*]

Slaves are property and therefore are owned by other personae. Anyone in Roman society may own a Slave, even another Slave. Slaves usually have only one name and are bought and sold as commodities. Slave dealers also offer the option to rent Slaves for a specific time period or task. In general, the Imperium is enjoyed by the few at the expense of the many; it is estimated by the censors that Slaves outnumber free citizens by more than three to one, a dire secret and one reason why Roman law forbids Slaves to be differentiated by dress or ornamentation. The Senate fears that Slaves would rebel if they saw the vast numbers of oppressed people in their midst. If favored after many years of service, Slaves can be manumitted into the Freedman rank. An industrious and obedient servant in a private household can expect manumission by the age of 35.

Slaves have few privileges or rights in the Imperium. While the killing of a Slave has been officially considered murder for two hundred years, Roman courts tend to overlook such "accidents." If convicted of a crime, punishment for a Slave is severe: death by crucifixion [*cruci suffixus*] or eaten by wild animals in the arena [*damnatio ad bestias*]. The fortunate are sentenced to be gladiators or

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miners. On the last day of the Saturnalia (December 23), the role of master and slave is reversed for one day. The servants of the household elect one of their number to preside as the mock king [*Saturnalicius princeps*] over the feast, while the masters of the house serve and entertain the Slaves. In addition, mistresses serve food to their female Slaves in a private ceremony on the Matronalia (March 1).

OCCUPATION

Life in the Imperium is not easy. Just as in our world, most people in *FVLMINATA* must work for their daily bread. Those who do not, like members of the Senatorial rank, are still bound by custom and duty to spend their days working for the public in the government or in the military.

A persona's work helps define who he or she is. What does your persona do? As with rank, the type of fabula the GameMaster wishes to run will influence the choice of occupation. Each occupation is accompanied by suggestions for ranks and

skills. These skills indicate knowledge acquired by schooling, training and experience that a persona will need to be a capable member of his or her chosen career. Note that when you choose an occupation, your persona does not automatically gain the corresponding skills. You must spend skill points to ensure that your persona performs well in his or her duty. If not, your persona risks being found incompetent, drummed out of the legions, removed from office amidst scandal, going bankrupt, being sold to the mines, or worse.

Because the public sphere dominates much of the activity in the Imperium, many personae will choose to be politicians and soldiers. For personae who do not wish to hold public office or join the military, the Imperium holds a wide variety of other occupations. Rome has its doctors, lawyers, business tycoons, professional athletes and actors. The few occupations below are only a sample of the most common vocations that readily lend themselves to adventurous fabula. The page numbers indicate where the occupation is covered in more depth.

Occupation	Suggested Rank	Suggested Skills	Page(s)
Actor	Any but Senator or Equestrian	Theater, Music, Poetry, Myth	139
Artisan	Plebeian, Freedman or Foreigner	Craft, Trade	116-118
Auxiliary Soldier	Foreigner	Gladius, Forest, Horse	149-152
Chariot Driver	Slave	Chariot, Dagger	133
Criminal	Any	Thief, Stealth	97
Doctor	Any but Slave	Medicine, Chirurgy, Pharmakon	119
Engineer	Any but Slave	Machines, Fort, Monuments	66-69, 74
Farmer	Any	Farm, Harvest	114-115
Gladiator	Slave	Gladius, Move, Spear, Trick	125-127
Hunter	Plebeian, Freedman or Foreigner	Track, Snare, Stealth	115
Innkeeper	Plebeian, Freedman or Foreigner	Wine, Dice, Food	72-73
Lawyer	Senator	Law, Rhetoric	96
Legionary	Plebeian	Pilum, Gladius, Move	145-147
Magistrate	Senator	Administrate, Diplomacy	92-93
Magus	Any	Amulet, Magic, Philter	171-189
Matron	Senator	Administrate, Harmony	101-102
Merchant	Any but Senator or Slave	Trade, Sail, Harvest	118-119
Officer	Senator, Equestrian	Command, Strategy, Horse	144-145
Priest	Any but Slave	Customs, Divine	111-113
Sailor	Freedman or Foreigner	Sail, Navigate, Sea	159
Servant	Freedman or Slave	Customs, Groom, Food	115-116
Smith	Any but Senator or Equestrian	Armor, Smith, Metals	116
Spy	Any but Senator or Slave	Stealth, Code, Interrogate	94-95
Watchman	Plebeian, Freedman	City, Guard, Customs	155-156

ATTRIBUTES

Once you have selected your persona's rank and occupation, you must define what makes him or her unique from all other Romans. To do this, we define the persona's innate potential for doing certain kinds of things, called attributes, and his learned aptitudes at specific sorts of tasks, called skills.

FVLMINATA uses four attributes to quantify your persona's potential and raw abilities.

INTELLIGENTIA

Intelligentia applies to your persona's mental perception, memory, problem-solving ability, and intelligence. Politicians, spies and engineers tend to have high Intelligentia ratings.

AGILITAS

Agilitas defines your persona's quickness, physical agility and manual dexterity. Criminals, entertainers and athletes tend to have high Agilitas ratings.

PIETAS

Pietas reflects your persona's sense of moral duty to Roman society. Citizens with a high Pietas rating have reverent souls and take responsibility their own actions. Pietas is a measure of your persona's intuition as opposed to logical reasoning. Priests, officers and magi tend to have high Pietas ratings.

Vis

Vis encompasses your persona's physical strength, stamina and sturdiness. Vis is used in situations where power is needed for resolution. Gladiators, soldiers and laborers tend to have high Vis ratings.

Each attribute is rated on the following scale:

<i>Attribute Ratings</i>		
Attribute Rating	Modifier	What it Means
5	-3	Crippled*
6	-2	Far Below Average
7	-1	Well Below Average
8	-1	Below Average
9	0	Slightly Below Average
10	0	Average Attribute
11	0	Slightly Above Average
12	+1	Above Average
13	+1	Well Above Average
14	+2	Far Above Average
15	+2	A Paragon
*Only allowable with special GM permission		

In making your persona, you will usually have 42 attribute points to distribute between the four Attributes. However, your GameMaster may give you more or fewer depending on the fabula she wishes to run. Also be aware that attributes of 5 or lower are only allowable with express permission from the GameMaster. Attribute ratings in these ranges represent severe handicaps that the persona must face, and the GameMaster has is the final judge of what is appropriate for her fabula.

SKILLS

Like attributes, skills are rated numerically. The skill rating indicates how well your persona knows how to do the particular tasks that the skill applies to. The meanings of the various skill ratings are listed below.

The skills are broken into groups based on which god of the Roman pantheon patronizes use of that skill. Mercurius is the god of Trade, Travel and Thieves, so the skills Coin, Move, Thief, Trade and Trick fall under his sphere of influence. However, even though much Travel is

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done using ships and horses, the skills of Sail and Horse are in the sphere of Neptunus, god of the sea and creator of horses.

Each persona in the Imperium can choose one god to be their patron god above the others. As a blessing, the persona may increase the skill rating of each skill by one point within that god's sphere of influence, provided they already have some training in it. If a persona learns one of their patron god's skills after persona creation, they will still benefit from their god's good favor.

Example: *C. Pomponius Lysimachus is a trireme captain [trierarchus] in the Imperial Navy. Lysimachus spends some of his skill points to buy Command 3, Sea 4 and Sail 5. As his occupation is dependent on the sea, he wisely chooses Neptunus as his patron god. Because of this, Lysimachus begins the game with Command 3, Sea 5 and Sail 6. Note that the skill Command was unaffected, because that skill is under Iuppiter. Also, since he did not spend any of his own points to buy Fish, Harpax, Horse or Swim, he has a skill rating of 0 in those skills. If he later buys Fish 1, he will function as if he had Fish 2 because of Neptunus' favor.*

Skill Ratings		
Skill Rating	What it Means	Comments
0	Ignorance	You have never done this
1	Novice	You do this once a year
2	Apprentice	You do this once a month
3	Average Skill	You do this once a week
4	Chief Apprentice	You do this every day
5	Journeyman	Good enough to be paid for
6	Accomplished Journeyman	Good enough to be sought after
7	Master	Best in a city
8	Esteemed Master	Best in a province
9	Grand Master	Best in the Imperium
10	Legend	No one has ever done it better

You will usually have 42 skill points to purchase skills when creating your persona. But as with attribute points, your GameMaster may give you more or fewer depending on the fabula she intends to create. For beginning persona, no individual skill should have a skill rating greater than 5 (6 for skills under your patron god). Unlike attribute points, additional skill points can be acquired with experience. These skill points can be used to increase skill ratings or purchase new skills before or after a game session. They may also be saved for use during the fabula; in emergency situations it is advantageous to have a few skill points in reserve to apply to your persona. For detailed mechanics on experience and advancement, see CHAPTER X: FABULAE, pp. 216-217.

In addition to these 42 skill points, starting personae are awarded free skills based on starting rank.

Senator: Language (Latin) 2, Language (Greek) 2, Customs (Patrician) 2

Equestrian: Language (Latin) 2, Language (Greek) 2, Horse 2

Plebeian: Language (Latin) 2, City 2 *or* Farm 2, Customs (Plebeian) 2

Freedman: Language (Latin) 2, Language (Any) 2, Customs (Slave) 2

Foreigner: Language (Latin) 2, Language (Any) 2, City 2 *or* Sea 2 *or* Forest 2

Slave: Language (Latin) 2, Language (Any) 2, Customs (Slave) 2

The following are the skills in *FVL MINATA*. A "*" following the skill name indicates that the skill requires further specialization; the skill description will give examples of the types of specialization allowable. A "#" following the skill name indicates that the skill needs another skill as a prerequisite. This also means that your persona must possess the prerequisite skill at a minimum rating of three before purchasing the advanced skill. If your patron god governs the prerequisite skill, you need only spend two skill points.

Skill List		
Skill	Patron	Prereq(s)
Administrate	Ceres	
Amulet*	Minerva	Magic, Metals
Armor*	Volcanus	Smith
Bow	Diana	
Box	Mars	
Chariot*	Iuppiter	Horse
Chirurgy*	Apollo	Medicine
City	Iuppiter	
Code	Quirinus	
Coin	Mercurius	
Command	Iuppiter	
Craft*	Minerva	
Customs*	Bacchus	
Dagger	Mars	
Dice	Bacchus	
Diplomacy*	Iuppiter	Harmony, Rhetoric
Divine*	Apollo	
Farm	Ceres	
Fish*	Neptunus	Sea
Food	Venus	
Forage	Ceres	
Forest	Diana	
Fort*	Mars	Monuments
Fulminata*	Quirinus	Code, Metals
Gladius	Mars	
Groom	Venus	
Guard	Mars	

Skill	Patron	Prereq(s)
Harmony	Venus	
Harpax*	Neptunus	Spear
Harvest**	Ceres	Farm
Horse	Neptunus	
Interrogate	Iuppiter	
Knowledge*	Quirinus	
Language*	Quirinus	
Law*	Iuppiter	Language (Latin), Rhetoric
Machines	Volcanus	
Magic	Quirinus	
Medicine	Apollo	
Metals	Volcanus	
Monuments*	Volcanus	City
Move*	Mercurius	
Music*	Apollo	
Myth	Bacchus	
Navigate	Diana	
Pankration#	Mars	Box, Wrestle
Pharmakon#	Ceres	Forage
Philosophy*	Minerva	Language (Greek)
Philter*	Venus	Magic, Pharmakon
Pilum	Mars	
Poetry#	Apollo	Language (Any)
Rhetoric	Iuppiter	
Sail#	Neptunus	Navigate, Sea
Scribe*	Minerva	Language (Any)
Sea	Neptunus	
Seduce	Venus	
Smith*	Volcanus	Metals
Snare*	Diana	Forest or City
Spear	Diana	
Stealth	Quirinus	
Strategy	Minerva	
Swim	Neptunus	
Theater	Bacchus	
Thief	Mercurius	
Tormentum#	Volcanus	Pilum
Track#	Diana	Forest or City
Trade#	Mercurius	Coin
Train	Venus	
Trick	Mercurius	
Wine	Bacchus	
Wrestle	Minerva	

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APOLLO

God of Healing, Divination and the Arts

Chirurgy#

This is the ability to perform surgical operations. A *chirurgus* will be familiar with medical instruments and wound dressings. This skill can be used for first aid in the field.

#Medicine

The following are sample uses of the Chirurgy skill:

Actions	Rolls
Determining skill level of another <i>chirurgus</i> by examining patient	I + Chirurgy
Removing a pilum bullet	A + Chirurgy

For detailed mechanics on healing, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 55-56.

Divine*

This is the ability to foretell the past, present or future.

(Astrology)

An ancient skill from Chaldea. An *astrologus* will know how to observe celestial movements and interpret cosmic events such as planetary alignments, comets, novae, eclipses and meteor storms. This specialization can be used to prepare a birth chart to foretell a persona's destiny.

(Augury)

The ability to read and interpret unsolicited signs of the gods for approval; in its pure form, it is not used to foretell the future. An *augur* will be able to interpret the flight patterns and behavior of wild birds. This skill can be used to observe the feeding habits of the sacred chickens to make a recommendation on a course of action.

(The Etruscan Art)

This is the ability to divine by examining the entrails of sacrificed animals and un-

usual births and growths [*prodigia et monstra*]. An Etruscan diviner [*haruspex*] will be able to determine the will of the gods by the color, shape and markings of the inner organs. This skill is also used to interpret lightning, its frequency and its location in the sky. A specialized interpreter of lightning is called a *fulgurator*.

The following are sample uses of the Divine skill:

Actions	Rolls
Interpreting the meaning of an eclipse	P + Divine (Astrology)
Sacrificing a bull	V + Divine (Augury)

Medicine

This is the ability to diagnose and treat illnesses, from simple ailments to contagious diseases. A *medicus* will know general anatomy and the effect of humors. This skill can be used to determine cause of death.

The following are sample uses of the Medicine skill:

Actions	Rolls
Making a correct diagnosis	I + Medicine
Applying a wound dressing	P + Medicine

For detailed mechanics on healing, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 55-56.

Music*

This is the knowledge of musical composition and the ability to play an instrument.

(Cymbals)

This is the ability to play the cymbals [*cymbalum*]. This skill can also be used to keep a rhythm on the tambourine [*tympanum*] or the sistrum, a bronze ceremonial rattle associated with cult of Isis.

(Flute)

This is the ability to play the double flute [*tibia*]. A flute player [*tibicen*] will be able to perform light and airy songs, from simple rustic runes to complex haunting melodies.



This skill is also used to play the pipes [*fitula*] and the curved clarinet [*littuus*].

(Horn)

This is the ability to play the military trumpet [*tuba*]. A trumpeter [*tubicen*] will be able to wake the troops, signal a changing of the guard or convey the order to decamp. In combat, this skill is used to communicate charges and retreats. The tuba is also used in some religious ceremonies to drown out the ill-omened sound of bleating animals. This skill is also used to play the military horn [*cornu*] and bugle [*bucina*]. A horn player is called a *cornicen*; a bugle player, a *bucinator*.

(Lyre)

This is the ability to play music on the lyre. A skilled lyre player [*lyricus*] will be able to strum songs or accompany poetry readings with timely melodies. This skill is also used to play the lute [*cithara*]. A lute player is called a *citharista*.

(Water Organ)

This is the ability to play the water organ [*hydraulus*], a large instrument that requires an attendant to pump air and water. A water organist [*hydumularius*] will be able to please large crowds with grand, vibrating compositions.

The following are sample uses of the Music skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Keeping a rhythm during a ceremony	A + Music (Cymbals)
Sounding a charge	V + Music (Horn)

Poetry#

This is the ability to write or recite poetry. *Apoeta* will be able to compose sentimental elegies, witty epigrams and narrative epics. This skill can be used to commemorate a tragic death or important military victory.

#Language (Any)

The following are sample uses of the Poetry skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Translating an archaic Greek poem	I + Poetry
Writing a touching elegy	P + Poetry

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BACCHUS

God of Wine, Gambling and Culture

Customs*

This is the knowledge of customs and traditions. A persona with this skill will be able to behave correctly in social situations. This skill can also be used to imitate the behavior of a persona of the appropriate rank.

(Patrician)

This is the knowledge of Roman elite society. A persona with this specialty will be able to make formal greetings, conduct one's self at an upper-class dinner party or perform the correct actions during a public festival.

(Plebeian)

This is the knowledge of the way of life of the Plebeians or the common people. A persona with this specialty will be able to gather good gossip at the public fountain or deal with the local *vigiles*.

(Slave)

This is the knowledge of being a Slave. A persona with this specialty will be able to perform menial tasks and take orders without question.

The following are sample uses of the Customs skill:

Actions	Rolls
Writing a proper letter of introduction	I + Customs (Patrician)
Cleaning a domus	A + Customs (Slave)

Dice

This is the ability to gamble with dice [*alea*] and knucklebones [*tali*]. A good gambler [*aleator*] will know the basic rules of games of chance and local variants. This skill can be used to detect cheaters or rigged games.

The following are sample uses of the Dice skill:

Actions	Rolls
Knowing the rules of a gambling game	I + Dice
Spotting loaded dice	P + Dice

Myth

This is the knowledge of myths and legends. A persona with this skill will be able to recount the labors of Hercules or the story of Aeneas. This skill can be used to recognize allusions in literature and fine art.

The following are sample uses of the Myth skill:

Actions	Rolls
Identifying the myth depicted on a Greek urn	I + Myth
Telling the story of Daedalus	P + Myth

Theater

This is the ability to understand and put on theatrical shows. A persona with this skill will know the conventions of the stage and be able to appreciate Sophocle's tragedies and Plautus' comedies. This skill is also used to perform in mime [*mimus*] and pantomime [*pantomimus*] plays.

The following are sample uses of the Theater skill:

Actions	Rolls
Executing a traditional pantomime dance	A + Theater
Inciting lust in a mime sketch	V + Theater

Wine

This is the ability to identify and appreciate wine [*vinum*], sour wine [*posca*] and hot spiced wine [*caldum*]. A persona with this skill will be able to tell the difference between a Falernian and a Chian.

The following are sample uses of the Wine skill:

Actions	Rolls
Determining the origin and vintage of a wine	I + Wine
Consuming wine without becoming drunk	V + Wine



CERES

Goddess of Farming and the Countryside

Administrate

This is the ability to run organizations. A persona with this skill will be able to manage a plantation [*latifundia*], run a guild [*collegium*] or handle the finances of a legion. This skill can also be used to govern provinces or cities.

The following are sample uses of the Administrative skill:

Actions	Rolls
Keeping track of logistics for a legion	I + Administrative
Levying taxes in a province without fomenting rebellion	P + Administrative

Farm

This is the knowledge of rural living and farming. A farmer [*agricola*] will have basic knowledge of plowing, sowing and harvesting cycles.

The following are sample uses of the Farm skill:

Actions	Rolls
Identifying a crop from a distance	I + Farm
Plowing a field	V + Farm

Forage

This is the ability to gather provisions from nature. A persona with this skill will be able to find edible roots and rare herbs. This skill can also be used to find fresh water in the wild.

The following are sample uses of the Forage skill:

Actions	Rolls
Avoiding a poison mushroom	I + Forage
Scavenging for berries and nuts	A + Forage

Harvest**

This is the ability to grow food. A farmer [*agricola*] with this skill will be able to cultivate and harvest a specific crop.

#Farm

(Fruit)

This is the ability to tend orchards of apples, pears and plums. This specialty can be used to grow and harvest figs, dates, berries and pomegranates. This skill can also be used to cultivate vines and produce quality vintages from harvested grapes.

(Honey)

This is the ability to produce honey and manage beehives. A beekeeper [*apiarius*] will know the effect that places and different types of flowers have upon the flavor and color of honey. This specialty can be used to construct artificial hives for beekeeping.

(Livestock)

This is the ability to raise and breed livestock for meat, milk, wool or leather. A herdsman [*pastor*] will be able to look after pigs, sheep, cattle and goats. This specialty can also be used to raise chickens, geese and ducks for meat and eggs.

(Olives)

This is the ability to grow olives and make olive oil. A persona with this specialty will be able to operate olive presses and store oil in jars for transport.

(Vegetables)

This is the ability to cultivate gardens of beans, carrots, radishes, turnips and cabbage.

(Wheat)

This is the ability to raise and harvest wheat. A persona with this specialty will be able to properly use a sickle [*falx*], a measure [*modius*] and a measuring shovel [*rutellum*]. This skill can also be used to bake bread or make spelt.

The following are sample uses of the Harvest skill:

Actions	Rolls
Building a beehive	A + Harvest (Honey)
Harvesting wheat with a sickle	V + Harvest (Wheat)

CHAPTER II PERSONAE

Pharmakon#

This is the ability to prepare drugs. Personae with this skill will know how to identify and use salts, herbs and poisons. This skill can be used to concoct medicinal elixirs and unguents to achieve desired effects, both beneficial and deleterious.

#Forage

The following are sample uses of the Pharmakon skill:

Actions	Rolls
Assembling the ingredients for a salve to treat burns	I + Pharmakon
Mixing enough poison to pollute a well	V + Pharmakon

For detailed mechanics on healing, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 55-56.

DIANA

Goddess of Hunting, Nature and the Moon

Bow

This is the ability to aim and fire a bow. This skill can also be used to fire a sling.

The following are sample uses of the Bow skill:

Actions	Rolls
Shooting an arrow at a deer	A + Bow
Stringing a powerful hunting bow	V + Bow

For detailed mechanics of combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

Forest

This is the knowledge of the woods. A woodsman [*lignator*] will be able to follow trails and identify native fauna and flora. This skill can also be used to survive in a wooded setting.

The following are sample uses of the Forest skill:

Actions	Rolls
Staying on a natural path	P + Forest
Chopping down a tree	V + Forest

Navigate

This is the ability to navigate by examining the heavens. A navigator [*gubernator*] will be able to determine the compass directions if the sun, moon or stars are visible. This skill can also be used to read maps.

The following are sample uses of the Navigate skill:

Actions	Rolls
Finding the way back home	1 + Navigate
Plotting the safest course	P + Navigate

Snare*

This is the ability to use and construct traps and snares. A persona with this skill will be able to identify and disarm traps as well.

#Forest

The following are sample uses of the Snare skill:

Actions	Rolls
Capturing birds with a net	A + Snare
Constructing a staked pit	V + Snare

Spear

This is the ability to attack with a spear [*hasta*]. This skill can also be used to fight with a javelin [*lancea*] or net and trident [*tridens*].

The following are sample uses of the Spear skill:

Actions	Rolls
Blocking an incoming blow with a trident	A + Spear
Thrusting a spear through a door	V + Spear

For detailed mechanics of combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

Track#

This is the ability to track humans (prereq: City) or wild game, such as boar, quail or lion (prereq: Forest). A persona with this skill will be able to approximate the number of men being followed as well as their direction. This skill can also be used to identify the tracks, spoor and calls of wild animals.

#City or #Forest



The following are sample uses of the Track skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Identifying an animal print in the mud	I + Track
Following a persona through an urban crowd	P + Track

IUPPITER

God of Government and Leadership

Chariot*

This is the skill of racing a chariot and knowledge of chariot racing. A charioteer [*agigator*] will be able to manage a swift racing *quadriga*, or four-horsed chariot. This skill can also be used to judge the field at a chariot race.

#Horse

The following are sample uses of the Chariot skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Examining a team of horses for evidence of sabotage	I + Chariot
Negotiating a tight turn	A + Chariot

For detailed mechanics of chariot racing, see CHAPTER VII: LUDI, p. 136.

City

This is the knowledge of urban settings. A persona with this skill will know the layout of a Roman city, such as the location of the main street [*decumanus maximus*], entry gates, forums, temples and bath complexes [*thermae*]. This is also the knowledge of aqueducts and sewers.

The following are sample uses of the City skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Evading pursuers by running through back alleys	A + City
Locating the nearest bath complex in an unfamiliar city	P + City

Command

This is the ability to give orders convincingly. A persona with this skill will be able to lead legions

into battle. This skill can also be used to exert authority in an uncertain or dangerous situation.

The following are sample uses of the Command skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Relating instructions to the house slaves	I + Command
Shouting orders amid the din of battle	V + Command

Diplomacy*

This is the ability to make diplomatic contracts. A persona with this skill will be able to settle arguments and negotiate business deals and treaties. This skill can also be used to run for political office.

#Harmony, #Rhetoric

The following are sample uses of the Diplomacy skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Composing a trading contract for an Imperial monopoly	I + Diplomacy
Garnering votes for a local election	P + Diplomacy

Interrogate

This is the ability to question a persona. An interrogator [*quaestionarius*] will be able to determine the veracity of statements by noting clues in the subject's voice and responses. This skill can also be used to resist torture.

The following are sample uses of the Interrogate skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Extracting information from a prisoner	P + Interrogate
Roughing up a suspect	V + Interrogate

Law#

This is the knowledge of Roman government, laws and its court system. A capable judge [*index*] will be able to pass fair verdicts.

#Rhetoric, #Language (Latin)

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The following are sample uses of the Law skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Researching prior cases for precedent	I + Law
Rendering a verdict that adheres to Roman law	P + Law

Rhetoric

This is the ability to speak persuasively. An orator will be able to sway audiences with speeches replete with well-crafted arguments and turns of phrase. This skill can also be used to talk another persona into doing something against his conscience.

The following are sample uses of the Rhetoric skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Rebutting another persona's oratory	I + Rhetoric
Winning over an audience with an impassioned appeal	P + Rhetoric

MARS

God of Warfare and the Frontiers

Box

This is the ability to box. A boxer *[pugil]* will be able to engage in fistfights or don studded boxing gloves *[caesti]* for an official bout.

The following are sample uses of the Box skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Boxing in the Nemean Games	A + Box
Breaking a window with fist	V + Box

For detailed mechanics of unarmed combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

Dagger

This is the ability to use a military dagger *[pugio]* in combat or close quarters. This skill can also be used to attack with a curved dagger *[sica]*.

The following are sample uses of the Dagger skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Fighting with a <i>sica</i> in the arena	A + Dagger
Plunging a <i>pugio</i> into a sleeping enemy	V + Dagger

For detailed mechanics of combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

Fort*

This is the ability to construct a military encampment *[castra]*. A persona with this skill will be able to direct the efforts of legionaries in any terrain to build temporary and permanent fortifications.

#Monuments

The following are sample uses of the Fort skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Laying out the plan for a fort in difficult terrain	I + Fort
Supervising tired legionaries to build a fort	P + Fort

Gladius

This is the ability to wield the gladius, the Roman short sword. This skill can also be used to fight using other bladed weapons, such as the cavalry saber *[spatha]*, scimitar *[falx]* and hooked sword *[harpe]*.

The following are sample uses of the Gladius skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Attacking on horseback with <i>spatha</i>	A + Gladius
Cutting a thick rope in one blow	V + Gladius

For detailed mechanics of combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

Guard

This is the ability to be vigilant. A watchman *[vigil]* will be able to spot enemies lurking in the shadows or forest.



The following are sample uses of the Guard skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Noticing a merchant ship on the horizon	I + Guard
Recognizing an ambush	P + Guard

Pankration#

This is the martial art of *pankration*, a Greek combination of boxing and wrestling that allows kicking, strangling and bone breaking. In official competitions, drawing blood by biting, scratching or gouging is not allowed. A persona with this skill will be able to counter most boxing and wrestling moves in close quarters combat.

#Box, #Wrestle

The following are sample uses of the Pankration skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Kicking an onrushing soldier	A + Pankration
Breaking bones of held opponent	V + Pankration

For detailed mechanics of unarmed combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

Pilum

This is the ability to aim and fire a pilum or military musket. This skill can also be used to operate the military handgun [*hastula*].

The following are sample uses of the Pilum skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Judging effective range for a difficult shot	I + Pilum
Firing pilum at an escaped arena lion	A + Pilum

For detailed mechanics of combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

MERCURIUS

God of Travel, Trade and Thieves

Coin

This is the knowledge of finance, money and currency. A persona with this skill will be able to

balance accounts and manage investments. This skill can also be used for minting and identifying marks on coins, including forgeries.

The following are sample uses of the Coin skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Calculating the value of a persona's estate	I + Coin
Spotting a good forgery at a glance	P + Coin

Move*

This is the ability to move in a trained fashion.

(Climb)

This is the ability to climb trees or cliffs. This specialty can also be used to scale ropes, walls and fortifications.

(Defend)

This is the ability to evade blows or use a shield as a defense when weaponless. This specialty can also be used for taking cover against projectile attacks.

(Jump)

This is the ability leap across gaps or clear low walls. This specialty can also be used to reach for suspended objects.

(March)

This is the ability to march in formation. A persona with this specialty will be able to cover long distances efficiently and in unison. This specialty is used for all combat maneuvers such as advancing, charging, wheeling and retreating.

The following are sample uses of the Move skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Scaling a tall, rickety ladder	A + Move (Climb)
Reaching a destination in a double-time march	V + Move (March)

For detailed mechanics of moves in combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

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Thief

This is the ability to steal. A persona with this skill will be able to pick locks, break into buildings or snatch items in plain sight through sheer legerdemain. This skill can also be used to conceal small items or smuggle large shipments.

The following are sample uses of the Thief skill:

Actions	Rolls
Hiding a dagger in the folds of a toga	A + Thief
Detecting a pickpocket attempt	P + Thief

Trade*

This is the ability to conduct business. A merchant [*mercator*] will be able to buy, sell, trade and determine the value of goods. This skill can also be used to haggle for a better price.

#Coin

The following are sample uses of the Trade skill:

Actions	Rolls
Estimating the final auction price for a Greek statue	I + Trade
Negotiating for a discount on a bulk sale	P + Trade

Trick

This is the ability to fool another persona through misdirection or deception. A persona with this skill will be able to pull off a con or tell a bald-faced lie and get away with it.

The following are sample uses of the Trick skill:

Actions	Rolls
Kicking sand in an opponent's face	A + Trick
Throwing one's voice	V + Trick

amulet or magical ring. This skill can also be used to fashion curse tablets [*lamellae*] or voodoo dolls [*pupae*].

#Magic, #Metals

The following are sample uses of the Amulet skill:

Actions	Rolls
Making a good luck charm	A + Amulet
Calling on the powers of an enchanted ring	P + Amulet

For detailed mechanics for magic, see CHAPTER IX: ARCANA, pp. 166-171. Note: The ability to fashion specific magic amulets must be purchased with additional skill points. Unlike other skills, amulet spells begin at a -1 rating, and can only progress to a rating of 0 or +1. Thus, a persona may become better at creating amulets by increasing the rating on his Amulet skill, but never better at making a particular amulet. Just like some skills, advanced amulets have prerequisites (#). If you wish your persona to start the fabula knowing how to make certain amulets, remember to save enough skill points to purchase them.

Craft*

This is the ability to create artistic objects of beauty and practical ones of value.

(Furniture)

This is the ability to make dining couches [*triclinia*], tables, stools and beds.

(Glass)

This is the ability to blow glass and fashion vessels and windows. A glassmaker [*vitriarius*] will be able to mix and heat sand, ashes and lime to produce molten glass. This skill can also be used to engrave scenes on cameo vessels.

(Mosaic)

This is the ability to create mosaics [*emblemata*]. A persona with this specialty will be able to place small cubes [*tesselae*] into mortar to form geometric patterns or figured scenes.

MINERVA

Goddess of Crafts and Stratagems

Amulet#

This is the ability to fashion magical charms. A persona with this skill will be able to create an

(Painting)

This is the ability to produce pleasing landscapes on interior walls or a portrait [*imago*] on wood. A painter [*pictor*] will be able to decorate pottery or statues.

(Pottery)

This is the ability to fashion clay into pottery. A potter [*figulus*] will be able to make amphorae, fine Samian tableware [*terra sigillata*] or oil lamps. This skill can also be used to make bricks and roof tiles.

(Sculpture)

This is the ability to sculpt statues or friezes in marble. This skill can also be used to carve monumental inscriptions.

(Textiles)

This is the ability to spin cloth and fabricate clothing. A weaver [*tetter*] will be able to make tunics, togas and dresses [*stolae*]. This skill can also be used to make or repair sandals.

The following are sample uses of the Craft skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Designing a mosaic for a wealthy client	I + Craft (Mosaic)
Preparing a block of marble for more detailed work using a chisel	V + Craft (Sculpture)

Philosophy*

This is the study of ethics and morals. A *philosophus* will be able to lecture on the merits of the good life, different forms of government or the nature of the ideal. This skill can also be used to determine another persona's guiding principles by paying attention to words and actions.

#Language (Greek)

The following are sample uses of the Philosophy skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Disproving a statement in a formal debate	I + Philosophy
Explaining Zeno's Paradox to a learned crowd	P + Philosophy

Scribe#

This is the ability to write clearly and legibly in a known language. A scribe [*scriptor*] will be able to write on scrolls or wax tablets with a practiced hand. This skill can also be used to forge official documents.

#Language (Any)

The following are sample uses of the Scribe skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Copying a scroll verbatim	A + Scribe
Detecting a forged contract	P + Scribe

Strategy

This is the ability to plan strategy and tactics. A persona with this skill will be able to devise large-scale military campaigns as well as small missions. This skill can also be used to hatch or defuse plots.

The following are sample uses of the Strategy skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Identifying the weakest part of an enemy's defenses	I + Strategy
Conducting a full assault during a city siege	V + Strategy

Wrestle

This is the ability to wrestle in the Greek style. A wrestler [*luctor*] will be able to execute holds and perform various throws to imbalance his or her opponent.

The following are sample uses of the Wrestling skill:

<u>Actions</u>	<u>Rolls</u>
Forcing an opponent off-balance	A + Wrestling
Keeping a wrestler in the infamous "Ladder Grip"	V + Wrestling

For detailed mechanics of unarmed combat, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 59-62.

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NEPTUNUS

God of the Sea and Horses

Fish*

This is the ability to catch seafood. A fisherman [*piscator*] will be able to fish in charted waters or manage fishponds [*piscina*] or oyster beds [*ostriaria*]. This skill can also be used to make fermented fish sauces, such as *garum* and *liquamen*.

#Sea

The following are sample uses of the Fish skill:

Actions	Rolls
Selecting a location for an artificial oyster bed	I + Fish
Blending an exquisite batch of garum	A+ Fish

Harpax#

This is the ability to fire a *harpax*, or grappling harpoon. This skill can also be used to operate the antiquated boarding ramp [*corvus*].

#Spear

The following are sample uses of the Harpax skill:

Actions	Rolls
Firing a grappling harpoon	A + Harpax
Reeling in a captured ship to board her	V+ Harpax

Horse

This is the skill of riding a horse. A horseman [*eques*] will be able to care and feed his mount. This skill can also be used to tame an unruly horse.

The following are sample uses of the Horse skill:

Actions	Rolls
Selecting good horses for a breeding farm	I + Horse
Urging a horse to jump a fallen tree	P + Horse

Sail*

This is the ability to operate a sailing vessel. A sailor [*nauta*] will be able to hoist sails and ropes,

operate a rudder or direct rowing. This skill can also be used to construct a sailing vessel.

#Navigate, #Sea

The following are sample uses of the Sail skill:

Actions	Rolls
Sailing to Alexandria	A + Sail
Steering in a squall	V + Sail

Sea

This is the knowledge of natural bodies of water. A persona with this skill will be able to identify weather patterns and wind directions for good sailing. This skill can also be used to survive on the open sea or uncharted river.

The following are sample uses of the Sea skill:

Actions	Rolls
Identifying a land mass by its profile	I + Sea
Predicting the weather at sea	P + Sea

Swim

This is the ability to swim. A persona with this skill will be able to avoid drowning in rough waters.

The following are sample uses of the Swim skill:

Actions	Rolls
Racing another swimmer across a river	A + Swim
Recovering an object from the sea floor	V + Swim

QUIRINUS

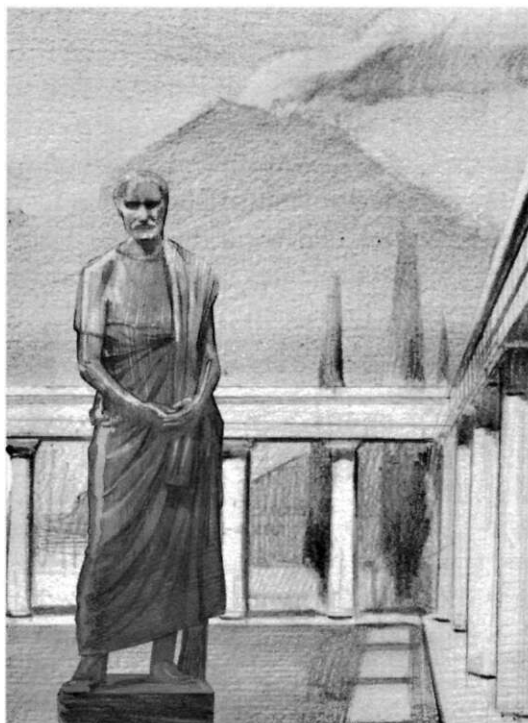
God of Secrets

Code

This is the ability to encrypt communications. A watchword officer [*tesserarius*] will be able to keep a daily password for his legion. This skill can also be used to code messages on the ancient Spartan code cane [*scytalus*].

The following are sample uses of the Code skill:

Actions	Rolls
Cracking a new Parthian cipher	I + Code
Recognizing a hidden message in seemingly innocuous letters	P + Code



Fulminata#

This is knowledge of the secret substance gunpowder [*terrafulminata*]. A *fulminatus* will know the proper ratios of charcoal, nitre and sulfur to mix to create viable powder. This skill can also be used to salvage wet fulminata or prepare explosives. Only a persona with this skill at a rating of 7 or above will know the secret that fulminata is not mined, but manufactured.

#Code, #Metals

The following are sample uses of the Fulminata skill:

Actions	Rolls
Developing a new blend of fulminata that burns hotter	I + Fulminata
Making linen cartridges for a pilum	A + Fulminata

Knowledge*

This is the knowledge of the Imperium, its provinces and the frontiers. A person with this skill will be able to recall details of important people and events, depending on his or her specialty, such as the names of the first kings of Rome, the campaigns of Alexander the Great or the year in which the Senate passed a certain law. Sample specialties include (Imperium), (Hispania) and (India). This skill can also be used for researching facts.

The following are sample uses of the Knowledge skill:

Actions	Rolls
Reciting the key battles of the Second Punic War	I + Knowledge (Punic Wars)
Taking part in the ceremonies during a local festival to honor a Syrian deity	P + Knowledge (Syria)

Language*

This is the ability to converse in or read a language. It is not the ability to write in that language (see Scribe* skill). Sample specialties include (Greek), (Latin) and (Parthian).

The following are sample uses of the Language skill:

Actions	Rolls
Reading the <i>Acta Diurna</i>	I + Language (Latin)
Conveying orders to a Greek slave	P + Language (Greek)

Magic

This is the ability to cast magical incantations. A magus will be able to recite spell songs [*carmina*] or follow arcane rites.

The following are sample uses of the Magic skill:

Actions	Rolls
Performing a binding ritual	P + Magic
Summoning the dead	V + Magic

For detailed mechanics for magic, see CHAPTER IX: ARCANA, pp. 166-171. Note: Individual

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magic spells [*carmina*] must be purchased with additional skill points. Unlike other skills, spells begin at a -1 rating, and can only progress to a rating of 0 or +1. Thus, a persona may become better at singing *carmina* by increasing the rating on his Magic skill, but never better at casting a particular spell. Just like some skills, advanced *carmina* have prerequisites (#). If you wish your persona to start the fabula knowing a few spells, remember to save enough skill points to purchase them.

Stealth

This is the ability to discover secrets by stealth. A persona with this skill will be able to overhear snippets of sensitive conversations without being noticed. This skill can also be used to sneak into guarded areas by blending in with shadows.

The following are sample uses of the Stealth skill:

Actions	Rolls
Following a persona while avoiding notice	A + Stealth
Blending into a crowd	V + Stealth

VENUS

Goddess of Sex and Well-Being

Food

This is the ability to appreciate and prepare food. A cook [*coquus*] with this skill will be able to cook and bake complete meals. This skill can also be used to arrange pleasing menus.

The following are sample uses of the Food skill:

Actions	Rolls
Judging the quality of prepared food	I + Food
Selecting appropriate dishes for a festival	P + Food

Groom

This is the ability to groom well. A persona with this skill will be able to bathe or shave one's self to have a clean appearance. This skill can also be

used to perform these grooming activities on others.

The following are sample uses of the Groom skill:

Actions	Rolls
Shaving off a full beard	A + Groom
Giving a massage	V + Groom

Harmony

This is the ability to promote harmony. A persona with this skill will be able to settle personal differences (i.e. smooth ruffled feathers). This skill can also be used to calm down crowds.

The following are sample uses of the Harmony skill:

Actions	Rolls
Composing a letter to mediate between rivals	I + Harmony
Preventing a quarrel between two Senators with opposing viewpoints	P + Harmony

Philter#

This is the ability to make potions, ointments and powders. A persona with this skill will be able to create a love philter or a concoction that causes temporary madness.

#Magic, #Pharmakon

The following are sample uses of the Philter skill:

Actions	Rolls
Preparing a magical salve	A + Philter
Drinking a potion of invisibility	V + Philter

For detailed mechanics for magic, see CHAPTER IX: ARCANA, pp. 166-171. Note: The ability to fashion specific philters must be purchased with additional skill points. Unlike other skills, philter spells begin at a -1 rating, and can only progress to a rating of 0 or +1. Thus, a persona may become better at mixing potions by increasing the rating on his Philter skill, but never better at making a particular philter. Just like some skills, advanced philters have prerequisites (#). If you wish your persona to start the fabula knowing



how to mix certain philters, remember to save enough skill points to purchase them.

Seduce

This is the ability to seduce or incite lust. A persona with the skill will be able to inflame others with physical or verbal charm.

The following are sample uses of the Seduce skill:

Actions	Rolls
Whispering romantic poetry to a would-be lover	P + Seduce
Throwing one's self at a persona	V + Seduce

Train

This is the ability to teach skills or pass on knowledge. A persona with this skill will be able to instruct another persona in a skill up to the level of his own skill rating. Note that the person who wishes to learn the skill must spend skill points to acquire it.

The following are sample uses of the Train skill:

Actions	Rolls
Teaching rhetoric to the son of an Equestrian	I + Train
Instructing a servant girl how to fire a pilum in the heat of battle	P + Train

For detailed mechanics on experience and advancement, see CHAPTER X: FABULAE, pp. 216-217.

VOLCANUS

God of Fire and Engineering

Armor#

This is the ability to fabricate armor and weapons from iron or steel. A smith [*faber*] with this skill would be able to create banded steel armor [*lorica*], spearheads or a fine gladius.

#Smith

The following are sample uses of the Armor skill:

Actions	Rolls
Repairing links on a mail shirt	A + Armor
Fashioning a spatha	V + Armor

Machines

This is the knowledge of engineering. A persona with this skill will be able to create siege machines and raise earthworks. This skill can also be used to repair mills and water pumps.

The following are sample uses of the Machines skill:

Actions	Rolls
Troubleshooting a broken hypocaust heating system	I + Machines
Creating a wheeled battering ram	A + Machines

Metals

This is the knowledge of the properties of metals and minerals. A persona with this skill will know how to operate furnaces to smelt metals from unprocessed ore and the use of earths as artist's pigments. This skill can also be used for mining, quarrying and alchemy.

The following are sample uses of the Metals skill:

Actions	Rolls
Experimenting with a new mineral recovered from Hibernia	P + Metals
Digging for lead with a pickaxe	V + Metals

Monuments

This is the knowledge of buildings and basic principles of construction, such as the arch and concrete. This skill can also be used to build an aqueduct or devise a way to enlarge a harbor.

The following are sample uses of the Monuments skill:

Actions	Rolls
Designing a triumphal arch	I + Monuments
Pouring underwater concrete	A + Monuments

CHAPTER II PERSONAE

Smith*

This is the ability to fashion useful objects from metals and alloys. A persona with this skill will be able to create nails, burnished copper mirrors and lead pipes. This skill can also be used to fashion bronze vessels, brass ornaments and gold brooches [*fibulae*].

#Metals

The following are sample uses of the Smith skill:

Actions	Rolls
Inventing better molds for lead bullets	I + Smith
Fashioning a unique set of gold earrings in the shape of eagles	P + Smith

Tormentum#

This is the ability to aim and fire a cannon [*tormentum*]. A gunner [*tormentarius*] will be able to judge a target's distance and adjust accordingly.

#Pilum

The following are sample uses of the Tormentum skill:

Actions	Rolls
Knocking out a trireme's mast	A + Tormentum
Bombarding a city under siege	V + Tormentum

HUMORS

A persona's body contains four fluids or humors that influence mood and motivation:

Humors	
Humor	Excess Indicates
Black Bile [<i>Melancholicus</i>]	Depression, Lack of Energy
Blood [<i>Sanguinicus</i>]	Activity, Lack of Self-Control
Phlegm [<i>Flegmaticus</i>]	Illness, Lack of Will
Yellow Bile [<i>Cholericus</i>]	Anger, Lack of Nerves

The proportions of these humors govern the behavior and temperament of your persona. If they are in balance, the body is healthy; if imbalanced, the body is suffering from a physical, mental or emotional temperament. Restoring balance is an important goal for all personae. Good Romans are concerned with serious dignity [*gravitas*], the quality that reflects a calm disposition.

Humors are rated from zero (well-balanced) to three (dangerously excessive levels). When a persona has a humor rating of zero in all four humors, he is considered to be in balance. The four humors come in pairs: Melancholicus (M) and Sanguinicus (S) are opposites; so are Flegmaticus (F) and Cholericus (X). Because of this, you cannot have an excess of both Melancholicus and Sanguinicus, as the excesses would cancel each other out.

When creating your persona, you are assumed to be out of balance by a total of three points. This could take the form of a single three-point excess of one of the humors, or a one-point excess in one humor and a two-point excess in another. While every persona should seek to bring his or her humors into balance, this task is not easy. Like everything else in the Imperium, it has a cost. When creating your persona, you may lessen the amount by which you are out of balance by spending skill points. For one skill point, you may reduce the amount by which your persona is out of balance by one. Thus, for three skill points, you may begin the game in balance.

TEMPERAMENTS

Unbalanced humors manifest as temperaments. A temperament is a predisposition to a certain physical, mental, or emotional state. The humor rating defines how many temperaments a persona has. A persona with a humor rating of three has the physical, mental, and emotional temperaments associated with that humor at three. In the cases of humor ratings of two or one, a persona's lowest attribute(s) will determine where the persona is susceptible:

Lowest Attribute Rating	Temperament
(Vis + Agilitas)/2	Physical
Intelligentia	Mental
Pietas	Emotional

No persona may have more than one temperament of a given type (physical, mental, or emotional). Where attribute ratings are equal, the choice of temperament is left to the player's discretion.

Example: *Ulpia Syrica is an intelligence officer [frumentarius] in the Cohors Amazona. Looking at the humors, she chooses a two-point imbalance in Cholericus and a one-point excess in Sanguinicus. This means she must choose two temperaments. Checking her attributes, her Pietas is 8, her Intelligentia is 11, and the average of her Vis and Agilitas is 11.5. Because of her low Pietas, Ulpia is most susceptible to emotional temperaments. Checking the chart, she sees that the emotional temperament for Cholericus 2 (listed as "X 2") is Violent. Intelligentia is Ulpia's next weakest attribute. That means a mental temperament. Her one-point excess of Sanguinicus (listed as "S 1") manifests as Generous. On her persona sheet, Ulpia will have Violent 2 and Generous 1 listed under temperaments.*

A persona with unbalanced humors is predisposed toward certain types of behavior. Sometimes this can be an advantage; sometimes it is a disadvantage. If a persona's action is affected by one of his temperaments (GM's discretion), the

persona will add or subtract the magnitude of the unbalanced humor to the target number of the roll, depending on whether the temperament is advantageous in this situation or not.

Example: *Crispus, a Plebeian wine merchant, has an unbalanced humor of Melancholicus 1 and has the physical temperament of Lazy. If a Senator came to town, and Crispus wanted to impress him enough to become his client, the GM might rule that Crispus' lazy nature makes it difficult for him to muster the energy to impress the Senator. Crispus would suffer a -1 to the appropriate rolls. However, if a corrupt Equestrian were attempting to intimidate Crispus into smuggling contraband in with his wine shipments, the GM might rule that the work necessary to make such an arrangement would oppose Crispus' lazy nature. Because of this, he would enjoy a +1 bonus to resist the intimidation.*

When in balance at the beginning of a game session, a persona is awarded six humor points by the GM that he may use in that session as adjustments to tali rolls. When out of balance, the persona receives only three humor points. Spending one humor point allows the player to re-roll as many of the four tali as he wishes (see CHAPTER HI: TALI, page 50 for details). Humor points may not be carried over into the next session. Between game sessions, players may spend newly awarded skill points to decrease unbalanced humors (see CHAPTER X: FABULAE, pp. 216-217 for details).

Temperaments			
Humor Rating	Physical Temperament	Mental Temperament	Emotional Temperament
S3	Joyful	Gullible	Lecherous
S2	Cheerful	Susceptible	Lusty
S1	Lively	Generous	Amorous
M1	Fatigued	Needy	Sentimental
M2	Lazy	Gluttonous	Gloomy
M3	Slothful	Avaricious	Hopeless
X3	Frayed	Pressured	Wrathful
X2	Nervous	Fazed	Violent
X1	Jumpy	Unfocused	Confident
F1	Dull	Indifferent	Fearful
F2	Weak	Jaded	Cowardly
F3	Sickly	Apathetic	Panicked

BACKGROUND

Now that you've determined rank, occupation, attributes, skills and humors, it's time to revisit your original concept in order to flesh out your persona. At the moment, your persona is just a list of numbers. Granted, these statistics will allow you to play *FVLMINATA* according to the rules, but role-playing is so much more than rolling dice. *FVLMINATA* is not a wargame that pits faceless troops against each other. Plot and characterization impel the action on the stage, not hex movement rates. While a large-scale military campaign would be an excellent backdrop for an Imperium-spanning epic, such a fabula should focus on individual actions, not the marching orders of entire legions.

To enter your GameMaster's fabula, your persona needs background. In real life and in the world of *FVLMINATA*, people do not spring fully armed from the head of Iuppiter like the goddess Minerva. A starting persona should begin play with the following elements of background: name, homeland, family history and personality. During the course of the fabula, your persona will not only develop skills, but a richer background as well.

NAME [*Nomen*]

For most male Roman citizens, the name is composed of three parts: the first name [*praenomen*], the family name [*nomen*] and the last name [*cognomen*]. The three name [*trio, nomina*] naming convention is used to differentiate Roman citizens from non-citizens.

The *praenomen* is a private name, rarely used outside of the household. Use of this name between two personae conveys an intimacy shared by couples, siblings or lifelong friends. Improper public use of this name by strangers or enemies is considered an insult. The following are the most popular *praenomina* and their abbreviations in the Imperium: Gaius (C), Lucius (L.), Marcus

(M.), Publius (P.), Quintus (Q.), Sextus (Sex.) and Titus (T.). See APPENDIX A: ROMAN NAMES for more *praenomina*.

The *nomen* is a family name, originally denoting to which clan [*gens*] a citizen belonged. Most *nomina* have roots back to the early days of Rome and the Republic. A *nomen* with an -idius ending usually denotes an Oscan heritage; those ending in -nius, Etruscan. In the Imperium, new *nomina* are derived from foreign names as these populations acquire citizenship. The list of possible family names is sizeable; see APPENDIX A: ROMAN NAMES to select a *nomen* for your persona.

The *cognomen* represents the individuality of a Roman citizen. In most cases, this is the name that will identify your persona in public life. A *cognomen* could be a Latin nickname, such as Rufus ("Red-Haired"), Cicero ("Chickpea"), Felix ("Lucky") or Balbus ("Stammerer"). Other *cognomina* are foreign names, especially Greek. Like the *nomen*, the array of *cognomina* is extensive; see APPENDIX A: ROMAN NAMES to select a *cognomen* for your persona.

In rare cases where a Roman citizen has performed an exceptional deed, an honorific name [*agnomen*] is added to one's full name. For example, Publius Cornelius Scipio was given the *agnomen* of Africanus after defeating Hannibal at the battle of Zama.

On adoption, a Roman man will take his adoptive father's full three names, but will add his old *nomen* as an extra *cognomen*, often modifying it with the suffix -ianus. Before being adopted by Gaius Iulius Caesar, the future emperor Augustus was named Gaius Octavius. After the adoption, he became Gaius Iulius Caesar Octavianus. The *agnomen* of Augustus was added later after the Civil War.

Women citizens take the name of their father, feminizing the *nomen* with the suffix -a and sometimes possessing a feminine *cognomen* to differentiate herself from sisters or relatives. For example, the Empress Nonia Gellia's father was

Quintus Nonius Gellius. Her younger sisters, Nonia Fidela and Nonia Rustica, were also named after their father's *nomen*, but each *cognomen* was different. Unimaginative Roman parents give female children a *cognomen* based on birth order: Maior ("The Elder"), Minor ("The Younger") or Prima ("First"), Secunda ("Second"), Tertia ("Third"). Upon marriage, a Roman woman will not change her *nomen*. You may feminize any male citizen *nomen* (and *cognomen*) to create a name for your female persona.

On manumission, a Freedman takes the name of his former master, keeping his slave name as a *cognomen*. For example, Helios, a Greek barber has been a faithful Slave in the household of a Senator, Lucius Memmius Philo. Memmius dies and frees his Slaves, including Helios. Helios registers at the censor's office under his new name: Lucius Memmius Helios.

Names of Foreigners follow the traditions and conventions of the persona's native culture. If a Foreigner acquires Roman citizenship, he or she must enroll in the census with three names. The *cognomen* is typically the persona's original foreign name or a Latinized variant. Although free to take any *praenomen* or *nomen*, most Foreigners select the reigning Emperor's or a citizen sponsor's. Auxiliary soldiers are allowed to use their future *praenomen* and *cognomen* before attaining official citizenship at the end of their military service.

Slaves only have one name. They either retain

a part of their native name or are renamed at the whim of slave dealers who feel that exotic appellations make for better sales. Thus, many Slaves are named for famous figures from myth or history, such as Icarus and Dido.

HOMELAND [*Patria*]

During the course of the fabula, your persona might explore the back streets of Rome, travel to exotic locations in the provinces or patrol the untamed frontier wilderness. Despite these wanderings, your persona will always consider the place where she was raised as home, be it the noisy slums of the Subura in Rome, the city of Alexandria or the dark forests of Germania. Your persona will have formed many of his habits and opinions growing up in this environment. This can be either a boon or a bane. Knowing local customs may prove invaluable

EQUIPMENT [*Paraphernalia*]

Don't worry about money or outfitting your persona with weapons or special equipment. Your GameMaster will furnish the personae with appropriate items. Rest assured, Senators and Equestrians will have lovely homes and expensive things. Legionaries will be supplied with standard military equipment. Most Freedmen and Foreigners will have few personal possessions. Slaves, well Slaves will have their desire for freedom. For personal effects, such as an heirloom gladius or a signet ring, ask your GameMaster. You will undoubtedly acquire other interesting and useful items during the course of the fabula.

for a critical snap judgment. Conversely, in negotiations, your persona's accent and mannerisms may label her a pretentious blueblood, a simple provincial or an uncivilized barbarian.

Most citizens will be from the city of Rome, the many towns of Italia or the most populous Senatorial provinces. Non-citizens are usually foreign-born, especially in the eastern provinces where the Greek civilization once ruled. See CHAPTER IV: IMPERIUM, pp. 70-72, 75-83 for more details on the neighborhoods of Rome and the provinces.

FAMILY HISTORY [*Familia*]

In addition to the duties of rank and occupation, your persona has been raised with obligations to his family. In Roman society, family is vital to the welfare of the Imperium. It is important to spend a few minutes thinking about your persona's family, since it not only enhances your persona's individuality, but also brings into being relatives that can be called upon during the fabula. Also, remember that the life of most personae is fraught with danger. Should your persona be killed, it would be helpful for you to know something about his brother, who could easily become your next persona.

Although family structure varies with one's rank, citizens' families are by and large patriarchal, which is mirrored in most aspects of the male-dominated Roman society. The eldest male of the extended family is the *pater familias*, the head of the family. While in Republican times he had complete power of life and death over his wife and descendants, that privilege has faded in this more civilized age of Imperium. Yet, the *pater familias* still arranges the marriages of his daughters and steers his sons into occupations that will benefit the entire family. Freedmen also follow this Roman model, secure in the knowledge that any children born after their manumission will be Plebeians. Slave families are at the whim of their owners. However, a wise master wishing to inspire work out of loyalty rather than fear will hesitate to separate slave families. Foreigners have their own family patterns depending on their native culture.

Friends (and foes) are important considerations as well. The right allies and contacts could help your persona pull through a crisis. Avoiding and finally defeating a bitter enemy can be an ongoing saga in your GameMaster's fabula.

PERSONALITY [*Natura*]

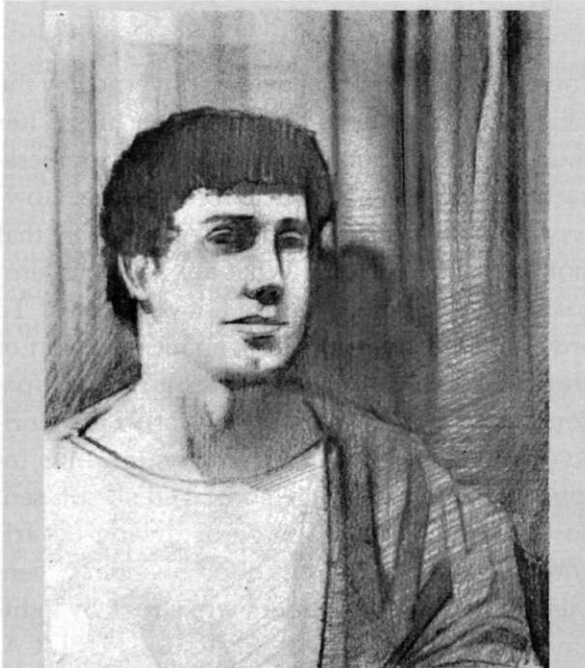
Your persona's basic behavior is governed by the balance or imbalance of humors in his or her body. If your persona has one or more temperaments, use them as guides to role-playing. However, temperaments are not the only factors that motivate your persona. What are her long-term goals? What does he desire above all else? To provide these answers, think about what sort of life could have led your persona into the occupation he or she now leads. Did his father die gloriously defending the Parthian frontier, thus inspiring him to join the legions? Did she present flowers to the young Emperor during his triumph and vow to be Empress at his side? Where was he when the Colosseum was struck by lightning last year? See CHAPTER V: RES PUBLICA, pp. 89-90 for recent historical events that might have influenced your persona's development.

THE NEXT STEP

Your persona is now complete and prepared to join the world of *FVLMINATA*. Tell your GameMaster that you are ready for the fabula to begin!

PERSONA TEMPLATES

Throughout the *FVLMINATA* core rulebook, you will see examples of persona templates. Unless noted, each template was created using the beginning persona creation rules described in this chapter. On the following six pages are twelve additional persona templates, two from each rank with each one using a different patron god. There are an equal number of male and female personae.



PERTINAX

Rank: Senator

Occupation: Senior Legionary Tribune [*Tribunus Legionis Latidavius*]

Attributes: I11, A10, P11, V10

Humors: M 2 (Lazy, Gluttonous)

MP: 0, **WP:** 10/20, **HP:** 3

Patron: Ceres

Skills: *Administrate 5, *Farm 4, *Harvest (Fruit) 3, City 3, Command 2, Customs (Patrician) 3, Food 4, Gladius 2, Horse 2, Language (Greek) 2, Language (Latin) 3, Pilum 3, Poetry 3, Rhetoric 3, Scribe 3, Wine 4

Background: Born in Italia into a respectable Roman family, Publius Opellius Pertinax has been set firmly on a career path [*cursus honorum*] appropriate to his Senatorial rank. His first appointment is a three-year tour as a tribune with the VII Legion Gemina. He is expected to be a good Roman officer and perform his administrative duties efficiently and meticulously. Although only twenty years old, Pertinax has married the only daughter of M. Camillus Macrinus, the influential military governor [*legatus Augusti*] of the imperial province of Hispania Tarraconensis. Both the Opellius and Macrinus families have high hopes for Pertinax. However, Pertinax, while capable, is dull and lacks ambition. He prefers the life of leisure: fine dining, exercise at the baths and collecting wine.



CAMILLA

Rank: Senator

Occupation: Lady of Rank [*Matrona*]

Attributes: I14, A 8, P13, V 7

Humors: S1 (Lively)

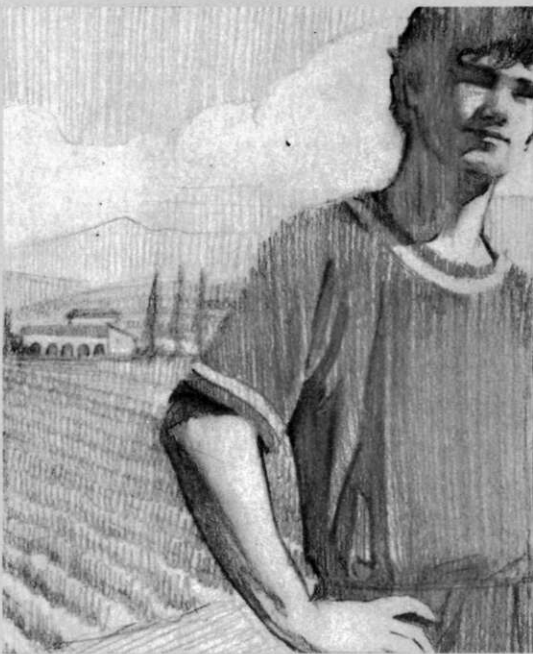
MP: 0, **WP:** 7/14, **HP:** 3

Patron: Iuppiter

Skills: *City 3, *Command 4, *Diplomacy 4, *Law 3, *Rhetoric 5, Customs (Patrician) 4, Dagger 2, Food 2, Harmony 3, Language (Greek) 4, Language (Latin) 4, Music (Lyre) 3, Myth 2, Poetry 5, Scribe 3

Background: Camilla Macrina is the only daughter of Marcus Camillus Macrinus, an influential Senator and governor of the Imperial Province of Hispania Tarraconensis (see p. 77). Her elder brother, Gaius Camillus Albus died three years ago on the Parthian frontier. She married P. Opellius Pertinax, but her heart has always been devoted to her studies. Camilla is a very ambitious woman—she desires wealth and power and aspires to be the Empress someday. Marrying Pertinax was supposed to be a means to that end. However, it has become apparent that Pertinax lacks the impetus, if not the will, to advance in Roman politics. Camilla is well educated for a Roman woman. She has had the best tutors and devours knowledge; she has a marked weakness for Greek poetry, which is one of the few passions that she and her husband share.

CHAPTER II PERSONAE



LAENAS

Rank: Equestrian

Occupation: Olive Oil Importer [*Mercator Oleum*]

Attributes: I13, A 8, P12, V 9

Humors: Balanced

MP: 0, **WP:** 9/18, **HP:** 6

Patron: Mercurius

Skills: *Coin 4, Trade 5, "Trick 3, Adminis-
trate 3, Customs (Patrician) 2, Customs (Ple-
beian) 2, Farm 3, Food 3, Harvest (Olives) 4,
Horse 2, Language (Greek) 3, Language
(Latin) 3, Navigate 3, Sail 2, Scribe 3, Sea 3

Background: The Billennius family has owned and managed vast olive estates in the province of Hispania Baetica for hundreds of years. Quality olive oil is in great demand in the Imperium since it is a staple of Roman life, used as heating oil for lamps, cooking oil for food and cosmetic oil for cleaning. Since his uncle's retirement, Tiberius Billennius Leanas has been running the family business. He has recently arrived in Rome to secure the lucrative trade contract to supply olive oil to the VII Legion Gemina stationed in nearby Hispania Tarracensis. Secondary goals are to expand aggressively into the Roman market and counter the recent efforts of rival olive oil operations in the North African provinces to gain an Imperial monopoly.



ULPIA

Rank: Equestrian

Occupation: Intelligence Officer [*Frumentarius*]

Attributes: I11, A12, P8, V11

Humors: X2 (Violent), S1 (Generous)

MP: 0, **WP:** 11/22, **HP:** 3

Patron: Mars

Skills: *Box 4, *Dagger 3, *Gladius 6,
*Guard 3, *Pilum 5, Code 4, Customs (Patri-
cian) 3, Horse 3, Interrogate 2, Language
(Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Move (Jump) 2,
Move (March) 2, Seduce 3, Stealth 3,
Strategy 2, Trade 2

Background: Raised in Syria, Ulpia Syrica is the only daughter of a wealthy silk merchant. As a young girl, she excelled at getting into fights. Instead of discouraging her aggressive nature, her father bought her a retired gladiator to teach her the art of combat. Instructed to treat Ulpia as a young man, the slave drilled her through a disciplined training regimen. Regrettably for the gladiator, the day her skills surpassed those of her teacher was the same day he made unwelcome advances against her. Ulpia calmly walked away after decapitating the grizzled warrior. Wealth buys opportunity in the Imperium; her father made sure that the right palms were filled with gold coins [*aurei*] to ensure a commission in the Amazonian Guard and a temporary tour of duty with the VII Legion Gemina. Ulpia looks forward to her first assignment outside of Rome.



VALENTINUS

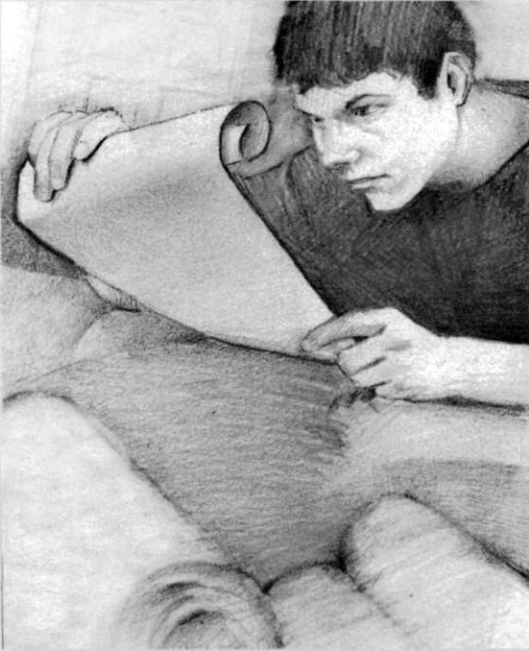
Rank: Plebeian
Occupation: Night Watchman [*Vigil*]
Attributes: I13, A12, P9, V8
Humors: Balanced
MP: 0, **WP:** 9/18, **HP:** 6
Patron: Diana
Skills: *Snare 4, *Spear 4, *Track 5, Box 2, City 4, Customs (Plebeian) 4, Customs (Slave) 3, Dice 3, Gladius 2, Guard 4, Interrogate 2, Language (Latin) 2, Law 2, Move (Climb) 2, Rhetoric 3, Stealth 2
Background: Marcus Antonius Valentinus has recently joined the II Cohort of Watchmen. Valentinus carries a dark secret that could undo his career and reputation—his father was a notorious criminal in Rome, specializing in extortion and protection rackets. Luckily for the family, he conducted his illicit deals using a pseudonym ("The Eel" [*AngttiUa*]). Last spring, his father disappeared without a trace. As the new head of the household [*pater familias*], Valentinus must now care for his ailing mother and his unwed sister. His assigned precinct [U/CMS] is responsible for the neighborhood around the Temple of Isis and Serapis in Region V. Like most *vigiles*, he enjoys catching thieves more than fighting fires. However, with his father's activities on his conscience, Valentinus feels that it is his personal mission to thwart criminal activities.



TERTULLA

Rank: Plebeian
Occupation: WineBarOwner [*Caupona*]
Attributes: I11, A9, P12, V10
Humors: S2 (Cheerful)
MP: 0, **WP:** 10/20, **HP:** 3
Patron: Bacchus
Skills: *Customs (Plebeian) 4, *Dice 4, *Myth 4, *Wine 6, Chariot 3, City 4, Coin 3, Dagger 2, Farm 3, Food 3, Harmony 3, Harvest (Fruit) 2, Horse 3, Language (Greek) 2, Language (Latin) 3, Thief 2
Background: Tertulla is the proprietor of Lucky's [*Felix*], a small wine bar [*tltermopolium*] named for the stray dog that sleeps on the premises. The bar, located near the Circus Maximus, caters to the racing crowd, especially fans of the Greens. As such, Tertulla is up to date on the latest drivers and race results, despite the fact that she hasn't seen a race since she began tending bar three years ago. In the summer, she offers chilled white wines from local Italian vineyards; in winter, her famous hot spiced wine [*caldum Tertullae*] served from an antique bronze samovar [*authepsa*]. Tertulla also runs a small kitchen, providing comfort food for her patrons, such as sausages, bread and stews. Like all tavern keepers, she turns a blind eye to illegal gambling. Fortunately, her bar is popular enough to avoid official inquiry since many night watchmen are regulars.

CHAPTER II PERSONAE



MONOBAZUS

Rank: Freedman

Occupation: Palace Clerk [*Librarius*]

Attributes: I14, A 8, P11, V 7

Humors: F 2 (Weak), M1 (Fatigued)

MP: 0, **WP:** 7/14, **HP:** 3

Patron: Quirinus

Skills: *Code 5, *Knowledge (Parthia) 4, *Language (Greek) 4, *Language (Latin) 4, *Language (Parthian) 4, *Stealth 4, Administrate 3, City 3, Customs (Patrician) 2, Customs (Slave) 2, Dagger 3, Diplomacy 2, Harmony 3, Interrogate 3, Law 2, Rhetoric 3, Scribe 3

Background: Aulus Calavius Monobazus is a Parthian of sallow complexion, but sharp intelligent eyes. A. Calavius Cordus captured Monobazus during the siege of Ctesiphon. When Cordus died a decade later, Monobazus received freedom and wealth. Those who came into contact with the strange, sickly boy knew his aptitude for observation and analysis. As a result, he was invited to join the Imperial intelligence agency, the Guardians of Smoke [*Curatores Fumis*]. Monobazus works hard poring over countless Parthian documents for subtle clues and hidden agendas behind seemingly direct statements. While adept at paperwork, Monobazus longs to be a field agent [*curiosus*] and will leap at any opportunity to undertake a secret mission for the agency.



CERVARIA

Rank: Freedman

Occupation: Physician [*Medica*]

Attributes: I12, A 11, P12, V 7

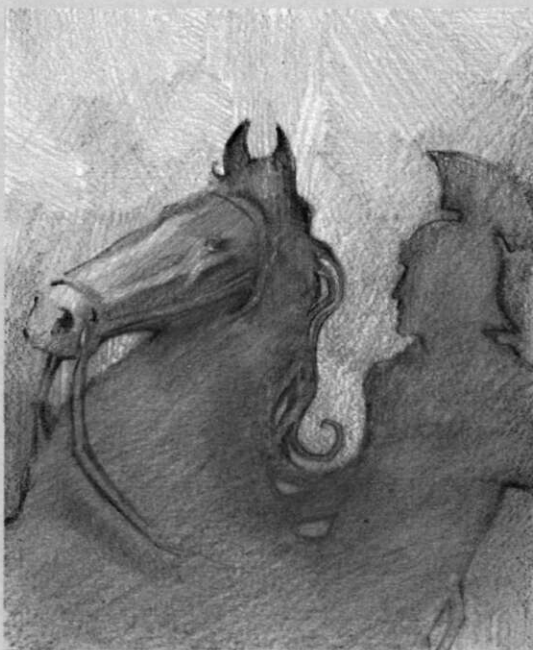
Humors: Balanced

MP: 0, **WP:** 7/14, **HP:** 6

Patron: Apollo

Skills: *Chirurgy 5, *Medicine 6, Administrate 2, Customs (Patrician) 3, Customs (Slave) 3, Food 3, Forage 3, Harmony 3, Language (Greek) 4, Language (Latin) 4, Metals 2, Pharmakon 4, Scribe 3, Wine 2

Background: Cervaria Proserpina's family were once Slaves of L. Cervarius Macer the governor of Achaia. Her father was a physician [*medicus*]; her mother, a midwife [*obstetrica*]. Parthian agents poisoned Macer's son, on the boy's tenth birthday. After Crito saved his life, Macer freed Cervaria's family. Cervaria has embarked on a medical career as well, one of the few open to free women in the Imperium. She has opened a private medical practice in Rome specializing in childbirth and female disorders, hoping to take advantage of her father's reputation in upper-class society. A successful *medica* can earn annual fees approaching 400,000 sesterces per year. Her two most treasured possessions are her father's bronze surgical tools and a copy of the *Gynaecia*, the seminal four-volume work by the Greek physician Soranus.



CHARIOVALDA

Rank: Foreigner

Occupation: Imperial Horseman [*Eques Singularis Augusti*]

Attributes: I7, A13, P9, V13

Humors: X1 (Confident), S2 (Susceptible)

MP: 0, **WP:** 13/26, **HP:** 3

Patron: Neptunus

Skills: *Horse 6, *Sea 3, *Swim 5, Bow 3, Forest 5, Gladius 4, Groom 3, Language (German) 3, Language (Latin) 2, Move (Climb) 3, Pilum 3, Snare 4, Spear 3, Track 4

Background: Born into the Langobardi tribe in the Imperial province of Germania Maior, Marcus Avidius Chariovalda is now a well-paid member of the Imperial Horse Guard [*Equites Singulares Augusti*]. A blond giant smeared with war paint and brandishing a bloodied cavalry saber [*spatha*], Chariovalda is a fearsome sight on the battlefield. Keeping with tradition, Chariovalda has taken the Emperor's name as his own. Although he currently bears the three names reserved for citizens, Chariovalda will receive full Roman citizenship at the end of his 25 years of service. His squadron [*turma*], the XXIV Saturnina, is stationed at the Horse Guard's original fort in Rome, the Castra Prima. Chariovalda publicly worships all of the gods in the state religion, but prays in private to the Alci, twin Germanic gods who look over all horses.



DANAE

Rank: Foreigner

Occupation: Actress [*Histria*]

Attributes: I12, A9, P9, V12

Humors: S2 (Lusty)

MP: 0, **WP:** 12/24, **HP:** 3

Patron: Minerva

Skills: *Craft (Painting) 4, *Craft (Textiles) 5, *Scribe 3, City 2, Customs (Patrician) 3, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Customs (Slave) 3, Groom 3, Language (Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Music (Cymbals) 3, Myth 2, Poetry 2, Rhetoric 3, Seduce 4, Theater 4

Background: An orphan, Danae was adopted by the acting troupe of Apollonius and Son and trained as a cymbal player. Apollonius soon noticed her stage presence and has cast her in supporting roles. She is devastatingly attractive, a fact not lost on the upper-class playboys from Senatorial families. Other actresses think that she is far too young to already have the throngs of admirers that it usually takes a career to build. Danae enjoys acting, but her passion is staging and costuming. Her goal is to stun the audience with breathtaking backdrops and props. Danae is intrigued by Sphaerus, the eunuch agent [*negotiator*] of the Artists of Dionysus who accompanies the troupe during its traveling season. He is too capable and astute to be a mere guild functionary. Danae wonders why Sphaerus always seems to be busy, even when the troupe sleepwalks through rehearsals of moth-eaten Roman comedy "classics".

CHAPTER II PERSONAE



SYPHAX

Rank: Slave

Occupation: Net Fighter [*Retiarius*]

Attributes: I11, A14, P8, V9

Humors: X1 (Confident), S1 (Generous)

MP: 0, **WP:** 9/18, **HP:** 3

Patron: Volcanus

Skills: *Armor 5, *Machines 3, *Metals 4, *Smith 6, Customs (Slave) 3, Dagger 4, Gladius 4, Language (Aramaic) 3, Language (Greek) 2, Language (Latin) 2, Move (Climb) 3, Move (Jump) 3, Spear 5, Trick 4

Background: Syphax is from a family of goldsmiths [*aurifices*] and armorers from Bethar, a small town outside of Hierosolyma (Jerusalem). The entire town was enslaved after the third ludaeen uprising in 987 AUC (AD 235). Because of his innate nimbleness, he was chosen to be a net fighter [*retiarius*] in the arena. While he barely won his first match against a hulking Thracian fighter [*Thraex*], he feels that the experience has steeled him for the matches to come. Syphax fights for his freedom and the right to use his birth name—Joshua bar Akiba. He was renamed after an ancient Numidian chieftain by his trainer [*lanista*] to complement his new gladiatorial role. Syphax wants nothing more than to continue his family's tradition in the field of metallurgy. His lack of religious conviction and his mind's natural tendency to dart from one idea to the next obviates any grand plans for liberating ludaea from Rome.



MAEVE

Rank: Slave

Occupation: Prostitute [*Lupa*]

Attributes: I9, A13, P9, V11

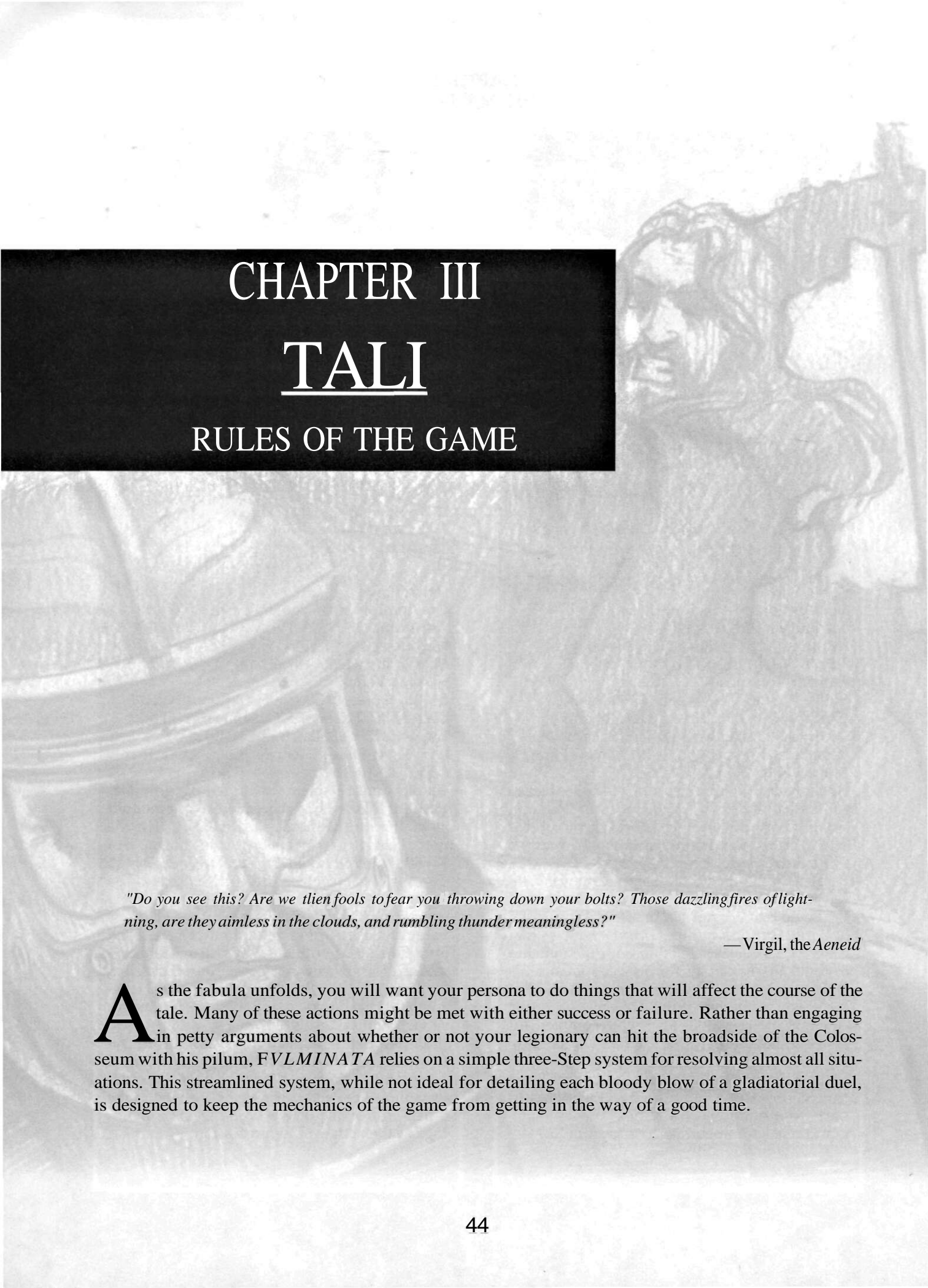
Humors: M1 (Needy)

MP: 0, **WP:** 11/22, **HP:** 3

Patron: Venus

Skills: *Food 5, *Groom 5, *Seduce 6, City 2, Coin 2, Craft (Glass) 3, Customs (Slave) 3, Dagger 2, Dice 3, Language (Celtic) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Music (Flute) 5, Music (Lyre) 5, Myth 3

Background: A member of the Robogdii (Dal Reti) tribe from Hibernia, Maeve was procured as young girl in the endless wars against the fierce Celtic tribes. She works at the "Temple of Mylitta", a brothel [*lupanar*] on the Caelian Hill. The madam [*lena*] of the establishment has greater aspirations, however; she aims to operate a string of call girls [*meretrices*] for the private homes of upper-class men of Senatorial and Equestrian rank. Maeve has been earmarked for this new enterprise, and thus is exempt from regular bedroom duties, lest she become damaged goods. Her employer's schemes fit well with Maeve's ambitions; she wishes to find employment as a musician or music teacher to a well-off family. An accomplished flutist and lyre player, Maeve spends nights entertaining her fellow prostitute's clients. Like others in her line of work, she wears a man's toga as the badge of her profession.



CHAPTER III

TALI

RULES OF THE GAME

"Do you see this? Are we tlien fools to fear you throwing down your bolts? Those dazzling fires of lightning, are they aimless in the clouds, and rumbling thunder meaningless?"

—Virgil, the *Aeneid*

As the fabula unfolds, you will want your persona to do things that will affect the course of the tale. Many of these actions might be met with either success or failure. Rather than engaging in petty arguments about whether or not your legionary can hit the broadside of the Colosseum with his pilum, *FVLMINATA* relies on a simple three-Step system for resolving almost all situations. This streamlined system, while not ideal for detailing each bloody blow of a gladiatorial duel, is designed to keep the mechanics of the game from getting in the way of a good time.

THE THREE STEPS

Whenever a player wants his personae to at-

tempt an action that affects the course of the fabula, the player and the Game Master should ask themselves the following questions:

- 1) Is chance an important element of this action, or is the personae sufficiently skilled to succeed at this task? If chance is important, go to Step 2. If the personae succeeds based on skill alone, go to Step 3.
- 2) If chance is important, what skill and attribute pair applies to the action? The player then makes an action roll using that attribute and skill. Whether the action roll succeeds or fails, go to Step 3.
- 3) Is the quality of the success or failure important? If so, the player makes an effect roll to determine how well he succeeded or failed. If the level of success is not important, the action simply succeeds or fails. In either case, the GM must describe what happens in the scene, guided by the results of the three Steps.

STEP ONE- CHANCE vs. SKILL

The world of *FVLMINATA* is not ruled completely by chance. Wise emperors and cunning generals have shaped the destiny of the Imperium through skill and hard work. However, the powers of fate can be harsh, fickle and unknowable. The GM must decide on a case-by-case basis whether the personae's skill alone is sufficient to achieve the task desired, or if reliance on chance would enhance the fabula.

The balance between chance and skill is a delicate one. Favoring chance too heavily causes a sense of unpredictability to permeate the game. The GM should not demand action rolls each time the players say, "I try to do this." Failure occurs regularly on action rolls. If this happens too often, players will likely feel that their personae

are inconsequential to the fabula. The whole idea of *FVLMINATA* is that the course of the fabula - sometimes the fate of the Imperium itself — is in the hands of your personae. This interactive aspect of the game is vital and must not be undermined by depending too heavily on chance.

Likewise, favoring skill too often can also interfere with the enjoyment of the game. If the personae succeed at everything they do by virtue of their skills, players will likely lose the fear of failure. The thrill of victory is sapped of its emotional power when it becomes too frequent. Players will not feel challenged and, although their personae have the world at their fingertips by virtue of their impressive skills, have little motivation to use their personae's sweeping influence. Much of the excitement of *FVLMINATA* drains away when the GM depends too heavily on skill.

That said, where does one draw the line between chance and skill? The rule of thumb is: *If the excitement and possibility of failure that accompanies chance would enhance the fabula at this point, call for an action roll. If the delay of consulting the personae sheet, making the action roll, and possibly failing would detract from the fabula at this point, rely on skill.* In general, chance comes into play where the possibility of failure is important, especially if a personae's humors are out of balance and affect the task, or where the situation is extremely chaotic, such as combat. Skill comes into play when the personae are doing what they do well, especially if there is little pressure to accomplish the task quickly or in unusual circumstances.

Example: *Nestor, a Greek Freedman, is an average carpenter - Craft (Furniture) 3. If he wants to build a chair for sale to make some money, his skill is sufficient to fashion an unremarkable chair in a couple of days. An action roll would be required if he wanted to make a fine chair to impress an interested Equestrian buyer or if he were trying to construct the chair very quickly or in substandard conditions.*

In general, a persona with a higher rating in a given skill will be able to rely on that skill more often, while one with a lower rating in the same skill will have to rely on chance more often. Use the following table as a guideline for the type of situations that personae may rely on their skill to accomplish. Any incremental changes between the example skill ratings are the prerogative of the GM.

Example: *Chariovalda, an Imperial horseman, has the skill Horse at a rating of 6. Ulpia, an Equestrian intelligence officer, has Horse 3. If they were both riding through lightly forested terrain or over wet or muddy surfaces, Chariovalda could rely on his skill and successfully gallop along without trouble. However, Ulpia would have to make an ac-*

tion roll to see whether she can keep her horse going through such conditions.

<i>Relying on Skill</i>		
Skill Rating 3	Skill Rating 6	Skill Rating 9
Do basic maintenance tasks; accomplish simple tasks	Accomplish moderately challenging tasks	Accomplish somewhat demanding tasks

The table below lists a few example skills. It also details a number of actions associated with three different skill ratings. Use these as a guideline for the situations where a persona may rely solely on skill for success. The GM may use these as templates for any skill her personae have.

<i>Example Skill Levels</i>			
Skill	Skill Rating 3	Skill Rating 6	Skill Rating 9
Administrative	Keep tidy records; Run a household	Run a business or plantation [<i>latifundia</i>]	Run a province
Gladius	Clean, sharpen, oil; Perform standard training maneuvers in a practice situation	Hit and wound an unarmed opponent	Hit and wound an opponent armed with a gladius or something shorter
Knowledge	Cite the great historians and their areas of specialty; Recite the details of major events (the Punic Wars, Caesar's assassination)	Recite the details of minor events (Spartacus' uprising, the eruption of Vesuvius)	Recite the details of rather obscure, but not secret, events (the early conquests of Antiochus III of Syria, the revolt of Iunius Civilis)
Rhetoric	List the standard methods of argument; Give an informative speech to an interested audience	Give a persuasive speech to an interested audience; Give an informative speech to a hostile audience	Give a persuasive speech to hostile audience
Smith	Care for a foundry and its tools; Fashion common items (horse-shoes, nails, etc.) of serviceable quality	Fashion uncommon items (bronze vessels, lead pipes, etc.) of serviceable quality	Fashion rare items (cavalry horse bits, jewelry, etc.) of serviceable quality
Strategy	Cite the great generals and their preferred strategies; Organize war games for small units	Make battle plans for an 80-man unit [<i>centuria</i>]	Make battle plans for a legion

CHAPTER III TALI

In a role-playing game, the personae can theoretically attempt any action. Some of these will strain the limits of credibility and threaten everyone's suspension of disbelief. However, simply denying the personae the chance to attempt them weakens the improvisational nature of the game. If a persona describes his action and the GM feels that neither skill nor chance will help him, rather than saying, "You can't do that," she may call for a roll of the tali (see sidebar). If the player rolls four 1's, he miraculously succeeds. Otherwise, he fails.

STEP TWO— ACTION ROLLS

Once you decide what action your persona is going to attempt, tell the GM. She will determine one attribute and one skill that pertain to this action. You should add your persona's ratings in this attribute/skill pair together. The sum of the attribute and skill is your target number for this action. Roll four tali and add the numbers together. If this total is less than or equal to your target number, your action succeeds. If you roll four 1's, your action always succeeds. Even if your target number is less than 4, four 1's is an automatic success. If the total is higher than your target number, your action fails. If you roll four 6's,

your action always fails. Even Rome's best fall short sometimes.

Example: *Didius, a legionary on patrol, spots a barbarian warrior spying on his camp. As he approaches, the barbarian notices him. If Didius attempts to fire his pilum at the barbarian, his player would need to roll the tali. The GM rules that fir-*

ing a pilum uses the Agilitas attribute and the Pilum skill. Didius has a rating of 9 in Agilitas and a rating of 3 in Pilum. His target number is 12. If the total he rolls on the tali is 12 or less, Didius' shot will hit the barbarian spy. If the total is 13 or more, he will miss.

TALI

Gambling is a popular pastime with Romans of all social classes. In addition to six-sided dice, the Romans throw knucklebones [*tali*] to play games of chance. Tali are the bleached knucklebones of sheep; each has four distinctly shaped sides, representing the numbers 6, 4, 3 and 1 respectively. The historical rules of gambling with tali are unknown, but literary sources suggest that a hierarchy of hands similar to those listed on the effect table was used. One exception was that a roll of four 1's was called "The Dogs" [Cones] and considered the worst possible hand. *FVLMINATA* uses tali for resolving situations where chance plays a part. However, since real tali are difficult to procure and tricky to read, normal 8-sided dice (d8s) are used for game play. Tali, in the form of custom d8s with Roman numerals, are available at your local game store. Alternatively, you may download a free Printable Tali Sticker PDF file from our website—www.FVLMINATA.com. Simply print the file on full-sheet labels, cut along the gray lines and stick them on four d8s. Each individual die should have two I's, two III's, two IV's and two VY's.

Throughout *FVLMINATA*, we will use the one-letter abbreviation of the attribute plus the full name of the skill to denote which attribute/skill pair to use for a given task. For instance, "Firing a pilum (A + Pilum)" means that the target number to fire a pilum is equal to the persona's Agilitas attribute plus Pilum skill.

Pairing Skills with Attributes

When a persona attempts an action, the GM must decide which attribute and skill are appropriate. To do this, she and the player must have a clear concept of what the persona is doing, as well as how he is going about it. Determining the appropriate skill stems from

knowing *what* the persona is doing. Is he holding a Dagger or a Pilum? Is he speaking about Philosophy or Law?

Picking the right attribute depends on knowing *how* the persona is approaching his task. If he is using Stealth to sneak into a Parthian encampment unnoticed, is he doing it by quickly darting out of sight when anyone approaches (Agilitas), or by thoughtfully choosing the least guarded path (Intelligentia)? If the persona is using Command to order his slaves about, what inspires them to obey? Is it respect (Pietas), fear (Pietas), a calculated system of rewards and punishments (Intelligentia), or perhaps his sheer physical charisma (Vis)?

This system is designed to be very flexible. Players may attempt to take advantage of this and pair all of their skills with their strongest attribute. However, the final decision lies with the GM and it must be her decision as to which Attribute + Skill pairing is appropriate.

Difficulty Modifiers

Common sense tells us that hitting a small target is more difficult, and more likely to fail, than hitting a large target, no matter how skilled you are. The same is true in *FVLMINATA*. The GM may apply a difficulty modifier to any tali roll to reflect that the task is easier or more difficult than normal. The difficulty modifier is added to, or subtracted from, the target number before the tali are rolled. Favorable difficulty modifiers *add to* the target number, increasing your chances of success. Unfavorable difficulty modifiers *subtract from* the target number, increasing your chances of failure.

Example: *In the previous example, Didius hesitates and the barbarian begins to/lee. Knowing that a moving target is harder to hit, the GM assigns a -2 modifier to Didius' shot. His target number drops from 12 to 10. Unless Didius' player rolls very well, the scout will escape and the barbarians will soon report on the layout and strength of the Roman camp.*

Consult the chart below for suggested difficulty modifiers. For example, the effective range of a pilum is 30 yards. The GM should consider enforcing a -1 difficulty modifier for every 10 yards beyond that mark. Be advised that difficulty modifiers shouldn't be used for every action since they slow down the game too much. Most modifiers will come from temperaments (see pp. 33-34), spells (see pp. 192-200), wounds (see pp. 61-62) and the attempted use of unfamiliar skills (see p. 56).

Suggested Difficulty Modifiers	
Difficulty	Modifier
Attempting to hurry an action that would normally be automatically successful	+6
An overriding advantage	+3
A significant advantage	+2
A real, but minor, advantage	+1
A real, but minor, disadvantage	-1
A significant disadvantage	-2
An overriding disadvantage	-3

STEP THREE- EFFECT ROLLS

Sometimes simply succeeding is enough. If your persona is attempting to climb a wall to escape a pursuing guard dog, relying on a high skill rating in Move (Climb) or making a successful action roll means that he climbed the wall and is safely on the other side. For other actions, how well you succeed matters. The prime example of this is in combat. How hard, or how accurately, you hit someone is just as important as whether you hit him at all.

To determine how well you succeed, you will roll the tali once again. However, this time, don't add the numbers together. Now you'll be looking at the tali more like Romans do when they gamble. Much like in poker, form the four rolled numbers into hands, or sets of similar numbers.

CHAPTER III TALI

The six different possible hands are listed below from lowest ranking hand to highest.

<i>Tali Hands</i>	
Tali Hand	Description
Senio	One and <i>only</i> one 6 is rolled. Exception: a (6, 4, 3, 1) is not a Senio, it is a Venus.
One Pair	Two 6's or two 4's, 3's or 1's without a 6. Note: rolls such as (6, 4, 4, 3) do not count as One Pair; they are Senios because they contain one 6.
Two Pair	A pair of pairs.
Three of a Kind	Three 6's, 4's, 3's or Vs. Note: rolls such as (6, 4, 4, 4) are not Three of a Kind; they are Senios because they contain one 6.
Venus	One of each number. A (6, 4, 3, 1).
Vultures	Four 6's, 4's, 3's, or Vs. Four Vs are also known as the Dogs.

After you determine what hand you've rolled, consult the **effect table** (see below) to see how well you have done. If you are performing a non-combat action that is not quantifiable, ignore the numbers and gauge your level of success by the rankings of the hands. A Senio indicates success,

but little more. A Vultures means complete and total success that amazes bystanders. The rest fall in between. If your attribute that applies to this action is high enough or low enough to warrant an *effect modifier* (see CHAPTER II: PERSONAE, p. 16), add it to or subtract it from the hand you rolled. No hand can be reduced below a Senio or raised above a Vultures.

Example: *Camilla Macrina, wife of a legionary tribune, is trying to orchestrate a political deal that will aid her husband. Assuming she succeeds in Steps 1 and 2, when she rolls on the effect table the tali come up: (4, 4, 1, 4), Three of a Kind. Camilla has an Intelligentia 14, which gives her an effect modifier of +2. This shifts the Three of a Kind two ranks upward to Vultures. Camilla puts together a masterful deal that will take her husband far.*

Later, Camilla is in the courtyard of her domus when a minor earthquake causes a statue to topple. It lands right on top of her. Whether Camilla is hurt or not, she will still need to extricate herself from the statue. Assuming she succeeds in Steps 1 and 2, when she rolls on the effect table the tali come up: (6, 6, 3, 3), Two Pair. However, Camilla has a Vis 7, which gives her an effect modifier of -1. This shifts the Two Pair one rank down to One Pair. It takes her about a minute of pushing and straining, and she tears her stola, but Camilla is able to get out from under the heavy marble.

<i>Effect Table</i>			
Tali Roll	Normal Effect Multiplier	Special Effect Multiplier	Inverse Effect Multiplier
Senio	%	1	³ / ₄
One Pair	1	2	² / ₃
Two Pair	1½	3	¹ / ₂
Three of a Kind	2	4	¹ / ₃
Venus	2½	5	¹ / ₄
Vultures	4	7	¹ / ₈

SPECIAL CASES

If you are performing an action that is quantifiable, particularly in combat, the effect table is more specific. If you are attacking someone, you will apply the **effect multiplier** to the damage value of the weapon you are using. Round all damage values up to the nearest whole number to determine how much damage you inflict on the target. If the weapon you are using has "+ Vis modifier" in its damage rating (see p. 62) add the effect modifier of your Vis after you have multiplied. The total is the number of **wound points** your attack has cost its target.

Example: *An assassin, with a Vis 12, leaps from a shadowed alley with a curved dagger [sica] to attack Valerius, an augur. If the assassin succeeds at his attack roll, he rolls on the effect table. The tali read: (4,4,1,1), Two Pair. Seeing that the damage of a curved dagger is Edged 3 and the normal effect multiplier for Two Pair is V/i, the assassin has done 6 wound points ($3 \text{ Base Damage} \times P/2 = 5 + 1 \text{ Vis modifier}$) of Edged damage to the augur.*

Firearms and certain magics use the **special effect multiplier**, rather than the normal effect multiplier, to reflect the deadliness of those attacks. Sometimes less is more, particularly when personae are trying to act quickly. Whenever a greater level of success would mean that something is quantifiably less, use the **inverse effect multiplier**.

Example: *Monobazus, a Freedman palace clerk, is haggling over a new pair of sandals in the forum. The artisan insists that they are the finest quality and demands a price of 2 sesterces. Assuming Monobazus succeeds on his action roll for his skill Customs (Slave), he rolls on the effect table. The Tali come up: (6, 3, 4,1) a Venus! Monobazus is able to convince the artisan to sell him the sandals for half a sesterce (2 sesterces time inverse effect multiplier of V*).*

Every action in *FVLMINATA* can be resolved with the 3-Step system outlined above. The rules that follow simply show how to use the system in special game situations.

Humor Points

When in balance at the beginning of a game session, a persona is awarded 6 **humor points** by the GM. When out of balance, the persona receives only 3 humor points. He may use these points in that session to adjust the results of tali rolls. After you have made an action or an effect roll, you may spend one of these humor points to reroll any, or even all, of the tali again. However, you must keep the new numbers, unless you spend another humor point. Humor points may not be carried over into the next session.

Example: *Danae, a Greek actress, is trying to paint a stunning backdrop for her troupe's revival of Plautus's The Pot of Gold. Her Intelligentia 12 and Craft (Painting) 4 give her a target number of 16 for her action roll. The tali come up: (6, 6, 4, 3), for a total of 19. Danae has failed. This production is too important, so she spends a humor point to re-roll some of the tali. She wisely chooses to re-roll the two 6's and the 4. The new roll is: (1, 4, 4). 9 plus the original 3 brings the total to 12, a success.*

When she rolls on the effect table, the tali come up: (6, 1, 1,1), a Senio. Seeing that she is but one talus away from Three of a Kind, Danae spends another humor point to re-roll the 6. Unfortunately she rolls another 6 and retains her Senio. Her Intelligentia 12 gives her a +1 effect modifier, bringing the total to One Pair. The backdrop is fine, but not as grand as she had hoped. If she wanted, she could spend her final humor point of the session to attempt another re-roll.

CHAPTER III TALI



Contested Actions

Often, two personae will be acting against each other. This is the heart of dramatic conflict, especially combat (see p. 59-62). When two personae are in such a contest of skill, the GM and the personae navigate Step 1 and Step 2 to determine if they succeed. If they both fail, the contest can continue into another turn. If one succeeds and the other fails, the result is obvious: the winner rolls on the effect table to determine the extent of his victory.

If both personae succeed there is an additional step. Both roll on the effect table. The lower-ranking hand is subtracted from the higher-ranking hand. The difference is applied in favor of the one who rolled the higher hand. If both personae roll the same effect multiplier, the contest is considered a tie, but can be continued in the next turn with a new application of Steps 1 and 2.

Example: Appius, a wealthy Senator, comes upon Felix, a Plebeian rabble-rouser, speaking to a small but growing crowd on a street corner. He is blaming the wealthy for all the troubles of the Roman

poor and urging the people to rise against their oppressors. Appius realizes that summoning the urban cohorts to arrest this man would prove the Plebeian right and strengthen his position. Appius climbs atop a nearby bench and begins to speak on the glory of Rome and the many ways that the Senators and Equestrians care for the poor. The duel has begun.

Felix is attempting an emotional appeal to his audience. The GM rules that he is using his *Pietas* + *Rhetoric*. For Felix, this gives him a target number of 13 (9 *Pietas* and 4 *Rhetoric*). Appius is a seasoned speaker with years of experience addressing Romans of all backgrounds (9 *Rhetoric*). The GM rules that he may rely on skill alone for addressing this small crowd and need not make an action roll.

Assuming that Felix rolls less than his target number of 13, both he and Appius roll on the effect table. Felix rolls a *Senio*, Appius rolls *Three of a Kind*. Appius prevails in influencing the crowd as effectively as if he had rolled *Two Pair* (*Three of a Kind* minus *Senio*). The crowd is reassured that Rome indeed cares for all its people. Felix slinks off in disgrace.

Cooperation

Sometimes two or more personae will want to work together to accomplish a common goal. When this occurs, those who are cooperating declare this to the GM as their action. The GM can rule on a maximum number of personae that may cooperate on a given task. Her criteria will vary from task to task: it is difficult for more than four people to attack a single persona at once, and more than three speaking on the same topic is more the norm for theater than for oratory.

Once all cooperating personae have declared their intended action, they each navigate Steps 1 and 2 individually to determine whether they succeed or fail. If they do not succeed, there is no penalty to the cooperative action. They have simply failed to help. For those personae that do succeed, each rolls on the effect table. The task will only occur once. The persona with the highest-ranking hand on the effect table will actually accomplish the action. The ranking of his hand on the effect table will be increased by the rankings of the hands of his fellow personae. No hand may be increased above a Vultures.

Example: *In the dead of night, an elephant has broken loose in the forum, and Valentinus, Crispus, Balbus and Festus, night watchmen, are the first on the scene. Knowing the toughness of the beast they face, the watchmen decide to cooperate in attacking it. Due to the size of the beast, the GM rules that four personae can cooperate in an attack. Each of them individually navigates Steps 1 and 2 to see if they succeed or fail in their attack. Valentinus, Balbus, and Festus succeed. Since Crispus fails he neither helps nor hinders the efforts of his fellow personae. The three successful watchmen roll on the effect table. Valentinus rolls Two Pair, Balbus rolls a Senio, and Festus rolls One Pair. Only Valentinus's attack will apply damage to the elephant. He will wound the beast as if he had rolled a Vultures (Two Pair + Senio + One Pair).*

USING SKILLS

Personae can attempt to do anything you can imagine. However, for most of the normal activities of life, they will remain within the bounds of what is covered by their skills. Creative players will want to use their skills in many ways, to achieve many ends. When ruling on how a skill is being used, the GM ought to understand what the persona hopes to gain by using the skill. This determines the way in which the skill is used. The following sections give guidelines for using skills in different ways. In general, skills can be used in five different ways:

- 1) to perform a specific task (Action)
- 2) to construct an item (Create)
- 3) to convince another persona to do something (Influence)
- 4) to gather information (Learn)
- 5) to tend to the sick and wounded (Heal)

Although most skills cannot be used in all five ways, each of them can be used in more than one way. Even skills that are heavily biased toward one type of use can be used in other ways.

Example: *The Pilum skill will usually be used to fire or reload a pilum. This is an action use. However, if a persona finds a pilum at the scene of a murder, he can use his Pilum skill to find out which legion the weapon was stolen from. This is a learn use. If locked in a foundry stocked with baskets of pilum parts, a persona could use the Pilum skill to craft a working weapon. This is a create use. Finding fulminata would be another worry, and another skill.*

Action Skill Use

Using skills to perform an action are the simplest way to use them. Tell the GM what you are trying to do and navigate the three Steps. Since combat will consist mainly of action skill uses, details can be found in Combat on pp. 59-62.

CHAPTER III TALI

Create Skill Use

When manufacturing something, a persona's goal will generally lean in one of two directions: quantity or quality. If the persona is attempting to produce many items in the time normally allowed for few, the regular effect table can be used. The GM can determine how many items could normally be made in the time allotted. This will vary from skill to skill. For example, the Smith skill may allow 2 gladii to be made in 1 day, while 1 Tormentum might take 2 weeks. Once the GM has determined the number made under normal circumstances, simply apply the normal effect multiplier to determine how many are made in that time frame. If, instead, the persona wishes to make one item much faster than the normal time requirements allow, he may use the inverse effect multiplier. If goods of high quality are his aim, consult the chart below.

Create Skill Effect Table	
Effect Roll	Result
Senio	Serviceable
One Pair	Fine
Two Pair	Great—renown throughout the shop
Three of a Kind	Extraordinary—renown throughout the city
Venus	Masterpiece—renown throughout the Imperium
Vultures	Classic—renown throughout the ages

Influence Skill Use

The discovery of fulminata by Aufidius Caelus Mulciber has ensured that the Imperium is safe from external threats. But inside the frontiers, there are more subtle dangers. The ability to persuade others to your cause can often be just as vital as a sharp gladius or a timely spell. Romans are renowned for their oratorical skills. While social influence can be handled as pure role-playing, the following rules system can also be used to emulate the machinations of the most glib orators.

When a persona tries to influence someone, he

must navigate the three Steps. Most social activities will rely on the Pietas attribute, although use of cold, hard logic may make Intelligentia more appropriate. Only the most blatant and crude seductions or intimidations would use Vis or Agilitas.

If the persona succeeds, before the effect roll is made, the player must state three different ways the target persona could react. The first, called *agreement*, should be the player's ideal result. The second, called *concession*, should describe a small compensation the target persona will give up if he is dead-set against the player's agreement. The third possibility, called *neutrality*, should be somewhat less in line with the player's desires for the meeting, but still successful. If you roll a Senio, One Pair or Two Pair, the GM is free to disregard these reactions, although you may gain a bonus to further attempts at influencing the same subject using a different skill. If you roll higher, the GM must choose one of your three defined options. If she feels she absolutely cannot pick the option indicated, she must award you a temporary humor point. See the chart below for details.

Influence Skill Effect Table		
Effect Roll	Result	Reactions
Senio	Attentive	Any reaction
One Pair	Well-disposed	Any; +1 bonus to any further influences on the same subject using a <i>different</i> skill
Two Pair	Friendly	Any; +2 bonus to any further influences on the same subject using a <i>different</i> skill
Three of a Kind	Encouraging	Agreement, Concession, Neutrality, GM fiat*
Venus	Laudatory	Agreement, Concession, GM fiat*
Vultures	Devoted	Agreement or GM fiat*

**GM fiat*—Sometimes, the GM must put the needs of the fabula before the roll of the tali. If this influence would jeopardize the integrity of the fabula, the subject may still resist, but the GM must award a temporary humor point. This humor point lasts only until the end of the current session.

Example: *Felix, our busy Plebeian rabble-rouser, has amassed a sizable debt at Lucky's, the wine bar owned by Tertulla. As Felix does not have the money to pay, he tries to convince Tertulla to give him more time to pay her. This is an influence use of the Rhetoric skill.*

Before he rolls, Felix delineates his agreement, neutrality, and concession options. He decides that if Tertulla agrees, her sentiment will be "Don't worry about it, Felix. I know you'll pay me when you have the money." If she is neutral, she will say, "You have three days. Then I'm cutting you off." If she disagrees but offers a concession, her stance will be "Not another drop until I get paid. Of course, if you want to work it off in the kitchen..."

Assuming he succeeds, Felix rolls on the influence effect table. The tali come up: (1,1, 3,1), Three of a Kind. Consulting the chart, Tertulla has but three options: Agreement, Concession, or GM's choice. She cannot choose his neutral option by giving him a short deadline and cutting off his credit. She must either postpone the debt indefinitely (Felix's agreement option), let him work his debt off (Felix's concession), or react in some other way that the GM sees fit. She decides that Felix has a good heart and tells him to pay her when he has the money.

If a persona realizes that he is being influenced, he may resist as a contested action. The persona need not use the same skill that he is being influenced with to contest the roll, but the skill chosen must make sense in the situation. Each persona must detail his agreement, neutrality, and concession options before either makes a tali roll.

Example: *Felix's inflammatory, drunken speeches have ignited a barroom brawl with the local night watchmen [vigiles] that frequent Lucky's. After the dust settles, Felix tries to persuade Tertulla that the chaos was not his fault. He is going to make an impassioned plea for mercy. This is an influence use of his (P + Rhetoric).*

Tertulla has heard enough from this sly fellow and is not going to let him off the hook so easily. She tells him the story of how Bacchus has two faces, the merry god of the vine and the wrathful lord of the Bacchantes, who tears men limb from limb. This is an influence use of her (P + Myth).

Felix decides on his options. His agreement option for Tertulla is "I won't be letting those unruly watchmen in here again. They're a menace!" If she is neutral, he wants her to say "Oh, well. These things happen when you run a bar." If she offers only a small concession, he chooses "How dare you upset one of my good customers? Now grab a broom and help me clean up or I'll turn you in to the urban cohorts myself!"

Tertulla also chooses her options for Felix's possible reactions. Her choice for agreement is that Felix is afraid and says "I'll make it up to you! I'll pay my bill and apologize to the watchmen!" If he is neutral, she chooses "I guess I'd better not drink so much, it's bad for my health." If he tries to weasel out with a small concession, she wants him to say "Those watchmen attacked me! I'm not to blame. But I'll pay part of my bill so you can replace some of the pitchers that were broken."

Assuming they both succeed in Steps 1 and 2 (however unlikely in Felix's drunken and wounded state), they both roll on the influence effect table. Felix rolls a Senio, but Tertulla rolls a Vultures. Tertulla succeeds as if she had rolled Venus (Vultures minus Senio). Felix must react with either agreement, by paying up and apologizing, or another option of the player's choice. He may not choose neutrality and promise better behavior or offer a concession by offering a token settlement. Not wanting to break with Tertulla completely, Felix agrees to pay up and apologize to the watchmen.

A note to Game Masters: This system gives your players real opportunities to advance their agendas by social maneuvering rather than violence, while still providing you an overall veto power

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to keep things from getting out of hand. Beware of overusing the "GM choice" option. If your players know that whenever they try to influence someone, you'll have that persona do what he would have done anyway, they will stop trying to influence people and rely on their trusty weapons and spells. Much of the flavor of *FVLMINATA* is lost if every fabula is merely a test of sorcery and combat savvy. For an effective, intriguing fabula to work, you must be willing to allow the players some leeway in shaping the fabula. And never discount the dramatic potential of giving them enough rope to hang themselves.

A note to Players: The influence system gives your persona a real chance to be more persuasive than you may actually be and get things done by the power of words. Don't abuse it. If you are playing one of the urban cohorts, don't repeatedly attempt to influence the *fulminatus* of a nearby legion to smuggle you a pilum and ammunition. You will only annoy the GM and force him to use the "GM fiat" options. Be thoughtful in choosing your agreement, neutrality, and especially your concession options. So long as your concession options are not along the lines of "If he won't give me the sun, he can at least give me the moon," the GM may be willing to grant them.

Learn Skill Use

Personae will often use their skills to see what they know about a certain subject. In these cases, the persona navigates Steps 1 and 2. During these Steps, the GM may add difficulty modifiers to reflect the complexity of the question. If this persona succeeds, roll on the learn effect table. The provided examples illustrate the level of detail a persona would know if asked "Where did Iulius Caesar live before he was elected *pontifex maximus*?"

Learn Skill Effect Table

Effect Roll	Detail	Example
Senio	Vague	"He lived in Italia."
One Pair	General	"He lived in Rome."
Two Pair	Reasonably Specific	"He lived in the neighborhood known as the Subura."
Three of a Kind	Quite Specific	"He lived on the fifth street east of the Forum of Nerva"
Venus	Erudite	"He lived in this <i>domus</i> ."
Vultures	Comprehensive	"He moved into this <i>domus</i> at age 27, after Crassus crushed the revolt of Spartacus . . ."

The Divine skill is also handled as a learn skill. The level of detail reflects the specificity and accuracy of the divination. It is suggested that the GM navigate the three Steps, including the effect roll, for the personae, so they are unsure as to the accuracy of their interpretations of the omens.

Heal Skill Use

With the exception of Magic (see CHAPTER IX: ARCANA), only three skills can be used to heal wounds and cure disease: Medicine, Chirurgy, and Pharmakon. Once blood is spilled, these skills are in great demand. Healing restores lost wound points just as weapons take them away. Navigate Steps 1 and 2 to determine the success of your healing attempt. If successful, roll on the effect table and use the normal effect multiplier along with the base healing points found on the table below. Don't forget to add or subtract any bonuses due to the appropriate attribute. The total is the number of wound points the patient has recovered.

Example: *Cervaria Proserpina, a Freedman physician, is tending the wounds of Valentinus, a night watchman, hurt during an intense fire (5 wound points from Blunt damage). She first washes and dresses his wounds using her Pietas 12 + Medicine 6. If she rolls 18 or less on her tali, she may roll again on the effect table. Proserpina rolls One Pair, for a multiplier of 1. She heals 3 points of Blunt damage (Base 2x1 + 1 Pietas Bonus = 3). She may not use Medicine on Valentinus again unless he receives a new wound. She may, however, use Chirugy or Pharmakon in an attempt to cure the remaining 2 wound points.*

Medicine covers initial battlefield dressings and splints. Chirugy deals with stitches and other advanced forms of medical care. Pharmakon details the brewing and administration of medicinal elixirs. No persona may be helped by the Medicine skill more than once per set of wounds per day. Likewise, Chirugy and Pharmakon may be repeated no more than once per day. If a persona goes untreated, his body will begin to heal itself. Guidelines for these cases can be found on p. 61-62.

Heal Skill Effect Table			
Skill	Used with Attribute	Base Healing Points	Duration
Medicine	Pietas	B2/E2	2 turns
Chirugy	Agilitas	B1 / E3 / P2	20 minutes
Pharmakon	Intelligentia	B3/E1/P1	2 hours
No Skill (Natural)	Vis	B1 / E $\frac{1}{2}$ / P $\frac{1}{2}$ *	1 day

* See special rules regarding pilum wounds on page 61-62.

Using Unfamiliar Skills

Sometimes your persona may attempt to use a skill that he does not possess. Such instances represent your persona's first time doing such an action. In these cases, you will still roll against your Attribute + Skill 0, but you will have a penalty modifier of -3 (overriding disadvantage) to represent your persona's complete and total inexperience in this type of task. Thus, a little familiarity with a task (skill level 1) is significantly better than no familiarity at all (skill level 0). Good Romans aspire to be well-rounded.

Additionally, with a successful unskilled use of the skill, write the skill on your persona sheet. The next time you gain a free skill point (see CHAPTER X: FABULAE, pp. 216-217), it must be spent on this skill, provided that the persona has met all of the skill's prerequisites at a skill level of 3. If not, you must spend the skill point in either acquiring or raising one of the prerequisite skills.

If your persona has a skill similar to the exact skill the GM requires, ask the GM if you can use that skill instead. If she allows this, you must

apply the -3 penalty for being unskilled to the Attribute + related Skill. The GM must decide this on a case-by-case basis. Describe why you think your persona's knowledge of the related skill is relevant in the particular instance.

Example: *Pertinax, a young Senator, has been accused of graft and must defend himself in a court of law. The GM rules that the proper defense calls for a logical legal argument (I + Law). Since Pertinax does not have the Law skill, he would need to roll an 8 or less (Intelligentia 11 + Law 0 + -3 penalty) to succeed. If he succeeds, he will record the Law skill on his persona sheet. Since Pertinax already possesses the prerequisites of Rhetoric and Language (Latin), he must spend the next free skill point on Law, raising it to 1. To better his odds at success, the player suggests that Pertinax could make an impassioned plea (P + Rhetoric) instead. The GM agrees. Now Pertinax must succeed by rolling an 11 or less (Pietas 11 + Rhetoric 3 + -3 penalty). A success here does not count as an unskilled Law success.*

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Using Attributes Alone

Some tasks, such as lifting heavy objects or noticing subtle changes in your surroundings, rely on attributes without the aid of specific skills. In these cases, the target number for your action roll is equal to your attribute rating, plus any difficulty modifiers applied by the GM. Each of the four attributes is used for certain types of tasks that are unrelated to skill.

Intelligentia is used for feats of perception. When the persona is looking for something out of the ordinary in his surroundings, he may roll his Intelligentia. Likewise, if the GM feels that there is something that the persona might notice, she may secretly roll the persona's Intelligentia. If the roll succeeds, consult the learn effect table (p. 55) to see how much detail the persona has noticed. The Intelligentia effect multiplier is added to the final rank of the hand.

Agilitas is used for feats of speed. While movement over long distances uses the skill Move (March), running uses only Agilitas. *FVLMI-NATA* tactical maps are labeled in units of movement equal to the distance a normal person can move in 1 turn (about 5 feet) while doing other actions. If a persona wishes to move faster, any other actions must be treated as **multiple actions** (see p. 58). To do this, he must make an Agilitas roll. If he succeeds, he rolls on the effect table, and may move a number of units of movement equal to 2 times the special effect multiplier. The Agilitas effect modifier is added to the total units of movement after the multiplier has been applied.

Pietas is used for feats of faith. When a persona implores the gods for aid, it is his Pietas alone that determines whether they grant his supplication. A persona appeals to one of the gods for aid by praying or making an offering, preferably at a temple to that god. Unless the GM feels that the persona is trying to abuse the god's favor, the persona makes an action roll with his Pietas (or Pietas + 3 if it is his patron god) as target number. Other modifiers, such as valuable sacrifices at the

god's temples, may apply at the GM's discretion. If he succeeds, he rolls on the divine intervention table. The Pietas effect multiplier is added the final rank of the hand. He may apply the bonus from the table to any single skill roll related to that god during the same day. He may declare this use after he has roll the tali.

Divine Intervention Table

Effect Roll	Form of Blessing
Senio	Eliminates -1 worth of penalties
One Pair	Eliminates -2 worth of penalties
Two Pair	+1 bonus to related skill
Three of a Kind	+2 bonus to related skill
Venus	+3 bonus to related skill
Vultures	1 temporary humor point, usable only on the related skill roll (action or effect roll)

Vis is used for feats of pure muscular power. Lifting objects, breaking down doors, and the like are uses of raw Vis. For breaking doors, the GM may assign a difficulty penalty for the sturdiness of the door. To lift objects, the GM can apply a difficulty modifier for the weight of the object. The table below lists some suggested modifiers.

Lifting Difficulty Modifiers

Weight	Difficulty Modifier
Upto100lbs.	+2
Upto150lbs.	+1
Up to 200 lbs.	0
Up to 250 lbs.	-1
Up to 300 lbs.	-2
Up to 350 lbs.	-3
Up to 400 lbs.	-4

TURNS

At certain points in the fabula, it will become important for the GM to manage the personae's (and non-player personae's) desired actions in an organized manner. Most combat and magic falls

into this category. Since every action in these types of scenes can be very important, time is broken down into units called **turns**, each representing approximately five seconds.

Order of Actions

The order in which actions take place is important. In *FVLMINATA*, regardless of Agilitas or combat skills, Rank determines initiative. Senators act first, followed by Equestrians, Plebeians, Freedmen, Foreigners, and, finally, Slaves. When multiple personae in a scene are of the same rank, other social criteria (such as military rank, prestigious patrons, deeper initiation into the mysteries of magic, etc.) can be used. If these subdivisions of rank do not apply, or if the GM does not wish to consider them, the personae act in order of Pietas, from highest to lowest.

Multiple Actions

Usually, personae can take one and only one action per turn. However, sometimes you will want to perform more than one action in a single turn. Acting so quickly makes each action more difficult and therefore less likely to succeed. On any turn, a persona may declare that he is performing multiple actions. To do so, consult the multiple action table to determine the difficulty modifier. Remember, this modifier applies to each and every action the persona performs this turn.

Multiple Action Table	
Actions	Penalty
1	0
2	-2
3	-4
4	-6
5	-8
6	-10
each additional action	an additional -2

Hurrying

Most actions (such as aiming and firing a pilum or attacking with a gladius) can be completed in

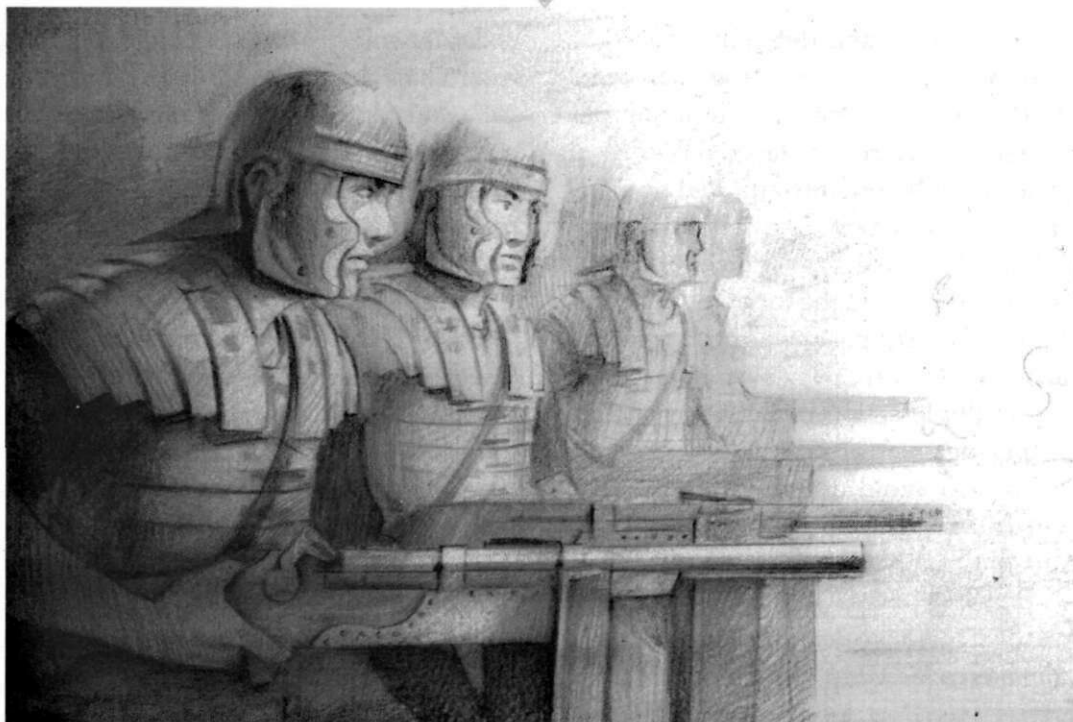
one game turn. However, some actions, such as loading a pilum (5 game turns) or summoning the dead (20 game turns), take multiple game turns. You may attempt to finish these actions faster by performing multiple actions per turn, with the following guidelines:

- 1) You must make an action roll for each portion of the action, even if you could normally rely on skill alone. If you could rely on skill alone under normal circumstances, you get a +6 difficulty modifier.
- 2) The normal penalties for multiple actions apply.
- 3) If you fail one of the action rolls, you may attempt it again during your next action.

Example: *Didius, our brave legionary, has fired his pilum at a barbarian warrior closing on his camp. He wants to reload his pilum and take another shot before the barbarian is upon him. Normally, reloading a pilum takes 5 turns. If Didius is willing to wait that long, he need not roll. So long as he does nothing else for those 5 turns, he can easily reload the pilum, just as he's been trained to do.*

However, Didius thinks that the barbarian will be upon him in 3 turns. He wants to reload his pilum as fast as possible! If Didius chose to, he could attempt to complete 5 turns worth of work in 1 turn. He would have to make five action rolls in that turn, each with a target number of 10 (Agilitas 9 + Pilum 3 + Multiple Action Penalty -8 + Difficulty Modifier 6).

Not wanting to chance failing an action roll on such an important task, Didius decides instead to take all three turns. This requires Didius to roll for 2 actions each turn. He rolls his (A + Pilum) skill at a -2 penalty because he is performing 2 actions per turn. However, since Didius could rely on skill alone to reload his pilum if he were not hurrying, he gets a +6 bonus. In the end, Didius must roll less than or equal to 16 (Agilitas 9 + Pilum 3 + Multiple Action Penalty -2 + Difficulty Modifier 6) twice each turn to successfully reload his pilum before the barbarian is upon him. In the third turn, he reloads his pilum on his first action, and may fire it as his second.



COMBAT

The Imperium Romanum is protected by a formidable military. Although life within its borders is considered peaceful, it is likely that the personae will be led into dangerous situations during the course of the fabula. A few special rules apply to the highly dramatic situation of combat.

In most scenes involving combat, personae will want to engage in both attacks on others and defenses of themselves. When both combatants opt to use hand-to-hand combat skills, attack and defense are handled as contested actions (see p. 51). Ranged attacks (Bow, Pilum, Tormentum) can only be contested if a persona chooses to solely defend during the game turn (see Active Defenses below).

For game purposes, the first persona who acts in that turn is the attacker and his opponent is the defender. Both the attacker and defender make an action roll. If the one succeeds and the other fails, the victor rolls damage normally using the effect table. If both succeed on their action rolls, the attacker and defender roll on the effect table. Remember that the lower-ranking hand is sub-

tracted from the higher-ranking hand and that the difference is applied in favor of the one who rolled the higher hand. However, since combat is a quantified action, any modifier due to high or low attributes does not shift the rank of the hand rolled. Modifiers (such as Vis for muscle-powered attacks) are added on after the effect multiplier is applied. The lower-ranking hand is subtracted from the higher-ranking hand. The difference is then applied to whichever combatant rolled the lower-ranking hand. If both attacker and defender fail their action rolls or roll the same on the effect table, the combat round is considered a draw and the fight may continue.

Example: *Achillea and Syphax are practicing for an upcoming gladiator bout. Achillea, armed with a sica, attacks Syphax who defends with his trident. Both succeed on their action rolls (A + Dagger and A + Spear, respectively). Achillea rolls Two Pair and Syphax rolls a Venus. Syphax's roll is downgraded three ranks to One Pair. Since the pair are using dummy weapons, Syphax only inflicts 1 wound point on Achillea (Dmg: **BlxI** + 0 Vis bonus).*

Since both attackers and defenders have the potential to inflict damage on a foe, a persona will likely declare only one combat action per turn. If a persona has already engaged in combat in the turn and is subsequently attacked by a different opponent, the persona may defend against the second attack. However, because this is the persona's second action in the turn, and the multiple action penalty (see p. 58) was not applied to the first action of the turn, this new defense must absorb two multiple action penalties in one action roll. A persona may always declare multiple combat actions to avoid doubling the penalty, but he will still need to apply the appropriate multiple action penalty to each action roll.

Example: *Didius, having dealt with the barbarian scout, continues on his patrol. Two barbarians with drawn swords (Dmg: E4) soon ambush him. Fearing an attack on his flank, Didius decides to actively attack both with his gladius. He makes two action rolls, hoping to roll less than or equal toll (Agilitas 9 + Gladius 4 + -2 multiple action penalty) on both. He rolls a 14 (fail) and **anil** (success). The first barbarian fails as well, thus this combat is a draw. The second barbarian succeeds. For his effect roll, Didius rolls Two Pair. The second barbarian rolls a Senio, adjusting Didius' roll down to a rank of One Pair. Didius inflicts 4 points of edged damage on the second barbarian. If he hadn't decided to attack both barbarian warriors, he would have suffered a combined penalty (-4) on his second action roll, failed it and taken damage from the barbarian's sword.*

Active Defenses

If disarmed or weaponless, a persona may still defend using his combat skills, including the skill Move (Defend). Remember that any hand-to-hand combat skill (e.g. Spear, Gladius, Wrestling) functions as Move (Defend). A persona may also choose not to counterattack during a game turn. In these cases, the attacker and defender still resolve the combat turn as a contested action. If the

defender ends up with the higher hand in the effect roll, he does not inflict any damage on the attacker. Defenseless beings and non-living objects cannot become a defender in a contested action. In these situations, the attacker succeeds or fails based on a single action roll.

Example: *In a real gladiatorial bout, Achillea is battling a Skirmisher [Ves] gladiator. She has successfully severed the string attached to her opponent's javelin. Unarmed, the Skirmisher edges towards the javelin in an attempt to retrieve the weapon. Achillea pounces on her disadvantaged opponent. She succeeds on her action roll (A + Dagger). The Skirmisher does as well on his (A + Spear). Achillea rolls One Pair, but the Skirmisher rolls Two Pair. His hand beats hers, but since he was unarmed, he inflicts no damage. However, the GM rules that the Skirmisher succeeds in retrieving his weapon.*

Normally, there is no defense against ranged attacks. Bullets, arrows and sling stones are simply too fast for personae to effectively dodge. However, if a persona declares that he is only defending (i.e. running for cover, raising a shield) in that game turn, he may contest the ranged attack using a combat skill. The action is resolved as above where the defender may reduce or neutralize the attack with a success, but cannot inflict damage on the attacker.

Example: *After a pitched battle, Didius manages to dispatch the two barbarians who had ambushed him. Didius notices movement in the distance - another barbarian is taking aim at him with a bow. Didius decides to duck behind a tree to avoid an arrow in the chest. The contested action is between the barbarian as the attacker (A + Bow) and Didius as the defender (A + Gladius).*

With the Move (March) skill, soldiers learn combat maneuvers to aid them on the battlefield (see p. 147). While many of these special ma-

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neuers are attack formations, the Move (March) skill may also be used to defend against ranged attacks. The Tortoise and Porcupine configurations allow legionaries to cooperate in a common defense. The defending personae and the attackers navigate Steps 1 and 2 to determine levels of success as per the rules on cooperation (see p. 52). If properly executed, the Testudo will hold up to volleys of arrows or pilum fire.

Unarmed Combat

Three skills can be used to engage in unarmed combat: Box, Wrestle and Pankration. Successful hits with the Box skill inflict blunt damage from fists (Dmg: B2) or spiked gloves (Dmg: B4). Instead of inflicting damage, a successful hit with the Wrestle skill either imbalances (opponent loses next action and is defenseless) or immobilizes (opponent is held fast). The choice is up to the player. Once in a hold, the opponent may attempt to break free each subsequent turn. The attacker and defend continue their contested action, but do so using the Vis attribute in place of Agilitas. Pankration is a combination of Box and Wrestle, but if a hold is established, the persona may automatically inflict extreme damage (Dmg: B4) on his opponent until his opponent breaks free.

Example: *A brawl has broken out in Lucky's over a controversial win at the chariot races. One patron, a Greek giant, is particularly destructive. Valentinus knows how to fight (Box 2), but wants to resolve this as peacefully as possible. He decides to attempt a wrestling hold on the Greek (A + Wrestle + -3 unskilled penalty). What Valentinus does not know is that the drunken Greek is an experienced fighter (Pankration 5). In the contested action, Valentinus fails his action roll and the Greek succeeds. Valentinus quickly finds himself in an uncomfortable hold. If he cannot escape, he is at the mercy of his opponent.*

An untrained brawler may attempt to hit (Box), grapple (Wrestle) or strangle (Pankration) an op-

ponent, but he will suffer the -3 penalty for an unskilled use of a combat skill (see p. 56).

WOUNDS

When people are hurt, the damage they take are expressed as wound points. If a persona takes a number of wound points equal to his Vis, he falls unconscious. If his wound points rise to twice his Vis, he is dead. When a persona has passed out from wound points surpassing his Vis, he will remain unconscious until another persona helps him.

There are three different types of damage: blunt (B), edged (E), and pilum (P). Blunt damage comes from fists, clubs, falling, and the like. Edged damage comes from sharp objects such as daggers, gladii and spears. Pilum damage is only inflicted by weapons that use *terrafulminata*, like the pilum and tormentum. A persona's ability to recover depends on what sort of damage he has suffered. If the last wound points the persona took before passing out were of the blunt type, another persona need only spend one action helping the victim to return him to consciousness. If the last wound points the persona took were of the edged or pilum types, another persona must use the Medicine, Chirurgy, or Pharmakon skill, or certain magic spells to bring the injured persona around. It is important to keep track of how many wound points a persona has taken. Pain from wounds makes every action more difficult. For every 2 wound points taken, a persona suffers a -1 difficulty modifier to all action rolls.

Without medical attention, a persona may begin to heal on his own. If you have been wounded with blunt or edged damage, you may roll once per day on the effect table. Apply the normal effect multiplier to following base values: B1 / E¹/2. The effect modifier for an unusually high or low Vis does not apply. This roll can be made in addition to genuine medical attention as well as in its absence. If you have taken damage

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of a pilum type, infection is a threat. You must make an action roll with your target number being your Vis. If your wound has been treated, you need only make this roll once. If untreated, make it each day for three days. If you succeed, you may roll on the effect table and apply the normal effect multiplier to the base value of P 1/2 to determine how many wound points you heal. Unfortunately, if you fail the roll, infection will increase your wound points. Each day, roll on the effect table and apply the normal effect multiplier to the base value of P1/2 to determine how many wound points you take. You will continue to take wound points each day until treated.

The table below list the base wound points done by various weapons, along with the type of damage, blunt (B), edged (E) or pilum (P). The base is multiplied by the effect multiplier on the effect table. Round all damage values up to the nearest whole number to determine how much damage you inflict on the target. In the case of muscle-powered attacks, a modifier for the persona's Vis is added after the effect multiplier is applied. Note that a hurled weapon loses this Vis bonus (e.g. spear, gladius, dagger).

<i>Weapons</i>		
Weapon	Base Wound Points	Wound Point Range
Arrow	E2	1-8
Chain Whip	B3	2-12 + Vis Bonus
Club	B3	2-12 + Vis Bonus
Curved Dagger [Sica]	E3	2-12 + Vis Bonus
Dagger [Pugio]	E2	1-8 + Vis Bonus
Fist	B2	1-8 + Vis Bonus
Gladius	E4	2-16 + Vis Bonus
Heavy Lance* [Contus]	E4	2-16 + Vis Bonus
Hooked Sword [Harpe]	E3	2-12 + Vis Bonus
Horse Whip	B1	1-4 + Vis Bonus
Javelin* [Lancea]	E3	2-14 + Vis Bonus
Pilum or Pistol [Hastula]*	P3	3-21
Saber [Spatha]*	E3	3-21 + Vis Bonus
Scimitar [x]	E5	3-20 + Vis Bonus
Sling Bullet	B2	1-8
Small Dagger [Parazonium]	E1	1-4 + Vis Bonus
Spear	E3	2-12 + Vis bonus
Spiked Glove [Caesfus]	B4	2-16 + Vis Bonus
Tormentum*	P7	7-49
Trident	E3	2-12 + Vis Bonus
Vine Cane [Vitis]	B1	1-4 + Vis Bonus
Wooden Sword [Rudis]	B1	1-4 + Vis Bonus

*Weapons marked with an asterisk use the special effect multiplier instead of the normal effect multiplier.
Note: the javelin and saber only receive this bonus during mounted combat.

CHAPTER III TALI

The following are descriptions of weapons used by the Roman army that may be unfamiliar to you:

Dagger [*Pugio*]

This broad dagger, issued to all legionaries as a sidearm and used throughout the Imperial military, is designed for close-quarters struggles. Its large size and distinctive, deeply-waisted shape make it unmistakably Roman. Larger and heavier than the curved *sica*, the *pugio* is as durable and combat-ready as a veteran legionary.

Gladius

The gladius or Roman short sword is optimally designed for an upward stabbing attack. While the edges are sharp and capable of inflicting damage, a legionary is trained to thrust his gladius into an enemy's exposed groin or stomach. The steel blade is compact enough to punch through most armor.

Pilum

Originally used to denote the heavy spear used by the legions, the word pilum now describes the front-line fulminata-powered weapon that strikes terror into Rome's enemies. The pilum is relatively short, measuring just under a yard in length, and light, a consideration the mules of Marius are thankful for. The steel barrel is mounted on a carved wooden stock by bronze straps. At the rear of the barrel is a small metal cover that locks in place. When opened, it reveals the firing chamber where a legionary loads the weapon. Pre-wrapped linen packets contain the precise amount of fulminata and a lead bullet. On forcing one of these into

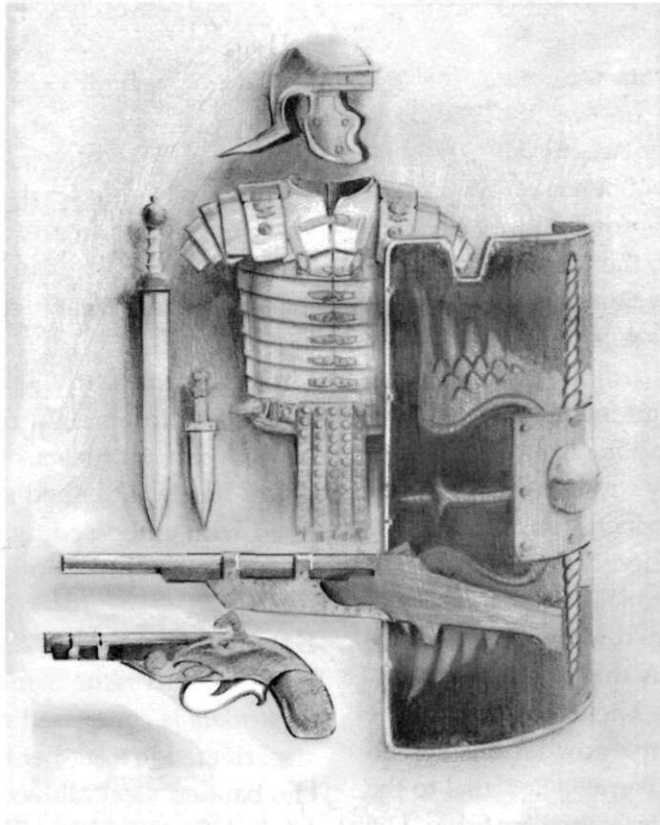
the firing chamber, a legionary discovers the sharp steel teeth below that tear the linen packet, allowing the fulminata to pour out. Legionaries curse these jagged teeth every time they clean their weapons, calling them "wolf's teeth" [*lupata*]. The firing mechanism consists of a spring-loaded

hammer or "talon" [*unguis*] topped with a piece of flint. Squeezing the bronze trigger releases the hammer, which smashes into a steel strike-plate. This sends a shower of sparks into the fulminata-filled firing chamber. The powder almost always ignites at the first spark, exploding within the firing chamber and hurling the lead bullet out of the barrel with great speed and force. However, the pilum is notoriously inaccurate at all ranges and is thus used by the legions as a shock weapon.

When faced with a wall of oncoming barbarians, accuracy is hardly the prime concern.

Pistol [*Hastula*]

A smaller, single-handed version of the pilum, the *hastula* or "little spear" is carried by legionary officers, the Praetorian and Amazonian Guards and naval trireme captains. Although use of standard charges gives the *hastula* the same power as a pilum, its short barrel considerably lessens the already poor accuracy. The *hastula* is loaded through the barrel, making it more difficult to clean and reload. In addition, the pistol lacks a stock to help absorb kickback. For these reasons, it is little surprise that Roman officers consider the *hastula* a badge of rank more than a combat weapon. The *hastula* of wealthy Senatorial officers often feature elaborate carvings, gold inlays or mounted gems.



Saber [Spatha]

The *spatha* is primarily used by the Roman cavalry who favor its length for chopping down enemy infantry. Ground troops may also use the saber, but the Roman military generally scorns the use of slashing attack in infantry combat.

Tormentum

The first working fulminata weaponry, the tormentum is the scourge of any wall that stands in the way of Roman glory. Its two-yard long bronze barrel is mounted on a wooden frame equipped with large wagon wheels for mobility on long marches. Like the *hastula*, the tormentum is barrel-loaded, but with larger ammunition packets to deliver a greater blast. A legionary gun crew requires four men [*tormentarii*] to operate and fire a tormentum. The chief gunner [*primarius*] calibrates and aims the weapon. Another gunner, chosen for his upper-body strength, hoists a bundle that contains an eight-inch iron ball, into the mouth of the barrel. Another shoves it down tight with a long wooden ramrod. Teeth at the base of the barrel puncture the linen, allowing the fulminata to spill into a tiny tray that runs from the inside of the barrel to the back. As soon as the fourth gunner sees that the powder has spilled into the tray, he shouts "Terra!" - a signal to the crew that the tormentum is primed for firing. The gunner then pulls a rope, releasing a cocked, flint-tipped "talon" [*unguis*] onto a strike-plate. From the tiny shower of sparks, the tormentum expels its ball with the force of a dozen catapults.

ARMOR

The table below lists the wound points absorbed by different armors, along with the type of damage, blunt (B), edged (E) or pilum (P). Armor simply subtracts from incoming wound points after all multipliers and modifiers have been applied. For game purposes, armor values do not degrade from use, nor are they subject to an effect multiplier.

Armor	
Armor	Defense
Bronze Muscled Cuirass [Lorica]	B2, E2, PO
Leather Muscled Cuirass [Lorica Scorteia]	B1.E1.PO
Banded Steel [Lorica Segmentata]	B3, E4, P2
Chain Mail [Lorica Hamata]	B4, E2, P1
Scale Armor [Lorica Squamata]	B3, E3, P1
Gladiator Armor [Galerus, Ocrea, Manica]	B2, E2, PO
Large Shield [Scutum]	B2, E1.P1
Small Shield [Parma]	B1.E1.PO

The following are descriptions of armor used by the Roman army that may be unfamiliar to you:

Cuirass [Lorica]

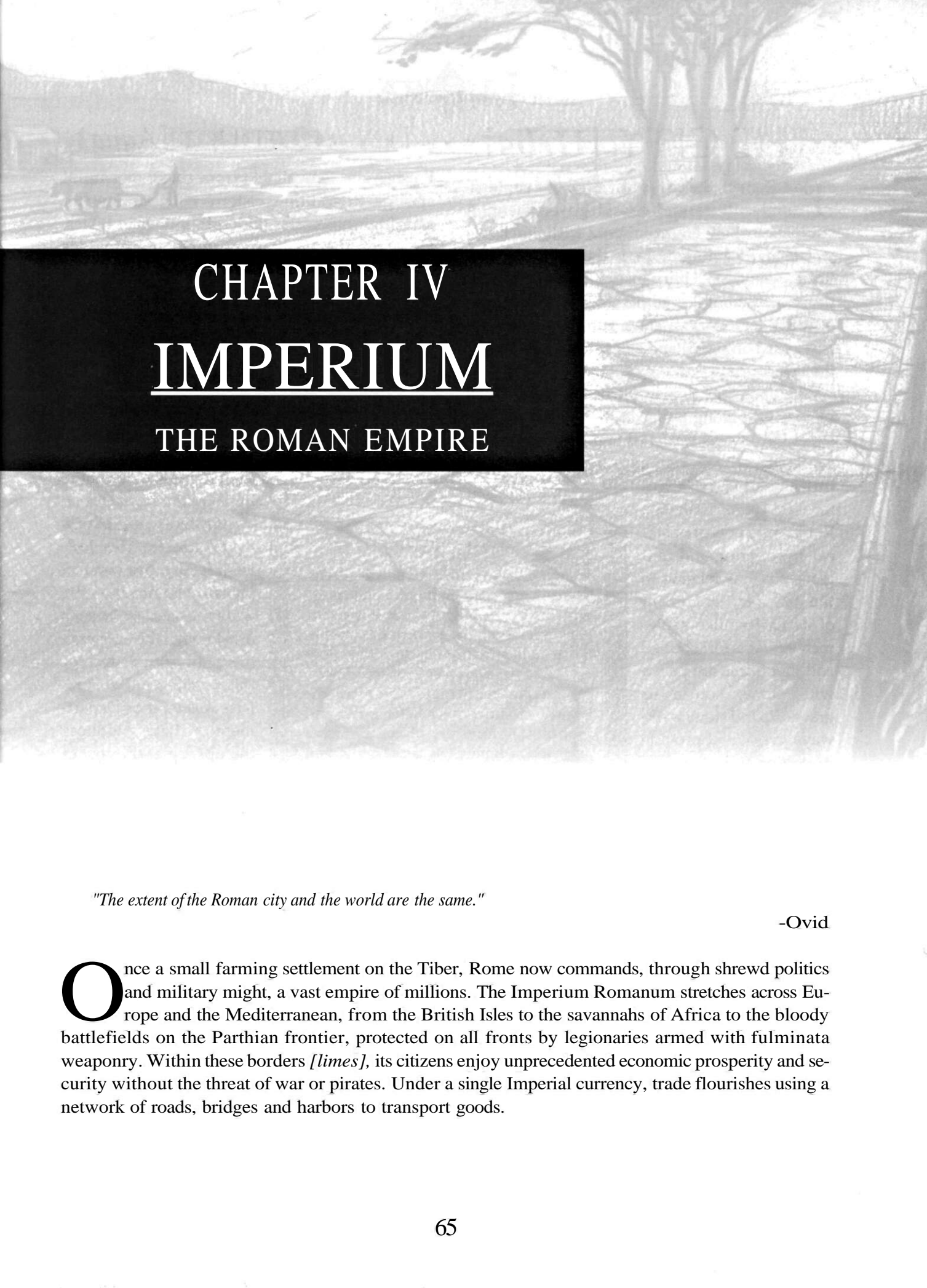
Molded to resemble a muscled torso, lorica is worn by senior officers, offering minimal defense under harsh battlefield conditions. When decorated with embossed figures or silver nipples, a suit of *lorica* is little more than parade armor.

Banded Steel [Lorica Segmentata]

The standard issue armor of the legions, *lorica segmentata* is comprised of overlapping plates of steel riveted to a leather harness. Light and flexible, banded steel allows freedom of movement while deflecting blows. The helmet [cassid] covers the skull, brow, neck and cheek while leaving the ears and face open to facilitate communication during combat. An apron [cingulum] of studded leather strips protects the groin.

Large Shield [Scutum]

The rectangular *scutum* is made of laminated wood, not metal. The front of the shield is painted with the unit's device. A notch in its upper right corner can cradle a pilum as the legionary advances. A central metal boss [umbo] both protects the shield hand and serves as an extra weapon. On the march, an oilskin shield cover [tegimen] protects the *scutum*.



CHAPTER IV

IMPERIUM

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

"The extent of the Roman city and the world are the same."

-Ovid

Once a small farming settlement on the Tiber, Rome now commands, through shrewd politics and military might, a vast empire of millions. The Imperium Romanum stretches across Europe and the Mediterranean, from the British Isles to the savannahs of Africa to the bloody battlefields on the Parthian frontier, protected on all fronts by legionaries armed with fulminata weaponry. Within these borders [*limes*], its citizens enjoy unprecedented economic prosperity and security without the threat of war or pirates. Under a single Imperial currency, trade flourishes using a network of roads, bridges and harbors to transport goods.

THE CITY [*Urbs*]

To a Roman, the city is a symbol of a sophisticated culture and sound government. A complex urban environment, with its lively streets and teeming mobs, is the mark of a civilized society. On a busy market day, one can expect to rub shoulders with a street entertainer, an off-duty legionary, a slave running errands, a city guard on patrol and a Senator on his way to the law courts.

When possible, Roman towns are laid out in a regular grid along two axes, the main east-west street [*decumanus maximus*] and the main north-south street [*cardo maximus*]. Inherited from the Etruscans, this rectangular city plan both fits Roman concepts of practical engineering and religious customs relating to the cosmic alignment of newly-founded settlements. Streets for wheeled and foot traffic are paved with stone, cobble or gravel. Raised stone walkways [*crepidines*] provide protection from the mud and puddles that collect on the roads.

Cities are protected by masonry walls and fortified gates. Most gates are equipped with a portcullis to bar entrance to enemy troops. New cities deep within the borders of the Imperium are either lightly defended by earthwork ramparts or boast no wall at all. Buildings are constructed of wood, bricks and mortar, locally-cut stone or concrete [*opus caementicium*]. Interior walls are plastered to allow painting. Roofs are covered with red clay tiles to prevent leaks from rainfall.

THE AQUEDUCT [*Aqua*]

Fresh water is available from rivers or natural springs. In addition, cisterns collect rainwater and dug wells access underground water tables. However, the Mediterranean climate provides inadequate rainfall to supply large cities with enough water for fountains and the baths. Immense aqueducts [*aquae*] transport copious amounts of water from mountain springs and rivers to urban populations. These arcaded structures are built on a sloping grade so that the water runs smoothly to the intended location. Ten great aqueducts feed Rome; an eleventh, the Aqua Avidia, needed to supply an ambitious bath complex, is in the initial planning stages.

Attached to aqueducts by bronze nozzles [*calices*], lead pipes connect private homes to the water main. Citizens must pay the government an annual fee for this privilege. The *Cura-tor-es Aquarum* or Department of Water monitors the upkeep and usage of the public water supply. Illegal tapping of aqueducts is a widespread problem, though little is done to curtail the practice. At the terminus of an aqueduct is a receiving and distribution tank [*castellum*] or a monumental public fountain [*nymphaeum*] elaborately

decorated with statues. Underground sewers, accessed by manholes, carry away waste and excess water. The Great Drain [*Cloaca Maxima*] of Rome is large enough to navigate small boats through its slimy interior.

MONUMENTS

To honor victories or prominent citizens, Romans erect public monuments as reminders of the might of the Imperium. However blatant as propaganda, monuments influence the attitude of the populace. Colossal statues of gods and emperors on horseback gaze down on the throngs of citizens. Smaller busts and bronze sculptures are placed in niches and corners. Immensely tall columns with spiral marble friezes depict the stages of a successful campaign against a barbarian enemy. The current Emperor has already begun to plan a triumphal arch [*arms*] to commemorate his victory over the Parthians. War trophies, such as the captured ship rams [*rostra*] on the speaker's platform in Rome and the Aegyptian obelisk at the Circus Maximus, are monuments as well.

CHAPTER IV IMPERIUM

THE FORUM

A forum is a Roman plaza. Specifically, it is an open rectangular area surrounded by a colonnaded walkway and public buildings. It is often decorated with monuments and statues (see sidebar below). The forum is the focal point of many Roman cities, serving as a market for commercial transactions or a civic space for public business. Typically, government buildings and temples border a forum.

In Rome, fora are numerous and specialized. *The forum Romanum* is dedicated to the Imperial government and state religion. The Emporium on the Tiber is a bustling commercial zone where importers and exporters haggle over huge lots. The Market of Trajan [*Forum Traiani*] boasts over 150 shops, including traders in such luxury goods as pepper, incense and silk. Food is restricted to the vegetable market [*forum olitorium*], the cattle market [*forum boarium*], the fish market [*forum piscarium*] and the pastry market [*forum cuppedinis*]. Smaller markets [*macella*] with shops and stalls provide neighborhoods with bread, fruit and vegetables.

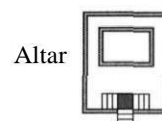
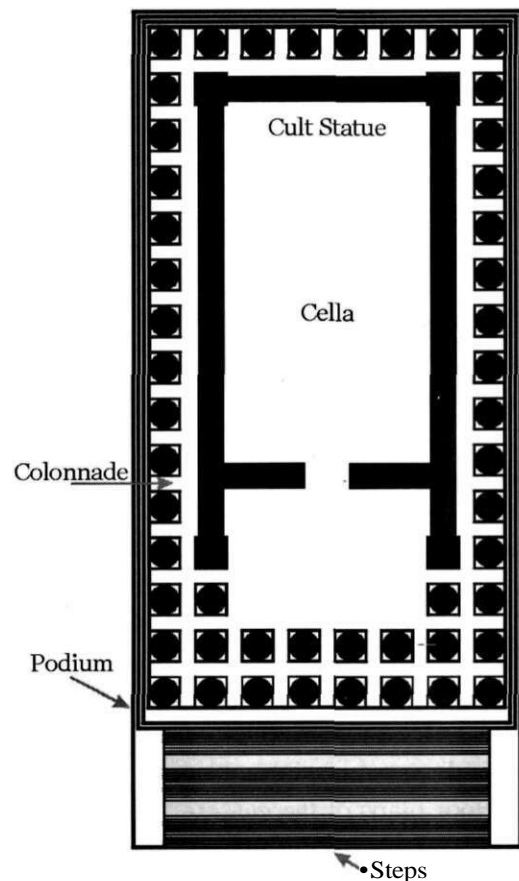
THE TEMPLE [*Templum*]

A Roman temple is the house of a god, not a building to hold a congregation. It is the center of cult activity, especially sacrifice, associated with worship of the god. In addition, temples store official documents, dedications and valuables. The Temple of Saturnus in Rome serves as the official treasury for the Senate and people of Rome. As holders of a privileged public office, priests of the state religion are not responsible for the maintenance of the temple. These administrative tasks are left to a temple official [*aedituus*] and his staff of freedmen and slaves. Priests of the Eastern Cults often double as spiritual leaders and temple caretakers.

The design of the Roman temple is a mix of Etruscan and Greek styles. Although regional varia-

tions exist, the map below is a plan of a conventional Roman temple. A temple typically is dedicated to one god. A *capitolium*, a temple with three *cellae*, honors the Capitoline triad of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. The Pantheon in Rome was built to pay homage to all of the gods. Unlike the classic rectangular temple layout, the plan of the Pantheon is round with a concrete dome.

The temple itself sits on top of a raised platform [*podium*] that may only be accessed easily by a front set of stairs. An altar [*am*] for sacrifice is located in front of the steps. The dense colonnade is made up of elaborately carved Corinthian columns, either of fluted white mar-



5 15 25ft.
10 20

A Temple

ble or polished stone. Above the columns on the façade are bronze letters or a carved inscription indicating the deity and person who built or restored the temple. The main room of the temple or the *cella*, is where the cult statue is displayed and public records are kept.

THE BATHS [*Thermae*]

Roman citizens value hygiene and a pleasing appearance as necessary for a civilized society. To satisfy this desire, the Imperium and private benefactors sponsor the construction and maintenance of enormous public bath complexes or *thermae*. The baths are not just places for washing, they are busy social centers where citizens can chat, exercise or play games. Even though many wealthy Romans have private bath facilities in their homes, the powerful continue to frequent the public *thermae* to socialize or conduct business. Like other public buildings, a lavish bath complex is one way to impress the populace and visitors. Functioning and aesthetic *thermae* reflect well on a city that is striving against the labels of "provincial" or "backwards."

A visit to the baths is an essential part of a Roman's daily routine. There are separate hours for men and women; larger baths have dual facilities operating side by side. The city of Rome has over 900 *thermae* with the capacity to accommodate 250,000 bathers. Even so, the more elegant and popular baths are mobbed during peak hours. Slaves may only enter the baths as an attendant of a free person. Most *thermae* charge a fee for a day's admission.

The floor plans of *thermae* are designed so that bathers are able to circulate easily from room to room. After an atrium or entrance hall, the first room is the chang-ing room [*apodyterium*] where bathers leave their tunics and togas. Vigilant guards (along with the private slaves of the distrustful) stand watch here while the bathers continue into the warm room [*tepidarium*] to begin the sweating stage. A few *thermae* have a

dry room [*laconicum*] or a steam sauna [*sudatorium*], which achieve similar results under different conditions. The next room is the hot room [*caldarium*] with extremely warm bathing pools. Finally, there is the cold room [*frigidarium*] where the bathers sink into freezing plunge baths. The floors and baths are decorated with mosaics, often with scenes depicting Neptunus or sea creatures.

Additional areas in the *thermae* complex are reserved for non-bathing activities. Reading rooms and libraries make available scrolls for learning and research. Isolated cubicles serve as take-out shops [*thermopilae*], massage parlors, beauty salons and lavatories [*foricae*]. A swimming pool [*natatio*] and colonnaded training ground [*palaestra*] provide space for exercise and sport. Although soap is a new commodity from Germania that is gaining some popularity, most Romans still use the combination of oil and scraper [*strigil*] to keep clean after working out.

Reservoirs and aqueducts supply water for the vast quantities of water required to operate the baths. Complicated hydraulic systems ensure that the water circulates from cisterns to the various bathing rooms. Wood-burning furnaces located in the substructure of the complex supply the heat for hypocaust systems that conduct hot air underneath the floors and pipes in the walls, regulating the appropriate temperatures for the rooms and water.

THE TOWN HOUSE [*Domus*]

While the majority of urban dwellers live in apartment blocks called "islands" [*insulae*], multi-storied tenements constructed of cheap concrete or wood, the privileged few reside in private town houses [*domi*]. The truly wealthy, such as the Imperial family, have grand palaces or country villas transplanted within the city limits. With no windows facing the busy streets, the *domus* offers privacy and peace. For a floor plan

CHAPTER IV IMPERIUM

of a *domus*, see CHAPTER X: FABULAE, p. 206. The layout of Veiento's one-story town house in Ostia is a typical residence of the elite in the world of *FVLMINATA*.

A *domus* is accessed from the street via its *atrium*, a colonnaded space open to the sky featuring a garden or pool [*impluvium*]. Visitors are entertained in these pleasant surroundings. Clients pay their respects here every morning to their patron. Some *domi* have a vestibule where the wax masks [*imagines*] of the family's ancestors are displayed. Larger homes have separate reception rooms [*oeci*] to greet visitors or clients. The other rooms of the house circle the atrium, including small bedrooms [*cubicula*] and offices [*tablina*]. The altar and statues of the household gods [*lares*] are kept in the *lararium*. Formal dinners are prepared in the kitchen [*culina*] and held in the dining room [*triclinium*]. Extravagant homes even have additional gardens [*horti*], outdoor living rooms [*di-aetae*], libraries and private baths.

From the outside, a *domus* is a nondescript building of concrete and plastered walls. This simple exterior is a direct contrast to the flamboyant decoration within: vividly painted walls, colorful mosaics, statues

and ornamental plants. Furniture is sparse, but richly embellished with gold appliques and expensive fabrics. Slave gardeners tend the carefully sculpted gardens, potted trees and flowerbeds.

BEWARE OF THE DOG [*Cave Canem*]

"Only dogs know their master and recognize a stranger if he arrives unexpectedly. They alone recognize their own names and the voices of their family."

- Pliny the Elder

Romans own pets for protection, companionship and show. Dogs [*canes*] such as the Gallic retriever [*vertragus*], the Laconian boarhound [*laconicus*], the Molossian mastiff [*molossus*] and the Umbrian deerhound [*umbricus*] are bred for hunting or to protect the house as watchdogs. Smaller breeds, such as the beloved white Sybarite lapdog [*sybarita*], are common playmates for children. Tamed birds of the speaking (magpie, raven) or the singing (finches, nightingales) kind are kept in fancy cages. Mulletts and lampreys [*murenas*] swim in fishponds. Exotic animals are a way to express one's wealth and sophistication: the parrot [*psittacus*] and peacock [*pavo*] from India, the long-eared fox [*lagalopex*] and monkey [*simia*] from North Africa, the cat [*feles*] and mongoose [*ichneumon*] from Aegyprus. Among veterans of the Aethiopian Campaigns, the snake-hunting secretary bird [*stimfiAus*] is a favorite pet for its swift, ruthless attacks.

OTHER BUILDINGS

Other buildings in Roman cities serve different functions. A public meeting hall [*basilica*] with long clerestory windows for ample lighting is a multipurpose structure for members of the law courts or local government. The Senate or town leaders [*decuriones*] meet in an assembly house [*curia*]. Numerous shops [*tabernae*] and taverns [*popinae*] facing the streets provide professional services, wares and prepared food. *Thermopila* or wine bars serve refreshments to thirsty patrons from large jars flush with marble counters. Inns [*cauponae*] offer travelers affordable, but filthy accommodations. Pimps [*lenones*] and madams encourage customers to duck into

brothels [*lupanares*]. Simple warehouses [*horrea*] with raised timber floors store grain and other valuables near shipping docks. For theaters and other entertainment buildings, see CHAPTER VII: LUDI.

ROME [Roma]

"Since the city was not adorned as the dignity of the empire demanded, and was exposed to flood and fire, Augustus so beautified it that he could justly boast that he had found it built of brick and left it in marble."

—Suetonius

All roads truly lead to Rome, the largest city on earth, with over one million inhabitants. As the capital of the Imperium, it is the "Head of the Entire World" [*Caput Mundi*]. To any Roman citizen, it simply is referred to as the City [*Urbs*].

Rome is located in the valley of the Tiber River and built upon seven hills: the Caelian, Esquiline, Viminal, Quirinal, Capitoline, Palatine and Aventine. The Pincian could be considered an eighth hill and across the river lies a ninth and tenth, the Lancelum and the Vatican. Situated near the only local ford that allows access from the surrounding plains to the sea, Rome defended its strategic position from the hills. As Rome expanded into Italia and later began her conquest of the Imperium, the city's residents focused on politics, religion and commerce. That is not to say that Rome is defenseless. Rome's garrison numbers in the tens of thousands and sections of the crumbling Servian wall still enclose the original

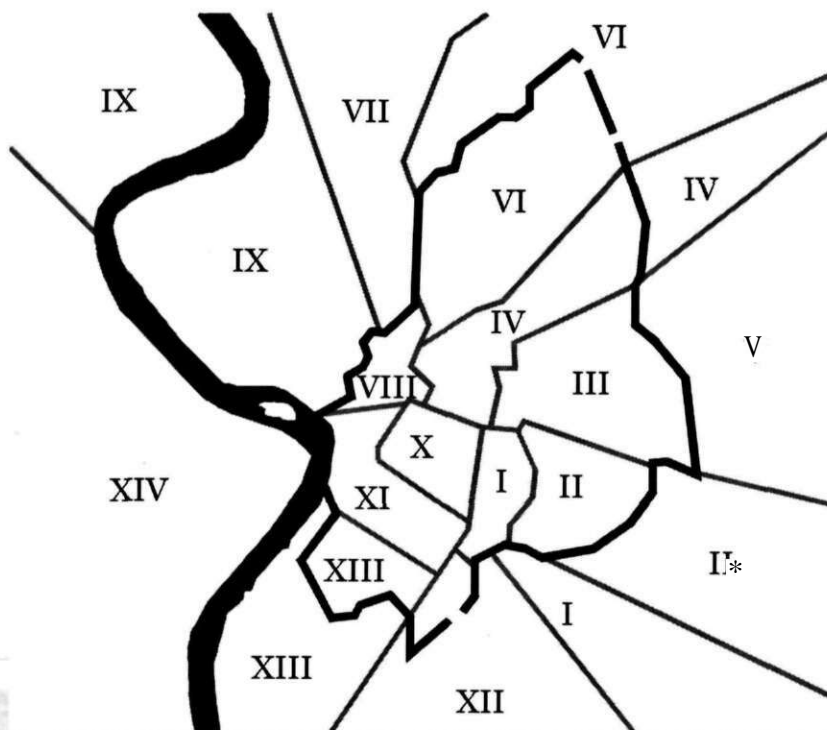
seven hills. Debate has raged in the Senate for decades over whether to build a new wall to fortify the extended perimeter of the Imperial capital.

For administrative purposes, Rome is divided into fourteen regions [*regiones*]. The regions are further divided into 256 districts [*vici*]. The Map of the City [*Forma Urbis*] is housed in the Temple of Peace. Covering one whole wall in the office of the Prefect of the City [*praefectus Urbi*], 151 engraved marble slabs detail the streets and buildings of the fourteen regions. Rome, unlike new cities that follow the grid plan, grew into its present design in a more organic fashion.

Region I: The Capenian Gate [Porta Capena]

This irregularly shaped region is named for the gate in the Servian that divides it. Inside the

Servian wall is a small neighborhood between the Palatine and Caelian Hills noted for being the chief underground temple [*mithraeum*] of the Mithraic College. Past the *Porta Capena*, is the Appian Way [*Via Appia*], the principal road to south Italia, and the Temple of Mars.



Region II: The Caelian Hill [Caelimontium]

By Senate decree during the reign of the emperor Tiberius, the Caelian Hill was renamed the Au-

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gustan Hill [Augustus Mons]. However, use of the original, unofficial name persists even in the name of Rome's second administrative region. This is a favorite place for the rich to own an extravagant *domus*. Near a sacred grove of oaks is the Oak Gate [Porte *Querquetulana*].

Region III: Isis and Serapis [*Isis et Serapis*]

Although this region is named for the two local temples to Egyptian deities, it is most known for the Colosseum or the Flavian Amphiteater [*Amphiteatrum Flavium*] and the local gladiator schools. On the western end of the Esquiline Hill, called the Oppius, are the Baths of Trajan and Titus and the remains of Nero's Golden House [*Domus Aurea*].

Region IV: The Temple of Peace [*Templum Pads*]

Originally dedicated by Vespasian, the Temple of Peace houses war trophies brought back from campaigns to enforce the Roman Peace [*Pax Romana*]. This region includes the Sacred Way [*Via Sacra*] from its beginning to the House of the Vestals [*Atrium Vestae*]. The Subura lies in the valley between the Viminal and Esquiline hills; this neighborhood is notorious for its noise and seedy atmosphere.

Region V: The Esquiline Hill [*Esquilae*]

This region is the eastern Esquiline Hill that lies outside of the Servian wall. Besides the sprawling apartment blocks that cover the hillside, this district is home to the Gardens of Avidius [*Horti Avidii*] with its breathtaking monumental fountain [*nymphaeum*]. The sick and diseased come to this region to leave offerings at the Temple of Minerva Medica.

Region VI: The High Lane [*Alta Semita*]

Taking its name from the street that runs on the ridge of the Quirinal Hill, this region includes

both the Viminal and Quirinal Hills. The Gardens of Sallust [*Horti Sallustiani*], decorated in Aegyptian style, are in this region. The city garrisons are on the outskirts of this district: the Praetorian Fort [*Castra Praetoria*], the Urban Fortress [*Castra Urbana*] and the Amazonian Camp [*Castra Amazona*].

Region VII: The Flaminian Way [*Via Flaminia*]

The area between the Via Flaminia and the Pinician Hill is predominantly apartment blocks, home to a mix of social ranks. Here Romans can enjoy a nice stroll in the paths and gardens in the Park of Agrippa [*Campus Agrippae*]. On the western end of the park is the *Porticus Vipsania*, a covered walkway that boasts a map of the known world.

Region VIII: The Roman Forum [*Forum Romanum*]

Although the smallest of the regions, the Forum Romanum is the heart of the city, containing many temples and most of the government buildings like the Senate House [*Curia*], the King's Home [*Regia*] and Hall of Records [*Tabularium*]. The district also encloses the most of the Capitoline Hill and the fora sponsored by Iulius Caesar, Augustus, Trajan and Nerva. One section in this region is the *Argiletum*, known for its specialty bookshops and cobblers.

Region IX: The Field of Mars [*Campus Martins*]

Once pastures used for military drills, the Campus Martius is now known for its monuments and theatrical entertainment. At the northeast end of the region are the Altar of Peace and Great Solar Clock of Augustus [*Horologium Augusti* or *Solarium*]. The Pantheon is here and the Tomb of Hadrian is just across the Tiber. The three major theaters of Pompey, Balbus and Marcellus are located in this district.

Region X: The Palatine Hill [Palatium]

The Palatine Hill is the location of the Imperial residences and homes of the Senatorial elite, particularly those of Patrician status. Domitian built extensive additions, including the *hippodromus*, a monumental garden in the shape of a racing circus. Also at the foot of the Palatine are the Lupercal cave and the carefully preserved hut of Romulus.

Region XI: Circus Maximus

The northern part of this region on the Tiber waterfront is bustling with commercial activity, especially in the cattle market [forum *boarium*]. The temple of Portunus, god of the Tiber harbor, is at the head of the Aemilian Bridge [Pons Aemilius]. To the south, the immense Circus Maximus dominates the landscape in the Murcia Valley between the Palatine and Aventine hills. Numerous taverns, bars and shops cater to the racing crowds.

Region XII: The Public Pool [Piscina Publica]

A quiet neighborhood of modest housing, Region XII is named for a reservoir used for public bathing that existed over a hundred years ago. The modest Temple of Bona Dea is here at the junction of the Via Ostiensis and the Via Appia. This area is also the proposed site of the new mammoth bath complex being planned by the current Emperor.

Region XIII: The Aventine Hill [Aventinus]

The history of the Aventine district is linked with the legendary Remus and the rise of Plebeian political power during the Republic. It is now prime real estate for expensive and fashionable *domi*. Several temples to female deities are also here, including those dedicated to Diana, Juno and Minerva. Outside of the walls, past the Aemilian

Gate [Porticus Amelia], the region becomes more commercial. The Emporium, where importers and exporters display their goods, and the Warehouses of Galba [Horrea Galbana] are here.

Region XIV: Beyond the Tiber [Transtiberim]

The neighborhoods on the west bank of the Tiber are primarily residential and industrial. It is a large region covering both the Janiculum and the Vatican Hills. The Temple of Fors Fortuna, the Gardens of Agrippa [Horti Agrippinae], the Tomb of King Numa and Nero's Circus [Circus Neronis] are located in Transtiberim. This district also includes Tiber Island [Insula Tiberina] and its Temple of Asclepius.

THE COUNTRYSIDE [Rus]

Just beyond the city gates lies the countryside—J humble villages, rustic farms, sprawling estates and the untamed wilderness. Despite the attractions of spectacles and politics, Romans are deeply in love with the rural life. Here the fetters of civilization slip off, allowing a more relaxed life where the sound of droning insects replaces the discordant noises of the city on a busy market day. Country living, from a simple walk along a garden path to an early morning boar hunt, is a pleasant diversion from the normal routine. For those who live and work in the countryside, a journey to the city is just as captivating. For more information on farming and hunting, see CHAPTER VI: PAX ROMANA, p. 115.

Each summer, town dwellers leave the cities in droves to escape the oppressive heat. While the wealthy retreat to their private villas by the seaside or in the cool mountains, most citizens rent

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temporary accommodations at resorts for their families. The roads from Rome choke with traffic as people rush to their vacations. A rich Freedman whisks by in a hand litter [*lectica*] carried by six burly slaves. Two Plebeian families share a lumbering cart [*plaustrum*] pulled by a pair of mules. Equestrians, eager to spend time at their new estates, guide two-wheeled carriages in both the uncovered [*cisia*] and covered [*carpentum*] varieties. Horses decorated with rich harnesses and colorful plumes pull an ornate covered carriage [*reda*] bearing a Senator's wife and her handmaidens [*ornatrices*].

Occasionally, well-heeled Romans leave the city to embark on extended tours of the provinces to see famous sites, such as Athens and the Nilus River in Aegyptus. Some make pilgrimages to oracles or the sanctuaries of Asclepius. Still others desire initiation into foreign mystery cults, the grandeur of athletic festivals or the soothing mineral springs of spas [*aquae*]. Government itineraries developed for military expeditions are readily available as public records and may be modified for tour planning. Regularly-placed milestones provide travelers with reference points for orienting maps and computing trip distances.

Although roadhouses [*popinae*] and wayside inns [*cauponae*] offer refreshments and hospital-

ity, these cheap establishments regularly attract a seedy crowd of ruffians and prostitutes. In addition, the wine is usually poor and the beds are uncomfortable and infested with bugs. The elite

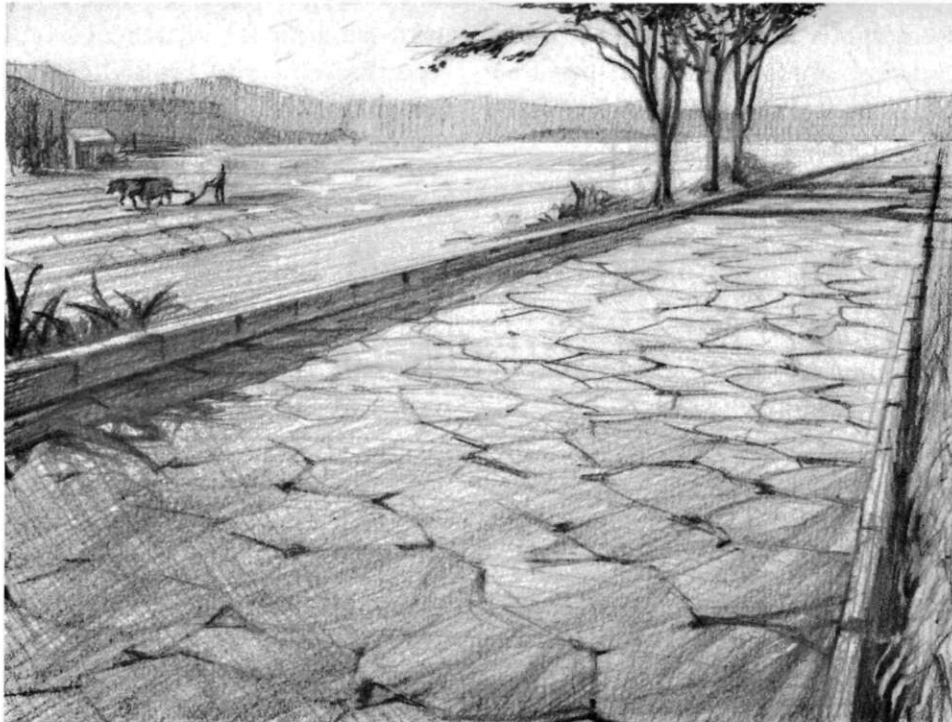
avoid these places, relying on former clients or friends for lodging. An unofficial rule of reciprocal hospitality exists among the upper classes. When a Senator or Equestrian goes on a journey, he plans his "halts" [*deversoria*] in advance. Refusal to take in a peer is more than a social *faux pas*. It could be political suicide.

The dangers of provincial travel range from inclement weather to armed robbery. Bandits [*latrones*] are a real threat, even in peaceful Italia. Despite the romantic tales of infamous robber kings, such as Iulius Maternus and Bulla Felix, brigands invariably come from the desperate segments of society: runaway slaves, deserters, escaped criminals and the starving poor. Organized road patrols [*viatores*] protect the Western provinces with unre-

stricted brutality. In the East, these patrols are called *diogmitai* and are commanded by humorless peacekeepers [*irenarchoi*], prized for their manhunting skills. While army detachments are sent to deal with the larger bandit groups, local vigilantes also mete out a private brand of justice.

THE IMPERIAL MESSENGER SERVICE [*Cursus Publicus*]

Relay messengers [*nuntii*] of the *Cursus Publicus* carry official dispatches at a rate of 50 miles per day. In an emergency, this rate has been tripled. While the *nuntii* are supposed to be conveying messages deemed critical to the administration of the Imperium, the Emperor and Senators frequently abuse the service with private correspondence. Fresh horses, food and water are available at relay stations [*mansiones*] and the larger postal stations [*mutationes*]. Independent contractors [*mantipes*] ensure that the stations remain fully stocked and adequately staffed. This burdensome provisioning process [*vehiculatio*] causes grumbling among the local populace who see it as a hidden tax. Private couriers [*tabellarii*], army scouts [*speculatores*] and intelligence agents [*frumentarii*] use the same routes and stations, but are barred from using any public provisions. Travelers bearing an Imperial warrant [*diploma*] are able to use the *Cursus Publicus* facilities as if they were messengers. The Imperial Messenger Service also employs long-distance messengers [*iulenes*] to bear treaties and other diplomatic papers to foreign powers, usually accompanied by a military escort.



ROADS [Viae]

A web of roads cuts through the countryside of the Imperium, connecting the provinces. Numerous roads radiate from Rome in all directions, linking it with its surrounding communities. Planned and built by army engineers, the main function of this transportation network is to provide an all-weather route for marching infantry. Under the *Pax Romana*, or Roman Peace, the roads accommodate commercial and private traffic.

In some ways, road building is an expression of Roman domination. Just as the Imperium orders society, straight roads dominate the landscape, unimpeded by natural obstacles. Rivers are conquered by bridges, mountains by tunnels. Engineers use the *groma*, a surveying instrument, to ensure that the planned road will be straight and level. After the surveyors mark out the road's path, soldiers dig a long trench and place curb-stones on each side. Then, the men fill the trench with layers of gravel, sand and stone, the precise order and amount based on climate and availability of construction materials. By Imperial

mandate, roads must be at least 16 feet wide, yet this is largely ignored in sparsely populated or frontier provinces where practical considerations outweigh decreed ideals.

THE VILLA

Villas are country homes that range from the modest rural dwellings of farmers to the lavish estates of the upper class. The inhabitants of Rome prize the Italian countryside for its beautiful vistas and clean air. Affluent Romans often possess villas in multiple locations to cater to any passing whim. The typical villa of the Italian countryside is a working estate separated into three parts: the owner's home [*pars urbana*], the working farm [*pars rustica*] and the storage facilities [*pars fructaria*]. Pleasure villas, such as seaside or mountain estates for summer vacations, dispense with farm structures, replacing them with bath complexes, libraries and formal gardens. Outside of Italia, villas typically blend regional architectural styles with the classic Roman model.

THE PROVINCES

[Provinciae]

As Rome expands through conquest, it converts won territories into administrative regions called provinces. Provinces of the Imperium are classified as senatorial or imperial. A *proconsul*, a provincial governor elected by the Senate and approved by the Emperor, is the Roman magistrate who oversees a senatorial province. A *proconsul* has the powers of consular *imperium* within that province. Two important provinces, Asia and Africa, are reserved for ex-consuls (see CHAPTER V: RES PUBLICA, pp. 93-94). A military governor or *legatus Augusti*, a direct appointee of the Emperor, administers an imperial province. *Procuratores* or *praefecti* govern a few minor imperial provinces. For example, two Equestrian prefects manage Aegyptus.

Successful administration of a province is a difficult task. Governors must balance the needs of the people with the requirements of the Imperium. Seemingly small decisions such as whether to raise taxes or execute the leader of a religious cult may have major ramifications. Social, legal and economic issues quickly mount and threaten to overwhelm the efficient machinery of the Roman state. Poor policy may lead to civil unrest, and perceived weakness to barbarian invasions.

ITALY

The Italian peninsula and its three major islands were the earliest conquests in Rome's expansion. Although the Roman culture absorbed local customs and ideas, many citizens practice the old ways to preserve and honor their family heritage.

Italia

Italia is the home province of the Imperium, and enjoys a special status, such as its immunity from

taxation. The province, divided into eleven districts [*regiones*], is administered by the entire Senate. Besides Rome, among Italia's other major cities are Brundisium, Rhegium, Tarentum, Mediolanum, Capua, Beneventum, Ravenna, Ariminum, Cremona and Genua.

Sardinia

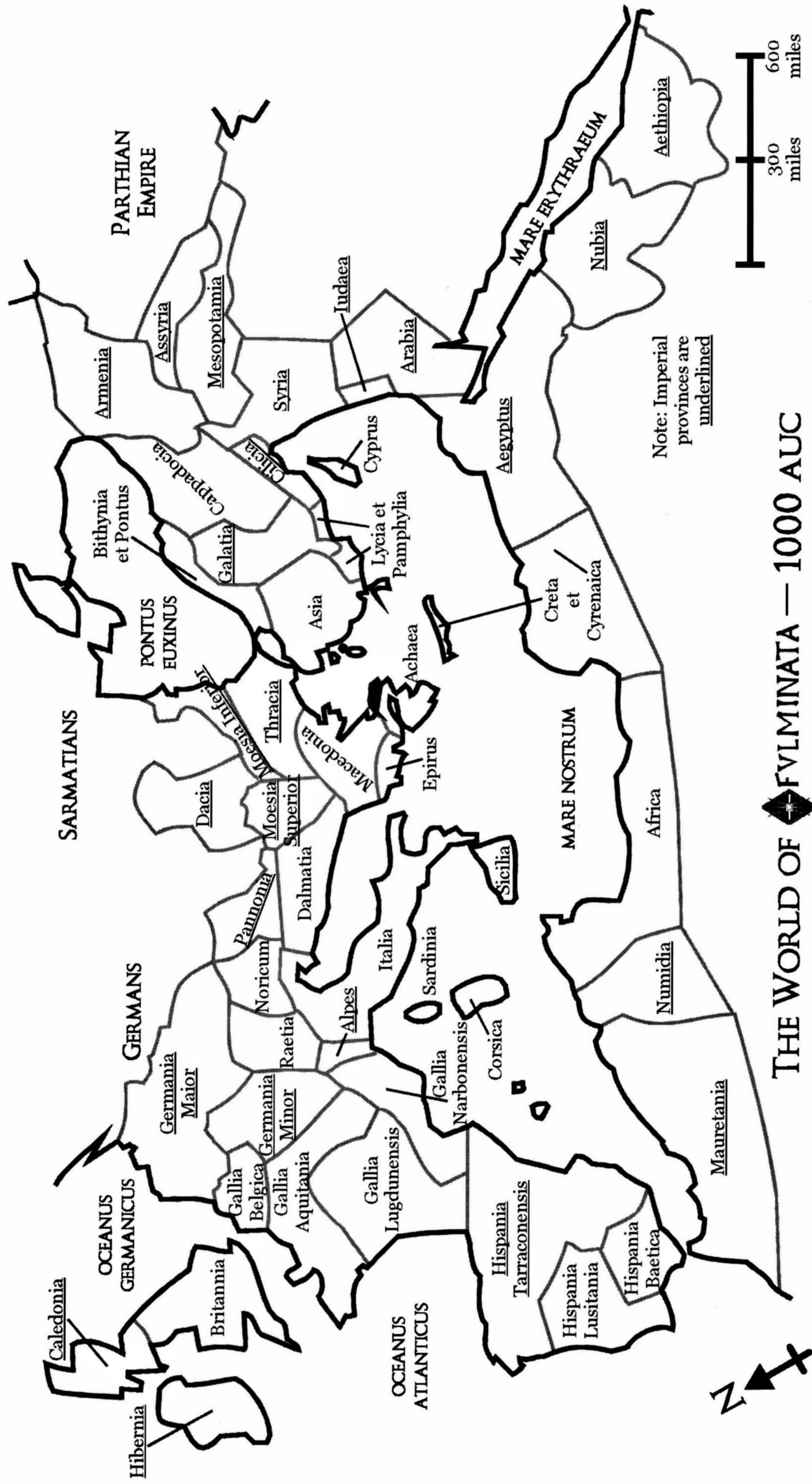
Sardinia has been under Roman dominion since 516 AUC (238 BC), but was made a separate senatorial province during the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Sardinia's most important cities are Carales, Tharros, Olbia, Nora and Turrus Libisonis. Sardinia is blessed with rich mineral deposits, eagerly exploited by Rome. There is no love lost between native Romans and Sardinians. Rebels and bandits opposed to the Imperium hide in mountain retreats, the massive stone towers, or *nuraghi*, built by the ancient inhabitants of the island.

Corsica

Marcus Aurelius separated Corsica from Sardinia in 926 AUC (AD 174) to form two separate senatorial provinces from these rugged islands. Corsica exports quality timber and a bitter honey for which one must cultivate an acquired taste. Corsican shipbuilders are in demand for their skills. While the eastern coast of Corsica is civilized, notably the two major cities of Mariana and Aleria, only the bravest of Roman settlers choose to move into the wild interior.

Sicilia

After the First Punic War, Sicilia became Rome's first won territory outside of Italia in 513 AUC (241 BC). This senatorial province's key cities are Lilybaeum, Agrigentum, Messina and Syracuse. Its primary exports are grain and wine. A volcanic island, Sicily is dotted with sulfur mines. While quick to abandon Carthaginian influences, the Sicilians retain many Greek cultural traits while adhering to Roman laws and customs.



THE WORLD OF  FVLMINATA — 1000 AUC

THE WESTERN PROVINCES

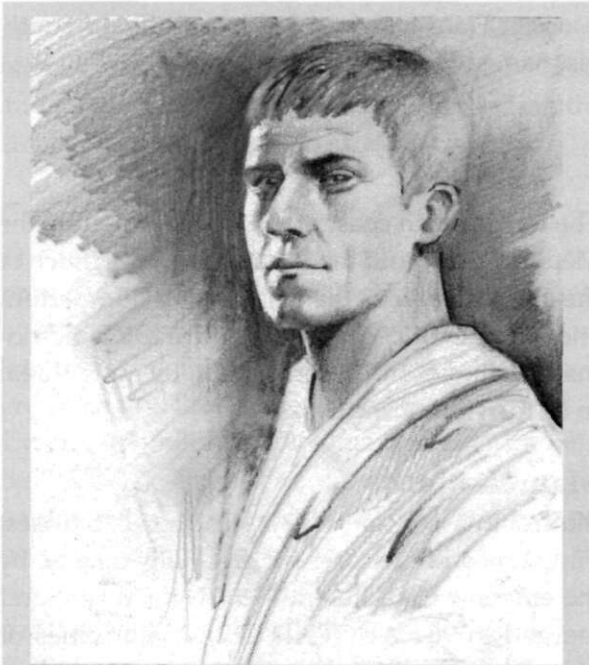
The rich lands to the west of Italia, inhabited by Celtic and Iberian tribes, were conquered over many years by Rome's legions as it made war against Carthage and expanded its influence. Its cities are flourishing under the *Pax Romana*, connected by well-maintained and heavily-traveled roads.

Gallia

The conquest of Gallia was a gradual process as Roman troops intervened in the wars between the independent Gallic nations [*civitates*], culminating with Julius Caesar's decisive victory in 703 AUC (51 BC). Gallia is actually four senatorial provinces, each administered separately: Aquitania, Belgica, Lugdunensis and Narbonensis. Their capitals are Burdigala, Durocortorum, Lugdunum and Narbo, respectively. The long-term presence of the Imperial army has helped Romanize these provinces; their Celtic tribal roots are now only a distant memory. The prosperous middle class seems unaware of the instability that distresses its Germanic neighbors.

Hispania

All of Hispania was finally conquered in 735 AUC (19 BC) by Augustus, completing a 200-year effort to overcome stiff resistance by Hispanian warriors with unorthodox fighting methods. The three Hispanian provinces—Baetica, Lusitania and Tarraconensis—have historically been great centers of mining, fishing, wine-making, cattle-raising and olive oil-manufacturing. However, the government worries about diminishing output over the last few decades. The senatorial provinces, Baetica and Lusitania, possess many large cities, such as their capitals, Corduba and Emerita Augusta. Tarraconensis remains an imperial province with a legionary garrison at Legio to protect its mineral resources, put down any insurgents and mobilize as a last defense of Hispania if the North African tribes cross the Strait of Gibraltar.



MACRINUS

Rank: Senator

Occupation: Military Governor [*Legatus Augusti*]

Attributes: I10, A 9, P12, V11

Humors: Balanced

MP: 0, **WP:** 11/22, **HP:** 6

Patron: Iuppiter

Skills: *Chariot 5, *City 7, "Command 8, *Diplomacy 6, "Interrogate 3, *Law 7, "Rhetoric 7, Administrate 8, Coin 5, Customs (Patrician) 5, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Dagger 2, Dice 3, Divine (Augury) 4, Farm 2, Forest 4, Gladius 3, Harmony 6, Horse 5, Knowledge (Hispania) 6, Language (Greek) 5, Language (Latin) 5, Monuments 3, Philosophy 2, Pilum 3, Scribe 5, Spear 4, Strategy 7, Theater 2, Train 4

Background: An influential Senator, Marcus Camillus Macrinus is the military governor [*legatus Augusti*] of Hispania Tarraconensis. He plans to continue on the fast track in Roman politics, aiming next for the consulship. A charismatic and popular leader, Macrinus publicly affirms his loyalty to the Emperor at frequent intervals to avoid any suspicion of treason. His only son, C. Camillus Albus, died on the Parthian frontier. Macrinus takes comfort in the fact that he has married his daughter to a Senator's son. *This persona was built using ±00 skill points to reflect his experience.*



THE BRITISH ISLES

On the northern frontier of the Imperium lie the *Insulae Britannicae*, last refuge of the once-mighty Celts. While the province of Britannia remains largely subdued, rebellious elements in Caledonia and Hibernia resist Roman rule with fierce fighting and Druidic mysticism.

Britannia

The emperor Claudius invaded and conquered Britannia in 795 AUC (AD 43). It was transferred to the Senate's control in 906 AUC (AD 154), once the legions had invaded Caledonia and gained a foothold in Hibernia. Its largest cities are Londinium (the capital), Eboracum, Lindum, Glevum and Camulodonum. While largely Romanized, Celtic influence still persists among the native settlements.

Caledonia

Following in the footsteps of Cn. Iulius Agricola in 835 AUC (AD 83), Cn. Papirius Aeilanus, under orders from the emperor Antoninus Pius, marched into Caledonia with the II Legion Augusta and dozens of auxiliary units in 900 AUC (AD 148). Separated from Britannia by an unmanned Hadrian's Wall, Caledonia is a poor province with a defiant population of natives, particularly the "Painted Ones" [*Picti*]. To this day, this imperial province requires a sharp, ruthless military governor to keep one step ahead of insurgents.

Hibernia

The lush, green island of Hibernia was invaded in 900 AUC (AD 148) to coincide with the conquest of Caledonia. Officially an imperial province, Hibernia is far from being under Roman control. The only true Roman settlements are the two legionary forts at Regia and Eblana. The Hibernians are stubborn and slow to accept Roman rule. Plans to secure the rest of the province have been postponed as the legions repel frequent raids by

partisan Fiani warriors, led by a brilliant strategist named Fionus Maculus.

NORTH AFRICA

The fertile north coast of Africa, bounded by the Mediterranean and the Sahara, provides much of the grain that feeds the citizens of the Imperium and other exotic goods. The unpredictable nomadic tribes of the desert remain the only threat to its thriving port cities.

Mauretania

Mauretania consists of two former provinces, Tingitana and Caesarensis, originally created by the emperor Claudius in 796 AUC (AD 44) and merged in 964 AUC (AD 212). Major cities of Mauretania include Tingis, Caesarea and Icosium. Mauretania, the homeland of the Mauri (Moors), is famed for its horses, ebony, wine and dyes. The procurator of this imperial province keeps a sharp watch for any unusual activity from the Moorish or Berber nomads.

Numidia

Numidia was separated from Mauretania Caesarensis in 964 AUC (AD 212) by Clodius Albinus. Cirta and Hippo Regius are its major cities. In addition to grain, wine and olives, this fertile province also furnishes wild animals, such as leopards and elephants, for the public games. Numidian cavalry are highly respected for their horsemanship. The procurator of this imperial province enforces Roman law and peace without a legionary force, relying instead on auxiliaries and fragile alliances with Berber chieftains.

Africa

The north coast of Africa was one of the prizes obtained from the Carthaginians after the Punic Wars. A prosperous senatorial province, Roman Africa is abundant in agriculture and rich in raw materials. Its major cities are Carthage, Lepcis Magna and Sabratha. A rebuilt Carthage is now

CHAPTER IV IMPERIUM

one of the largest cities in the Imperium. While the old city of Carthage was torn apart brick by brick and its earth salted, Punic culture survives in the smaller villages and among the discontented.

Creta et Cyrenaica

The territory of Cyrenaica became a senatorial province in 680 AUC (74 BC). The island of Creta was incorporated into the province seven years later. The inhabitants of Cyrenaica cluster in a group of five Greek cities called the Pentapolis — Cyrene, Apollonia, Ptolemais, Tauchira and Berenice. The chief city on Creta is Gortyn. Cyrenaica's fertile coast provides abundant crops, especially the pungent medicinal plant *silphium*, its chief export and civic emblem. The horses of Cyrenaica are prized as chariot and cavalry steeds.

EGYPT

Octavian, the future Augustus, added the Aegyptian kingdom of Cleopatra to the Imperium in 724 AUC (30 BC), thus securing a vital source of grain and the major port of Alexandria. Further territories were acquired during the Aethiopian Campaigns, establishing Roman dominion over Red Sea commerce.

Aegyptus

Aegyptus is an ancient land, full of mysteries and wondrous sites. Although the Greek-speaking elite and merchants of Alexandria thrive under Roman rule, native Aegyptians farther down the Nilus river preserve the traditions of the past. Two Equestrian prefects govern the imperial province of Aegyptus to prevent any Senator from controlling the grain supply. In fact, no Senator is allowed in the province without Imperial permission. The emperor Avidius Cassius was the son of a former Equestrian prefect of Aegyptus.

Nubia

In the Aethiopian Campaigns of 990 AUC (AD 238), the kingdoms of Nubia and Meroe fell

quickly to the advancing legions and were quickly absorbed into the Imperium. Its chief cities are Meroe and Napata. The hereditary queen of Meroe, always named Candace, is kept as a "guest" of the *legatus* assigned to this imperial province.

Aethiopia

The Kingdom of Axum was conquered in the Aethiopian Campaigns in 990 AUC (AD 238). The city of Adulis is an important way station for the Mediterranean-Indian Ocean trade routes in this imperial province. In addition to Eastern wares, Aethiopian merchants trade in ivory, rhinoceros horn, gold, silver, and slaves from the African interior.

ASIA MINOR

Through wills and annexations of client kingdoms, Rome slowly built a presence in Asia Minor, a departure from the normal pattern of military conquest. The Asian provinces are a curious blend of sophisticated Greek culture in the coastal cities and hardworking peasant values on its fertile plains. Rome exploits these different facets by taxing maritime commerce and recruiting auxiliary manpower from rural populations.

Asia

In his will, King Attalus III bequeathed his kingdom to the Romans in 621 AUC (133 BC). Assisted by a provincial assembly [*koinon*], a proconsul of consular status governs this senatorial province from its capital, Ephesus. Other principal cities are Pergagum, Smyrna, Miletus, Cyzicus and Halicarnassus. Asia leads the Imperium in education and culture, second only to Italia and Rome itself.

Bithynia et Pontus

In 680 AUC (74 BC), King Nicomedes IV willed Bithynia to Rome. Adjacent Pontus was added to this senatorial province nine years later after the

defeat of Mithridates. Because of its strategic value, the province is sometimes placed under emergency Imperial control; dispatched procurators rush in with troops whenever danger threatens. The province forms most of the southern coast of the Black Sea. Sinope, Nicomedia, Amastris are its principal cities. The native tribes take pride in their history and reputation as fierce warriors.

Galatia

Galatia was formed in 729 AUC (25 BC) from the kingdom of the Galatian tetrarch Amyntas, a stout ally of Rome. Its chief city is Ancyra. Long an imperial province, Galatia was transferred to the Senate in 946 AUC (AD 194), once the Eastern legions had taken up permanent positions along the Parthian frontier. Native Galatians are descendants of the far-wandering Celts; in private, they speak Celtic and conduct ancient religious rites in sacred oak groves.

Cappadocia

Annexed in 769 AUC (AD 17), Cappadocia had long been an ally of Rome. As a peaceful senatorial province, it has seen little conflict despite the presence of strategic passes in its Taurus Mountains and its proximity to the Parthian frontier. Its primary cities are Tyana, Satala and Melitene.

Lycia et Pamphylia

Lycia and Pamphylia merged in 795 AUC (AD 43) to become one province. The chief cities of Lycia are Xanthus, Patara and Myra; those of Pamphylia, Attaleia, Perge and Aspendus. The cities of this senatorial province share a strong civic identity and cooperate regularly, an anomaly in the Greek East where inter-city rivalries are common.

Cilicia

The imperial province of Cilicia, formed in 824 AUC (AD 72), is divided between a mountainous western region and a fertile eastern one. The Cili-

cian Gates, a pass through the Taurus Mountains, is the only overland passage for wheeled traffic to the Eastern provinces. Its main cities, Tarsus, Anazarbus and Aegae are essential supply bases for campaigning armies on the Parthian frontier. Cilicia is the homeland of Mopsus the seer and the infamous Cilician pirates.

Cyprus

The quiet, but flourishing senatorial province was annexed into the Imperium in 696 AUC (58 BC). Its chief port is Salamis; other major settlements are Amathus, Lapethus and Paphus. Cyprus' exports are copper, timber and grain. Although it has no naval facility, Imperial trireme captains have long realized its potential as a strategic base in the eastern Mediterranean. These plans gain little support in the Senate which does not wish to disrupt the copper trade.

THE ORIENT

Roman domination of the eastern provinces has barely changed the local culture, steeped in centuries of Greek and Persian influence. A Roman traveling through these provinces is more likely to hear Greek or Syraic spoken in the bazaars and villages. Romanization is primarily limited to temples of the state gods and the legal system.

Syria

An important imperial province, Syria surrendered to Pompey in 690 AUC (64 BC). The great cities of Syria include Damascus, Palmyra, Antiochia, Heliopolis, Sidon and Tyrus. Syria continues to be the center of the luxury caravan trade with the Far East as well as an exporter of delicacies—exotic nuts, Damascan plums, Ascalonite onions and dates from Jericho.

Iudaea

The imperial province of Iudaea has been troubled since its entry into the Empire in 758 AUC (AD 6). Briefly renamed Syria Palaestina by

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Hadrian, Avidius Cassius restored its original name. Grateful for the support he received from the Jewish community during his tenure as governor of Syria, Avidius Cassius invited the Jews to return, having been dispersed after two unsuccessful revolts in 822 AUC (AD 70) and 887 AUC (AD 135). However, a third major uprising in 987 AUC (AD 235) is testing the patience of the Imperium and raises the question of whether to honor the divine Avidius' policy of tolerance. Hierosolyma (Jerusalem) is currently under martial law that is mercilessly enforced by a procurator and a full legion.

Arabia

Arabia, made an imperial province in 858 AUC (AD 106) by Trajan from the kingdom of Nabataea, stands between Iudaea and Aegyptus. Although Roman control of the Red Sea has allowed Aethiopia to play a larger role in the trade with India, the Arabians continue as middlemen, dealing in incense, spices, gems, gold and silk. Its chief cities are Bostra and Petra. Farther down the Arabian peninsula lies Sabaea or Arabia Felix, an unconquered kingdom that wisely chooses to ignore Roman vessels passing through the straits of Aden.

Athenae and Corinthus. While the Roman proconsul in Athens possesses the ultimate word in matters of law, the Imperium allows an independent body, the Achaean League, to meet in council [*concilium*] to rule on local concerns.

Macedonia

This senatorial province was formed in 727 AUC (27 BC) from the remnants of the Greek territories. The primary cities of Macedonia are Thessalonica and Thebae. As the birthplace of Alexander and the seat of the ancient Macedonian Empire, Macedonia still holds a certain mystery and power.

Epirus

Epirus, the northwest part of Greece just west of the Pindus Mountains and Thessaly, was separated from the province of Achaea in 587 AUC (167 BC). Compared to its neighbors, Epirus is a struggling senatorial province with only the coastal cities, chiefly Nicopolis, enjoying any semblance of the Imperium's prosperity. An ancient oracle of Zeus, recently restored by the current Emperor, is located in the interior city of Dodona.

GREECE

The Greek mainland and its islands enjoy a special status in the Imperium for its people's role in developing laws and government and defending Western civilization from the Persian despots. Because the Romans admire the scholarly and artistic accomplishments of Hellenistic civilization, they tend to ignore the typical Greek disdain for Roman practicality.

Achaea

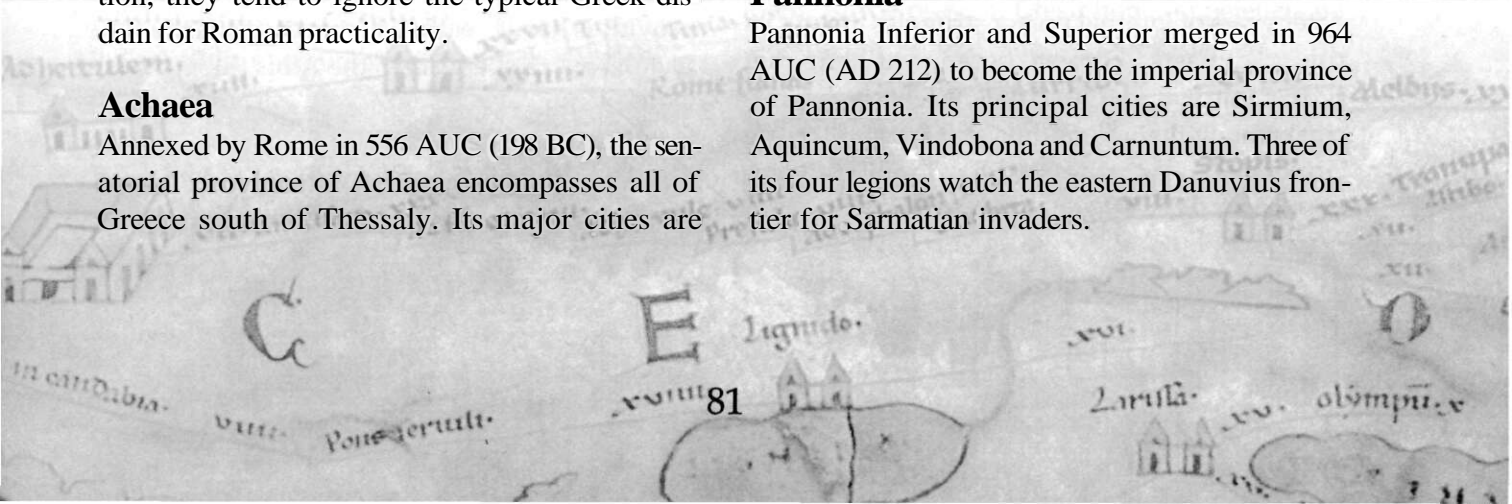
Annexed by Rome in 556 AUC (198 BC), the senatorial province of Achaea encompasses all of Greece south of Thessaly. Its major cities are

THE DANUBE

These war-torn provinces have seen much bloodshed. Even with the removal of the imminent threat of a German invasion from the north, the provinces bordering the Danuvius (Danube) River face the threat of unconquered German and Sarmatian tribes.

Pannonia

Pannonia Inferior and Superior merged in 964 AUC (AD 212) to become the imperial province of Pannonia. Its principal cities are Sirmium, Aquincum, Vindobona and Carnuntum. Three of its four legions watch the eastern Danuvius frontier for Sarmatian invaders.



Dalmatia

Dalmatia was formed in 761 AUC (AD 9) from the former province of Illyricum. This senatorial province takes its name from a local warlike tribe, the Delmatae. Dalmatia's most important city, Salona, is near the coast of the Adriatic Sea.

Dacia

Trajan completed his conquest of the Dacian people in 858 AUC (AD 106), carving out a new imperial province for Rome. Trajan also established many cities, including Ulpia Traiana and Apulum. Deceptively tranquil for over a hundred years, Dacia is still a frontier province. Native Dacians mingle with an influx of immigrants hoping to find work in the gold mines while grim legionaries barter with traders to obtain basic supplies at inflated prices.



Moesia

Moesia is divided into two imperial provinces, labeled Inferior and Superior. Its chief cities are Naissus, Singidunum, Viminacium, Troesmis and Oescus. Both provinces are heavily garrisoned along the Danuvius to protect the Imperium lest Germans or Sarmatians overrun the lightly guarded Dacia.

Thracia

After years of internal power struggles among its ruling dynasts, Thracia became an imperial province in 798 AUC (AD 46). Its few cities, principal among them Perinthus and Byzantium, are administered by appointed local military commanders [*strategoi*] who report to the procurator.

GERMANY AND THE ALPS

The first step towards Augustus' dream of a secure Germania was realized in 961 AUC (AD 209) when seven legions, armed with fulminata, and 50,000 auxiliaries crossed the Rhinus and Danuvius rivers on the 200th anniversary of the Varian disaster at the Teutoburg Wald [*Saltus Teutoburgiensis*]. Since then, citizens of the Alpine provinces have breathed a little easier as the conflict moved farther east to the Albis (Elbe) River.

Germania

The Albis River is the new fortified border [*limes*] for Germania Maior, the larger of the two Imper-

CHAPTER IV IMPERIUM

ial provinces. Germania Minor consists of the old Rhinus frontier and the Agri Decumates. Internally, the conquered tribes habitually rebel, forcing swift and merciless actions by legionary detachments. No Roman was surprised to encounter even more barbarians as they pushed to the Albis. Fierce enemies lie just outside the fortified river, such as the Angli, Semnones and Vandali.

Alpes

Once three provinces (Cottiae, Maritimae and Penninae), the imperial province of Alpes was consolidated for administrative purposes in 984 AUC (AD 232). The three previous capitals of the individual provinces are its largest cities: Axima, Segusio and Cemenelum. The primary duty of the governing procurator is to guard its main road, the Via Julia Augusta, that connects Italia and the Gallic provinces.

Raetia

Conquered in 739 AUC (15 BC), Raetia is a key senatorial province. It is a nexus for communications and travel to all parts of the Imperium. In an emergency, defending legions stationed here would be able to impede a massive land invasion of Italia from the north. The German tribes also discovered that it could also serve as a staging area for offensive military actions. The main city of Raetia is Augusta Vindelicorum.

Noricum

The Alpine province of Noricum became part of the Imperium in 739 AUC (15 BC) and was later transferred to the control of the Senate after the successful invasion of Germania. Noricum's principal cities are Ovilava and Virunum, its capital. Noricum is famous for its high quality iron deposits and its local youth corps, the *iuventus*

Noricorum, who train rigorously from a young age to be elite units of the Imperium.

THE PARTHIAN FRONTIER

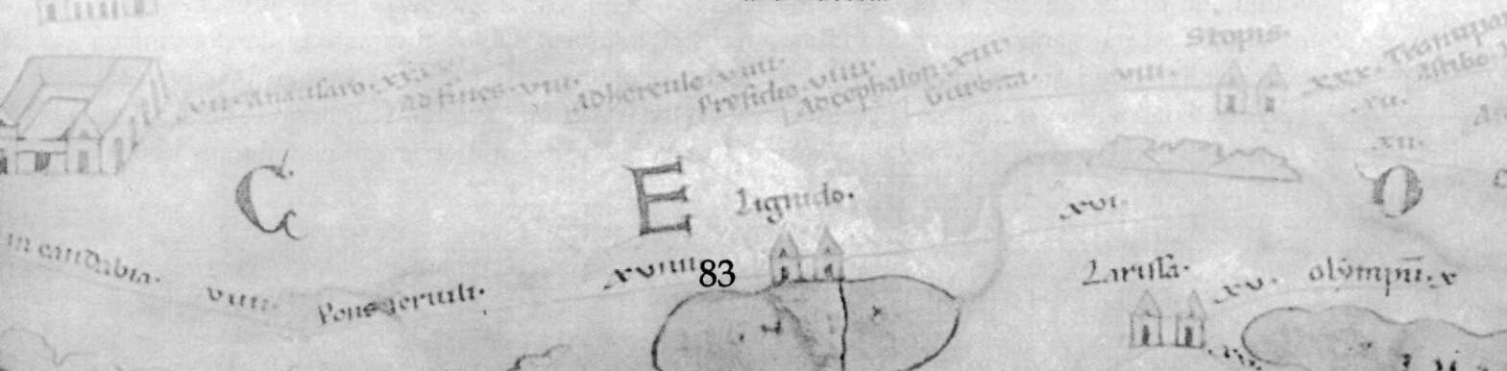
After Marcus Aurelius withdrew from the Parthian frontier, the Imperium and the Parthian Empire maintained an uneasy truce until legions armed with fulminata invaded once again under Avidius Cassius, sparking an aggressive policy that continues today. Tensions are high in the contested region between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers as Roman emperors tire of the stalemate and the expansionist lords of Parthia prepare for a massive counterstrike of their own.

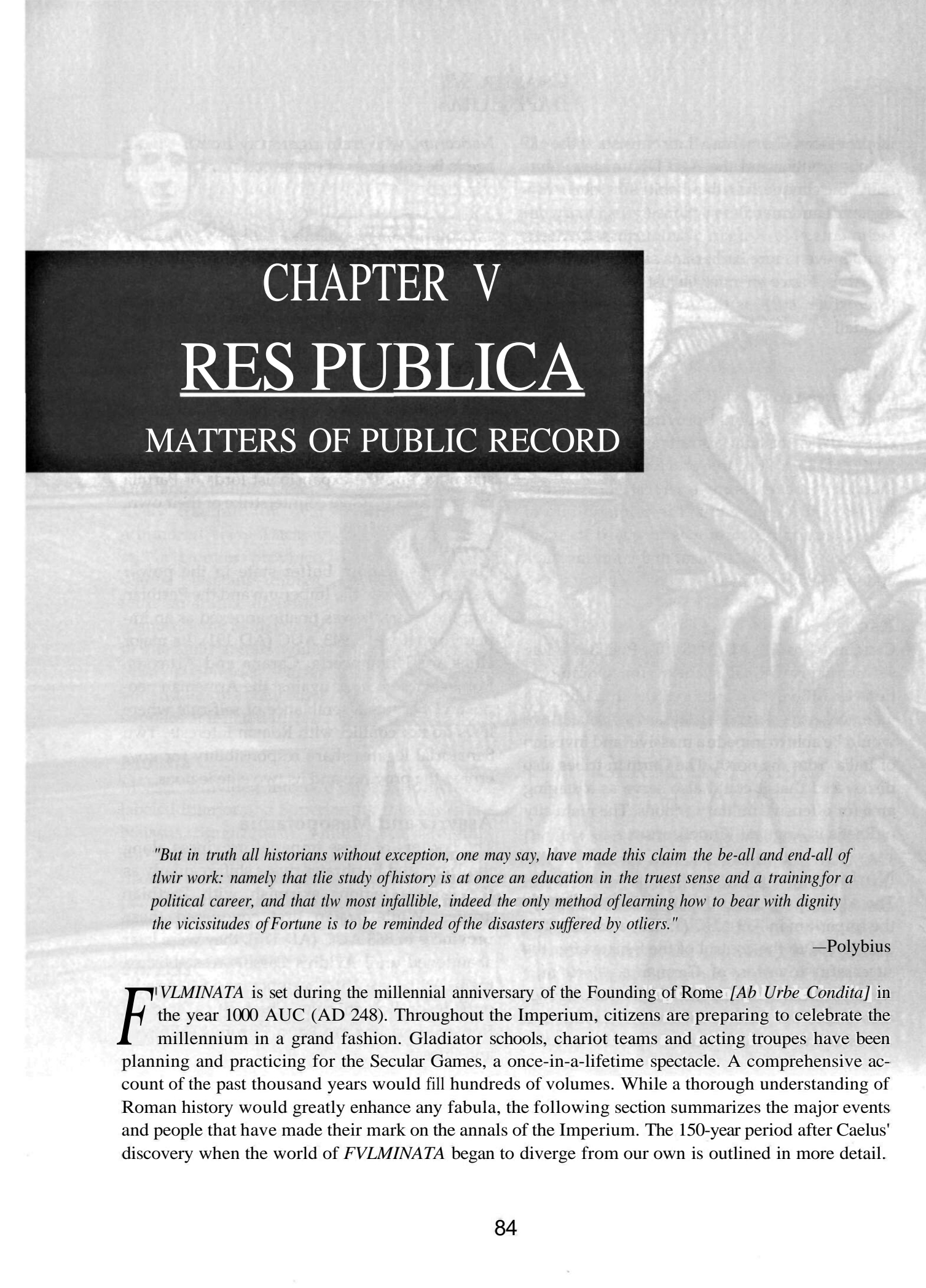
Armenia

Long considered a buffer state in the power struggle between the Imperium and the Parthian Empire, Armenia was finally annexed as an imperial province in 943 AUC (AD 191). Its major cities are Tigranocerta, Carana and Artaxata. Rome levies no taxes against the Armenian people and permits a semblance of self-rule where laws do not conflict with Roman interests. Two Senatorial legates share responsibility for governing the province and its two elite legions.

Assyria and Mesopotamia

The borders of these imperial provinces along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers shift regularly as the Roman legions skirmish with Parthian armies. While Trajan first conquered these provinces in 868 AUC (AD 116), they were later abandoned until Avidius Cassius reestablished them. At the present, Ctesiphon and Seleucia lie outside of Roman rule. Chief cities held by Roman garrisons are Dura Europus, Nineveh and Edessa.





CHAPTER V

RES PUBLICA

MATTERS OF PUBLIC RECORD

"But in truth all historians without exception, one may say, have made this claim the be-all and end-all of their work: namely that the study of history is at once an education in the truest sense and a training for a political career, and that the most infallible, indeed the only method of learning how to bear with dignity the vicissitudes of Fortune is to be reminded of the disasters suffered by others."

—Polybius

FVLMINATA is set during the millennial anniversary of the Founding of Rome [*Ab Urbe Condita*] in the year 1000 AUC (AD 248). Throughout the Imperium, citizens are preparing to celebrate the millennium in a grand fashion. Gladiator schools, chariot teams and acting troupes have been planning and practicing for the Secular Games, a once-in-a-lifetime spectacle. A comprehensive account of the past thousand years would fill hundreds of volumes. While a thorough understanding of Roman history would greatly enhance any fabula, the following section summarizes the major events and people that have made their mark on the annals of the Imperium. The 150-year period after Caelus' discovery when the world of FVLMINATA began to diverge from our own is outlined in more detail.

HISTORY

[Annales]

"He is destined to survive. Yes, so the generation of Dardanus will not perish, obliterated without an heir, without a trace.. Aeneas will rule the men of Troy in power-his son's sons and the sons bom in future years."

—Homer, the *Iliad*

The mythic origin of Rome begins with Aeneas, a Trojan prince, commander of the Dardanians and son of Venus. During the Greek sack of Troy, Aeneas escaped while carrying his father Anchises on his back. These heroic attributes of courage [virtus] and piety [pietas] make him the model for all good Romans. Aeneas wandered the Mediterranean, stopping at ancient Carthage to fall in love with its Phoenician queen Dido. Leaving Dido heartbroken and suicidal, Aeneas landed in Italy to found the city of Lavinium. Aeneas' son Ascanius went on to establish the city of Alba Longa.

Generations later, King Numitor of Alba Longa, a direct descendant of Aeneas was usurped by his younger brother Amulius. Amulius made Numitor's daughter, Rhea Silvia, a Vestal Virgin to prevent any male heirs from exacting vengeance. However, the god Mars impregnated Rhea Silvia, who bore the twins Romulus and Remus. Still attempting to avoid fate, Amulius ordered the infants to be cast into the Tiber. The brothers drifted ashore near a fig tree [ficus ruminalis] where they were rescued by a she-wolf [lupa] and a woodpecker [picus]. Reared by the she-wolf, the twins were eventually discovered by the shepherd Faustulus and his wife Acca Larentia. Upon reaching manhood, the twins killed Amulius and built a settlement on the Palatine Hill. Remus mocked Romulus for fortifying his new city, jumping over the low walls to prove their ineffectiveness. In a fit of rage, Romulus killed his brother and became sole ruler of the Tiber town he called Roma. Ro-

mulus populated his community by offering asylum to all exiles and refugees and by stealing the Sabine women. Romulus reigned for nearly forty years. One day, he mysteriously vanished, called up by his father Mars to become the god Quirinus.

THE MONARCHY

After Romulus' ascent to divinity, Rome was ruled by a series of seven kings. Numa Pompilius was responsible for codifying much of the Roman religion. Tullus Hostilius was a military leader who campaigned against local tribes. A populist and warrior, Ancus Marcius is credited with settling the Aventine Hill, the Janiculum Hill and the port of Ostia. The fifth king of Rome, Tarquinius Priscus, was the former right-handman of Ancus Marcius. A former Etruscan adventurer named Mastarna, Servius Tullius was known for establishing the Freedman rank, the census and Roman currency. Tarquinius Superbus, the grandson of Priscus and last king of Rome, was an absolute tyrant whose oppression of the Roman people led to his expulsion.

AUC	BC	Events
1	753	Founding of Rome; ROMULUS
3	715	Apotheosis of Romulus; NUMA POMPILIUS
81	673	TULLUS HOSTILIUS
113	641	ANCUS MARTIUS
138	616	TARQUINIUS PRISCUS
175	579	SERVIUS TULLIUS
220	534	TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS
245	509	Expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus; Beginning of the Republic

THE REPUBLIC

The Republic was an aristocratic oligarchy headed by the Patrician social class. The Senate and its chief magistrates, or consuls, governed all aspects of public and religious life. Plebeians had

few rights, an inequity that would be slowly corrected over the next several hundred years. Under the Republic, Rome's political and economic influence grew. After victories against the Etruscans in the north, the Samnites in the central plains and the Greek cities in the South, Rome unified Italy.

AUC	BC	Events
246	508	Defense of the Sublician Bridge [<i>Pons Sublicius</i>] by Horatius Codes against the Etruscan army led by Lars Porsenna
303	451	Publication of the Twelve Tables
358	396	Fall of Veil
364	390	Sack of Rome by Gauls
376	378	Construction of Servian Wall
411	343	First Samnite War
414	340	Latin War
427	327	Second Samnite War
431	323	Death of Alexander the Great
433	321	Battle of the Caudine Forks
456	298	Third Samnite War
474	280	Invasion of Pyrrhus

THE PUNIC WARS

"Carthage must be destroyed."

—Cato the Censor

Rome then faced its greatest challenge: Carthage, a Phoenician [*Punicus*] colony that became Rome's first archrival. Rome fought three successive wars—the Punic Wars—against this implacable foe on land and sea, ending in the complete destruction of Carthage. In the Second Punic War, the Carthaginian general Hannibal inflicted great defeats upon the Roman army. The loss of Roman life at the disastrous Battle of Cannae is made evident when the historian Livy records that the gold rings stripped from the bodies of dead Patricians and Equestrians filled three bushels.

AUC	BC	Events
490	264	First Punic War
494	260	Battle of Mylae
513	241	Battle of the Aegates
536	218	Second Punic War
537	217	Battle of Lake Trasimene
538	216	Battle of Cannae
552	202	Battle of Zama
605	149	Third Punic War
608	146	Destruction of Carthage

CONQUEST AND CRISIS

Rome emerged from the Second Punic War with total military supremacy in the Mediterranean. From this position, Rome exploited its newfound power to conquer and absorb Spain, Greece, North Africa and Asia. The Republic was quickly becoming an empire. Civil wars erupted, prompted by earlier power struggles among the elite, such as the Gracchi brothers who were advocates [*populares*] of the Plebeians. Marius and Cinna, who also gained populist support from the Plebeians, took control of the government. Sulla, a conservative Senator, marched on Rome twice to restore control of the Republic to the traditional aristocratic elite [*optimates*].

AUC	BC	Events
525	229	First Illyrian War
535	219	Second Illyrian War
540	214	First Macedonian War
543	211	Capture of Syracuse
554	200	Second Macedonian War
582	172	Third Macedonian War
606	148	Fourth Macedonian War
608	146	Destruction of Corinth
620	134	Destruction of Numantia
621	133	Assassination of T. Gracchus; Gift of Asia to Rome by King Attalus II of Pergamum
633	121	Execution of C. Gracchus
642	112	Numidian Wars
652	102	Battle of Aquae Sextiae
653	101	Battle of Vercellae
664	90	Marsian War
665	89	First Mithridatic War

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666	88	First march of Sulla on Rome against Marius
671	83	Second march of Sulla on Rome against Cinna; Second Mithridatic War
680	74	Third Mithridatic War
681	73	Slave revolt of Spartacus
687	67	Campaign against Cilician pirates by Pompey
691	63	Conspiracy of Catiline

710	44	Assassination of Caesar; Civil Wars
711	43	Battles of Mutina; Second Triumvirate
712	42	Battle of Philippi
723	31	Battle of Actium
724	30	Death of Cleopatra and Mark Antony
727	27	AUGUSTUS

IULIUS CAESAR

"The die is cast. [lacta alea est]"

- Iulius Caesar

From this chaos, C. Iulius Caesar rose to power. An astute politician and victorious general, Iulius Caesar used his popularity with the masses and his army to dominate Roman politics. Fearing his objectives, the Senate mobilized Pompey the Great (C. Pompeius Magnus) to stop him. Even though Pompey was an excellent soldier and tactician, Caesar's veteran forces overcame the armies mustered by the Senate. Caesar was assassinated by a band of conservative Senators as a last-ditch effort to restore the Republic. However, both of Caesar's strongest political successors, Mark Antony (M. Antonius) and Octavian (C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus) were intent on continuing Caesar's ambition. Octavian triumphed in the ensuing civil wars and became Augustus, Rome's first Emperor.

AUC	BC	Events
694	60	First Triumvirate—Pompey, Crassus and Caesar
696	58	Gallic Wars
701	53	Battle of Carrhae
702	52	Siege of Alesia
705	49	Crossing of Rubicon by Caesar; Civil Wars
706	48	Battle of Pharsalus
707	47	Battle of Zela
708	46	Battle of Thapsus
709	45	Battle of Munda

THE EARLY IMPERIUM

Augustus and his descendants ruled the Imperium for 85 years. With the state treasury at his disposal, Augustus restored the ancient traditions of Roman religion and culture. His building programs rebuilt temples and refurbished public spaces. An efficient leader and administrator (if somewhat humorless and gruff), Augustus made his vision of Rome a reality. His first successor, Tiberius, a military man with spartan tastes and a persuasive orator, followed the policies that Augustus had set in motion. The reign of the emperor Gaius, better known as Caligula or "Little Boots", was initially promising, but spiraled into madness as his behavior became more tyrannical and capricious. After Caligula's assassination, the Praetorian Guard forced the Senate to elevate Claudius to the throne. Claudius, despite his stammering and limp, was an able Emperor who expanded the borders of the Imperium and initiated many public projects. Like Caligula, Nero was initially popular. However, Nero's irresponsible reactions to the Great Fire in Rome—placing blame on the Christians and erecting the Golden House [*Domus Aurea*], an Imperial estate, in the rubble instead of rebuilding the lost private homes—led to conspiracies and mounting paranoia. As Nero ended his own life, the avaricious Servius Sulpicius Galba marched on Rome to take control of the Imperium. The Year of Four Emperors, 821 AUC (AD 69), followed as M. Salvius Otho, A. Vitellius and T. Flavius Vespasianus seized the Imperial purple in turn.

AUC	AD	Events
758	6	Rebellion in Pannonia
761	9	Ambush in the Teutoberg Forest (the Varian Disaster)
766	14	Mutiny of the Rhine and Danube legions; TIBERIUS
782	30	Crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth
783	31	Execution of Seianus
789	37	GAIUS (CALIGULA)
793	41	CLAUDIUS
795	43	Invasion of Britannia
806	54	NERO
812	60	Rebellion of Queen Boudicca in Britannia
816	64	Great Fire of Rome
817	65	Conspiracy of Piso
818	66	First Jewish Revolt
820	68	GALBA
821	69	Year of the Four Emperors; OTHO VITELLIUS VESPASIAN

THE FLAVIANS

A formidable general, Vespasian resolved early to base his rule on Roman traditions in order to avoid conflict with the Senate or the army. He made sure that his two sons were well-educated to secure the future of the Flavian dynasty. His elder son Titus was extremely well liked by the people and his troops; he was once declared Emperor while Vespasian still lived. Despite this popularity, he remained loyal to his father. The moral Domitian, the younger son, was a capable administrator and commander in the field. Yet his poor relationship with the Senate, marred by arrogance and rudeness, led to his murder and condemnation [*damnatio memoriae*] after his death. The Senate chose M. Cocceius Nerva as the next Emperor. He was pleasant and worked well with the Senate, the very opposite of Domitian. The end of the Flavian dynasty in 848 AUC (AD 96) also marks the point where actual Roman history and the world of *FVLMINATA* diverge. On

May 4 of that year, L. Aufidius Caelus stumbled upon the correct mixture of sulfur, dried dung and charcoal to create a powerful new explosive substance: gunpowder [*terra fulminata*].

AUC	AD	Events
822	70	Destruction of Hierosolyma (Jerusalem)
823	71	Plague and Fire in Rome
831	79	Eruption of Vesuvius; TITUS
832	80	Opening of Colosseum
833	81	DOMITIAN
837	85	Battle of Mons Graupius
840	88	Revolt of Saturninus
848	96	Discovery of fulminata; NERVA

THE ADOPTED EMPERORS

Even though the aged and childless Nerva adopted his heir Trajan out of necessity, he established a pattern that replaced a hereditary dynasty based on blood relationship. Successive emperors formally adopted the most qualified Senator to replace them as first citizen [*princeps*]. M. Ulpius Traianus (Trajan) undertook two great wars of conquest—one against the Kingdom of Dacia across the Danuvius River and one against the formidable Parthian Empire based in Mesopotamia.

Hadrian was a restless wanderer who took a grand tour of the Imperium during his reign. Hadrian fortified the frontiers to symbolize the *Pax Romana* within set borders. In the last decade of his life, the military applications of fulminata were being fully realized. Sex. Iulius Severus, Hadrian's top military commander, employed batteries of cannons [*tormenta*] to pulverize ludeaen fortifications. His chosen successor was Antoninus Pius, who was encouraged by Hadrian to immediately adopt two heirs, Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus and Marcus Aelius Aurelius Verus Caesar.

As Emperor, Antoninus Pius managed the Imperium well; he was thrifty and took care of the legions' needs. He ordered the invasion of Cale-

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donia and Hibernia to boost military morale, even though the new provinces did not offer much in spoils or natural resources. Three years later he gave Lucius Aurelius command of the eastern armies to mount a campaign against the Parthian Empire. Armed with mobile tormenta, Aurelius pushed deep into Parthian territory, but was killed during the siege of Artemita.

Marcus Aurelius, the sole heir, ascended to the purple and recalled the Parthian legions to the provinces of Mesopotamia, Assyria and Armenia. Returning soldiers unknowingly spread a plague that swept through the Imperium, killing tens of thousands. Although weakened, the eastern legions, commanded by Avidius Cassius, held their ground and even struck against the heart of Parthia, forcing a peace treaty. On the western front, Marcus Aurelius launched his own offensive against the German tribes of the Quadi and the Marcomanni. The tribes unexpectedly counterattacked across the Alps and the Danube, invading Noricum and Panrvonia. With the help of the tormentum and pilum, the Roman legions were able to repel the invaders. Over the next dozen years, Roman forces probed the German front for weakness and sent expeditions to scout on Sarmatian (Russian) positions, setting the stage for the full-scale assault that occurred twenty years later.

As she lay on her deathbed, Marcus Aurelius' wife, Faustina, in 927 AUC (AD 175) persuaded the Emperor to name Avidius Cassius as Caesar, the heir apparent to the Imperial throne. At the age of 14, Marcus Aurelius' only surviving son, Commodus (named for Marcus' deceased adoptive brother) resented this decision and worked secretly to build the groundwork for his Imperial bid. Upon the death of Marcus Aurelius, Avidius Cassius headed for Rome backed by a dozen legions. Support for Commodus melted away as Avidius Cassius neared the city riding a wave of popularity. The wary Praetorian Guard, who initially backed Commodus, abruptly reversed

course and coldly assassinated him to curry favor with Avidius Cassius.

AUC	AD	Events
850	98	TRAJAN
853	101	Dacian War
867	115	First Parthian War
871	119	HADRIAN
873	121	Construction of Hadrian's Wall
884	132	Second Jewish Revolt
885	133	First field use of tormentum
891	139	Death of Caelus Mulciber
892	140	ANTONINUS PIUS
897	145	Revolt of Mauretania
900	148	Invasion of Caledonia and Hibernia
903	151	Second Parthian War
915	163	MARCUS AURELIUS
918	166	Plague strikes in the Imperium
920	168	Third Parthian War Germanic War
937	185	Assassination of Commodus; AVIDIUS CASSIUS

THE AVIDIAN AGE

C. Avidius Cassius was born in Syria, the son of a prominent Equestrian who was Prefect of Aegyptus under Hadrian. Antoninus Pius made Avidius Cassius a Senator for distinguished victories in the Second Parthian War. Under Marcus Aurelius, Avidius Cassius was left to direct most of the Third Parthian War as *legatus* of Syria. In 924 AUC (AD 172), Avidius Cassius suppressed a revolt by the Bucoli in Aegyptus, securing the grain supply. Like his mentor, Marcus Aurelius, Avidius Cassius was a keen student of Greek philosophy and science. During his 16-year reign, Rome enjoyed a golden age of peace and prosperity, marked by the sponsorship of the arts and sciences. The only anger he displayed as Emperor was against his nemesis, the Parthian Empire; he pursued an aggressive campaign in the East, laying siege to many Parthian cities.

Dec. Clodius Albinus was one of many legionary commanders who idolized Avidius Cas-

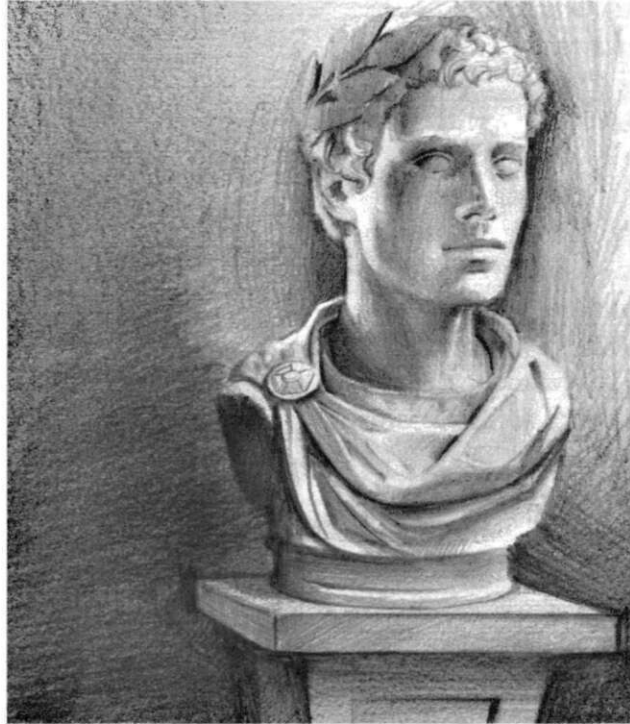
sius as a strategist and leader. When asked why he named Albinus as Caesar, Avidius Cassius stated "because he never closes his eyes," a reference to Albinus' vigilance and diminished need for sleep, requiring only two or three hours daily rest. The highlight of Albinus' reign was the spectacular invasion of Germania in 961 AUC (AD 209) to avenge the 200-year-old defeat of the Teutoberg Wald. Albinus personally led the Praetorian Guard and Imperial Horse Guard into combat.

Albinus chose another legionary commander to follow him: Nonius Festus, the nephew of Nonia Gella, second wife of Avidius Cassius. Fortifying the Imperium's borders in Germania Maior, Nonius Festus began to draw up plans to conquer Sarmatia. However, the Third Jewish Revolt postponed a campaign against the Sarmatian tribes. After checking the Iudaeian insurgents, Nonius turned his attention to the Eastern provinces and decided that Roman control of the Red Sea would be a key factor in maintaining Indian trade routes and in any future conflict with the Parthians. Nonius became gravely ill during the Aethiopian Campaigns and returned to Rome. A father of three daughters and no sons, Nonius adopted a distant relation by marriage, Avidius Maximus, who was only 14 years old at the time.

Senators close to Nonius attempted to convince him to appoint another as successor in the five years leading up to Nonius' death. Nonius as-

sured them that the Imperium would be in good hands, dropping veiled hints about a restoration of the Republic. Regardless of whether Nonius felt that a harmless figurehead would ease transition into a new age for Rome or whether Nonius became slightly mad from his illness, the Senate and legions carried out Nonius' instructions by hailing the teenaged Avidius Maximus as ruler of the Imperium. The first two years of Avidius

Maximus' reign have been fairly uneventful. An immature playboy, Avidius Maximus prefers the comforts of the upper class life, especially lavish dinner parties. Despite his adolescent behavior, he is benevolent and trusting. He leaves the running of the Imperium to the Senate, only occasionally intervening in matters of social policy.



AUC	AD	Events
942	190	Fourth Parthian War
953	201	CLODIUS ALBINUS
961	209	Invasion of Germania
982	230	NONIUS FESTUS
987	235	Third Jewish Revolt
990	238	Aethiopian Campaigns
998	246	AVIDIUS MAXIMUS
1000	248	The Present

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GOVERNMENT

"I am Master [Dominus] of my slaves, Commander in Chief [Imperator] of my troops and Emperor [Princeps] of the rest."

—Tiberius

Although Augustus claimed to have restored the Republic, Rome is an autocratic state. The *Princeps* or "First Citizen" is lord and master of the Imperium, possessing the true political and legislative power of the Roman government. He and his family are above any social rank; they enjoy the finest comforts of the Imperium—luxurious palaces, countless slaves, gourmet food and box seats at public spectacles. Members of the Imperial family are the only citizens permitted to wear solid purple togas.

The Emperor is also the supreme military commander or *Imperator* who can order the legions to suppress a revolt or wage war. Each year the Roman armies ritually salute [*salutatio*] the Emperor to proclaim him as their chosen leader. When two political rivals are hailed simultaneously, civil war may follow. An Emperor also takes the title *Augustus* or "Revered One" after the name bestowed upon the first *Princeps*. The wife of a reigning Emperor is given the *agnomen* of Augusta. In addition to these titles, the Emperor assumes the office of *pontifex maximus* or chief priest of the state religion and Tribune of the People [*Tribunus Plebis*]. He is also called Father of the Country or *Pater Patriae*, the universal patron to the citizens of the Imperium. If he so wishes, the Emperor may hold the post of chief magistrate [*consul*] or commissioner of the census [*censor*].

Along with enjoying these unique powers and privileges, a conscientious Emperor must also fulfill many arduous and time-consuming duties. Only the most capable can successfully handle the daily burdens of border defense, religious rituals, legal decisions and diplomacy. The secret of a long and glorious reign is to retain the favor of the people and the legions by responding to

their needs and wants. A capricious or evil *Princeps* breeds subversive activity; when the citizen body is content, it is more difficult for plots against the Emperor to take root. In a stable political environment, a conspirator's chance of being discovered is usually greater than the potential benefit of treason. Not all Emperors have chosen to work in conjunction with the Senate. However, recent Emperors have entered into a spirit of partnership with the elite body. After all, the future Emperor has always been selected from the Senatorial rank.

THE SENATE

While the Emperor holds the reins of power, he cannot do everything or be everywhere at once. The Senate, made up of leading citizens from the Senatorial rank, is the main governing body of the Imperium. For more information about the Senatorial social rank, see CHAPTER II: PERSONAE, pp. 11-12. It also serves as an upper class advisory board and talent pool for political posts in the provinces. The 600 men of the Senate possess vital knowledge of and experience in Imperial law, diplomacy and most importantly, military strategy.

During the Republic, the Senate exercised greater influence in government. Even with its diminished authority, the Senate is responsible for key administrative functions. The Senate enacts decrees [*Senatus consulta*] into binding law on matters of domestic policy, such as inheritance, qualifications for citizenship and the maintenance of civil order. Senators govern the city of Rome, the home province of Italia and all of the provinces in the Imperium defined as peaceful. The Emperor maintains control of imperial provinces when they require a strong military presence or have a rebellious or difficult population. The Senate is also a court of law and tries its own members on charges of bribery, conspiracy and extortion. As a judicial body, it retains the right to declare that the former Emperor

has become a god [*divus*] or should be erased from memory [*damnatio memoriae*]. The Senate also supervises the minting of bronze coinage.

MAGISTRATES [*Magistrati*]

Magistrates are Senators who currently hold political office. In general, the Emperor appoints military officers while the Senate elects magistrates. Senators must be from a respectable family and must have distinguished themselves in public life through military honors or civic donations in order to be considered for a prominent posting. The ability to speak clearly and interpret the law is a secondary consideration. Failing these qualities, a Senator must rely on building coalitions or making bargains with his rival's supporters. By Imperial decree, men with male heirs are given preference. And as with all activity in the Imperium, the favor of the Emperor greatly increases a Senator's chances of being elected. It is a great honor to be elected into a magistracy at the earliest possible age [*suo anno*].

The following are descriptions of the major magistracies of the Imperium. For provincial governors, see CHAPTER IV: IMPERIUM, p. 75. For military posts, see CHAPTER VIII: BELLUM, pp. 144-145:

Minor Magistrate [*Vigintivir*]

As one of the Twenty Men [*Vigintiviri*], a Senator is a member of one of four sub-committees that oversees public life in Rome: the Board of Ten who Judge Lawsuits, the Board of Three who Watch Nighttime Activities, the Board of Three who Supervise the Mint, and the Board of Four who Oversee Urban Construction.

Financial Deputy [*Quaestor*]

A *quaestor* is primarily responsible for managing the finances of the Imperium, and, to a lesser extent, monitors the day-to-day details of judicial activity. There are a total of 30 *quaestor* posts, one for each senatorial province (except Italia), two for each *consul* and one for the Emperor himself. In the provinces, the *quaestor* serves as second-in-command to the governor. This is the minimum magistracy necessary to qualify for lifetime membership in the Senate.

Commissioner of Commerce [*Aedilis*]

Originally responsible for the public buildings and temples, an *aedilis* now oversees all commercial activity in Rome, such as import tariffs, markets and enforcement of business law.

SYMBOLS OF POWER

The Emperor and certain magistrates (*praetor* and above) possess *imperium*, the supreme power of the Roman state, including military command and legal judgments. Other magistracies hold *potes-tas*, a limited form of authority that allows the bearer to execute the duties of his office. This authority is denoted by use of the following symbols of office.

Curule Chair [*Sella Curulis*]

Magistrates with *imperium* are known as curule magistrates and have the right to sit on a symbolic throne, an ivory folding stool [*sella curulis*] of Etruscan origin.

Bundled Axe [*Fasces*]

A *fasces* is a double-headed axe surrounded by a bundle of rods. The Emperor has 24 *fasces*, a consul has 12 and all other curule magistrates have 6. *Fasces* are carried by attendants [*lictors*] over the left shoulder, usually in a single file before the magistrate.

Purple [*Purpura*]

The color purple is associated with Imperial authority. The *murex* mollusk is the source for the purple dye used on the entire togas of Imperial family members, the broad stripes on Senators' togas and the thin stripes on Equestrians' togas.

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Public Commissioner [*Curator*]

Curatores are in charge of upkeep, repair and construction for public services and monuments. These include, but are not limited to, the roads, the aqueducts, the sewers, the Circus Maximus and the Temple of Saturn. New posts may be created for new monuments or in the event of an emergency. For example, the Flavian emperors added a permanent *curator* for the Colosseum and a temporary *curator* to manage the disaster-relief efforts after the eruption of Vesuvius.

Chief Magistrate [*Praetor*]

Being elected *praetor* is an important stage in the senatorial career. For the first time, the Senator may exercise the full power [*imperium*] of the law. Unless countermanded by a consul or the Emperor, a *praetor* effectively runs the Imperial government. *Praetori* moderate debates in the Senate, oversee legal proceedings and allocate funds for the public games [*ludi*]. Numerous important positions are available to Senators who hold this post, such as provincial governor [*proconsul provinciae*], military governor [*legatus Augusti pro praetore*] and legionary commander [*legatus legionis*].

Supreme Magistrate [*Consul*]

Excepting the Imperial throne, consul is the highest political office in the Imperium. In fact, the Emperor often holds the consulship multiple times himself. Although the Roman calendar begins counting from the founding of the city [*ab urbe condita*], individual years are also named after the two *consules* elected for that term. The Emperor alone is the consul for the millennial year 1000 AUC (AD 248), whereas the prior year was named "Statilius and Messius" for the two consules elected in 999 AUC (AD 247). Once a consul, a Senator is eligible to become the provincial governor [*proconsul provinciae*] of Asia or Africa, the prefect of Rome [*praefectus Urbi*] or a *censor*.

Commissioner of the Census [*Censor*]

Since Hadrian, the Emperor holds one of the two offices of *censor* for life. The other post is reserved for an elder statesman of consular status. A *censor's* duty is to keep the census of the citizen body, detailing the age, property and rank of each person. He is assigned the task of scrutinizing citizens who aspire to a higher Rank and for identifying those who fail to meet the minimum requirements of the Senatorial and Equestrian rank.

Prefect of Rome [*Praefectus Urbi*]

Reserved for the most senior ex-consuls, the position of prefect of Rome is essentially serving as the Emperor's right hand in governing the city and its immediate environs (all Italian towns within 100 miles). He commands the Urban Cohorts [*cohortes Urbanae*] and presides over the highest law courts. The term of office is three years.

THE CAREER PATH [*Cursus Honorum*]

For the Senatorial rank, the preferred career path [*cursus honorum*] is a defined series of military and political posts in the Imperial government. Each of the successive steps in this path qualifies a Senator to attain the next. In addition, certain political posts or magistracies are required to be eligible for other important positions. For example, the prestigious office of *censor* is only open to Senators who have held the consulship.

Whereas unofficial *cursi honorum* exist for Equestrians pursuing ambitious public service careers and for Plebeians aspiring to rise through the ranks of the legions, advancement and appointment in these posts are mainly based on loyalty and merit.

The Senatorial Career Path			
Post	Minimum Age	Term of Office	Available Posts
Minor Magistrate [<i>Vigintivir</i>]	17	1	20
Legionary Tribune [<i>Tribunus Laticlavus</i>]	20	3	30
Financial Deputy [<i>Quaestor</i>]	25	1	30
Commissioner of Commerce [<i>Aedilis</i>] / Public Commissioner [<i>Curator</i>]	30	1/3	4/20
Chief Magistrate [<i>Praetor</i>]	35	1	12
Legionary Commander [<i>Legatus Legionis</i>]	—	3	23
Military Governor [<i>Legatus Augusti</i>]	—	7	19
Provincial Governor [<i>Proconsul Provinciae</i>]	—	7	27
Supreme Magistrate [Consul]	40	1	2
Commissioner of the Census [Censor]	—	5	1

CIVIL SERVANTS

The Imperial government has an impressive corps of civil servants to perform financial accounting, process applications and make records of official documents. An organized and efficient bureaucracy is essential to the execution of policies and procedures. For example, a legion that consistently receives its pay [*salarium*] and food supplies fights with higher morale. Most civil servants are Slaves and Freedmen, often the personal retinue of the reigning Emperor. Accountants [*scribae*] and clerks [*librarii*] assist the Emperor and magistrates with mundane bookkeeping and paperwork. Attendants [*apparitores*] act as couriers or errand-runners. Plebeians and Equestrians hold senior posts, such as the prefect of the grain supply [*praefectus annonae*] who oversees the distribution of free bread to the poor. In addition, whole agencies [*curatores*] of civil servants have been established to assist or even take over the responsibilities of individual magistrates. These include the Keepers of the Roads [*Curatores Viarum*], responsible for the streets of Rome and Italia; the Agency of Public Works [*Curatores Operum Publicorum*], responsible for

public and private building construction; and the Department of Water [*Curatores Aquarum*], responsible for aqueducts and public fountains.

THE GUARDIANS OF SMOKE [*Curatores Fumae*]

The Guardians of Smoke is an Imperial agency devoted to espionage and counterintelligence that reports directly to the Emperor. The name of the spy bureau is derived from the Latin idiom *fumum vendere* (literally, "to sell smoke"), which describes dealing in illusory influence or information. While Rome prides itself on its ability to defeat its opponents through disciplined force, the spies of the Imperium work behind the scenes, covertly gathering data, devising secret operations and carrying out assassinations and sabotage. The primary mission of the *Curatores* is to protect the Emperor from assassination plots. In the cutthroat world of Roman politics, Senators and ambitious Equestrians maintain their own network of informants and spies as well as personal bodyguards [*comitatus*] and advisors.

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The Guardians of Smoke deploy several types of agents to scrutinize the many facets of the Imperium. Since intelligence is vitally important to strategy and tactics, *frumentarii* serve as army officers, providing insights to their commanders and the Guardians back in Rome. *Frumentarii* coordinate the activities of military scouts [*exploratores*] to reconnoiter enemy positions and work closely with the watchword officers [*tesserarii*] to ensure the security of the camp. *Frumentarii* are often viewed with suspicion and distrust because they have a duty to two masters. *Curiosi* are field agents not tied to the Roman army who serve as diplomatic emissaries or travel undercover throughout the Imperium. Some *curiosi* infiltrate enemy encampments or even take deep

covert war against its followers and institutions. The zeal with which the Guardians' agents carry out this private agenda out is tempered only by the degree of tolerance granted it by the incumbent Emperor.

LAW [Ius]

"Whenever the principle of natural desire or doubt as to the law blocks equity, the matter should be tempered by just decisions."

—Aemilius Papianianus

The foundation of Roman law is the Twelve Tables [*XII Tabulae*], a set of legal codes drawn up in 303 AUC (451 BC). Over the years, the Twelve Tables have been amended and updated to respond to new provisions or reflect differing legal opinions. While resolutions of the Senate [*Senatus consulta*] are the only official pieces of legislation that may modify the Twelve Tables, the Emperor, through his clerical staff, has the authority to influence Imperial law through three special legislative enactments [*constitutiones principis*]. The majority of these enactments are rescripts [*rescripta*], which are commentaries on Senate resolutions or specific responses to petitions. An edict [*edictum*] is an Imperial command that

THE DAILY NEWS [*Acta Diurna*]

The *Curatores Fumis* controls the publication of the Daily News [*Acta Diurna*], a formal record of official and newsworthy events read in Rome and all of the provinces. The Daily News is displayed in the Forum Romanum on whitened boards [*album*]; past issues are copied on scrolls for posterity and scholarly research. The Proceedings of the Senate [*Acta Senatus*] were once available to the public as well, but they are now restricted to the Senatorial rank.

The bulk of the Daily News is a rather dry read, listing births, deaths, public speeches, government postings, census registrations and upcoming religious festivals. Other sections are devoted to reports of fires, imports and exports, the results of gladiator bouts and chariot races, pending lawsuits and criminal sentences. The *Acta Diurna* also announces news from the provinces, including military victories and enemy activity.

cover assignments in foreign kingdoms. *Curiosi* are therefore experts in ciphers, forgery, disguise, languages and foreign customs. The Guardians also employ torturers [*quaestionarii*] trained in interrogation techniques to extract information from prisoners. Less glamorous are the clerks [*librarii*] who analyze public documents, captured messages and reports from field agents. Once content to react to threats and rumors of conspiracy, newer agents have begun to spy on private citizens in order to report on any seditious activities. This has not gone unnoticed by the Urban Cohorts or the Vigils who resent the thought of a secret police force in Rome. The Guardians have a vendetta against the Christian religion, having declared a

overrides the Twelve Tables. Emperors often invoke this power to pass innovative legislation.

LAWYERS

Finally, as a judge, the Emperor can issue a decree [*decreta*], thus rendering an opinion on the case. These decrees can be cited in future cases as precedents.

Civic law [*ius civile*] is primarily concerned with the rights and restrictions of Roman citizens. Non-citizens are handled using a different set of guidelines [*ius gentium*]. Where possible and tolerable by Roman standards, the Imperium allows provincial courts to enforce local regulations, often assisted by the Roman governor. However, local law has no jurisdiction over Roman citizens. A Roman citizen brought to trial in an imperial province has the right to appeal to the Emperor for justice. In a senatorial province, the appeal is to the Senate. These rules pertain to secular crimes and infractions; the interpretation of sacred law [*IMS sacrum*] is the domain of the state priests.

THE COURTS [*Tribunales*]

Trials for the most part take place before a single judge [*index*] with no jury. While providing for efficient and swift justice, the system is prone to corruption since a judge's decision is binding on all parties. Appeals to a higher court are possible, but seldom granted. The highest court is the Imperial Court, presided over by the Emperor as sole judge. In the Senate Courts [*quaestiones perpetuae*], praetors try citizens for the crimes of treason and bribery. The prefect of Rome [*praefectus Urbi*], the praetorian prefect [*praefectus praetorio*] and prefect of the vigils [*praefectus vigilum*] conduct trials of citizens accused of minor crimes. The surviving remnant of the jury system in Rome is the Court of One Hundred [*centumviri*] that meets in the Basilica Iulia to decide on inheritance and property disputes. This court is actually comprised of 180 men who often divide into four equal groups to settle claims simultaneously.

The traditional Roman lawyer is a jurist [*iurisconsultus*], a learned man of Senatorial rank who interprets and makes commentaries on Imperial law. The judge consults him during high-profile trials for advice [*responsum*]. A jurist may initiate a trial with a formal accusation or be called upon to defend the accused using his polished rhetoric and vast knowledge of jurisprudence. Being a profession for the Senatorial class, jurists do not charge fees for legal services, hoping instead to gain political favors, valuable gifts or rich legacies in wills. In addition, a jurist who successfully prosecutes a citizen for treason is entitled to a percentage of the confiscated property. Two schools of law dominate the jurist community: the Cassian School [*Schola Cassiana*] and the Proculian School [*Schola Procula*]. Also called the *Sabini* after the legendary jurist Masurius Sabinus, adherents of the Cassian School value the wisdom of the Twelve Tables and prefer precedent to innovation. The Proculian School is more focused on logical analysis, insisting that ethical and moral principles should guide legal opinions, not tradition.

The Imperial government passes laws, supplies judges and maintains the trial apparatus but does not provide legal counsel to the accused. Nor does it formally pay employees to arrest and prosecute criminals. The urban police and vigils do apprehend criminals that endanger the public welfare, but they do not often volunteer to investigate unsolved crimes. Justice is often obtained by hiring private lawyers. For a price, citizens who believe they have been wronged can hire an informer or accuser [*delator*] to present a case before a court of law. On the other side, the advocate [*causidicus*] is a private defense attorney who will argue against the *delator*.

CHAPTER V RES PUBLICA

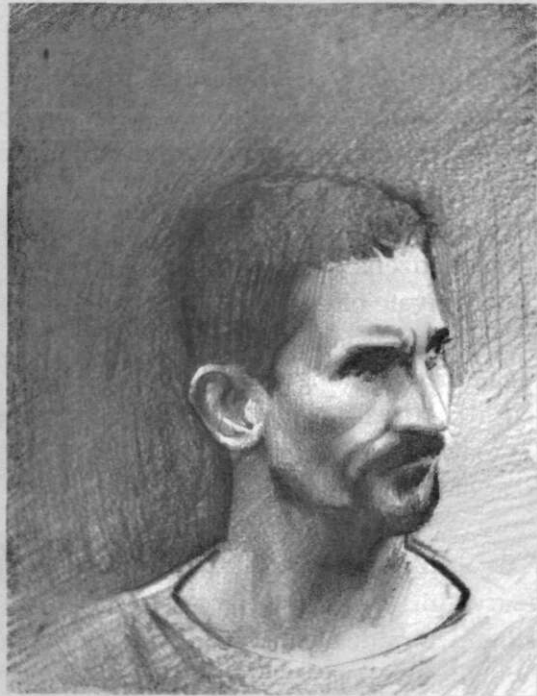
CRIME [*Scelus*]

"Crooked behavior follows a crooked appearance."

—Roman aphorism

Crimes are divided into public offenses and private ones. Any act that directly threatens the security of the Imperium, such as treason [*perduellio*], political corruption [*ambitus*], theft [*furtum*] of public property or the murder [*nex*] of a citizen, is a public crime subject to Imperial law. Private crimes are committed against individuals, like armed robbery [*rapina*], intimidation [*metus*], slander [*inuria*], deceit [*dolus*] and the killing [*caedes*] of a Foreigner or Slave.

Citizens with power and wealth, but who crave even more, such as disgruntled Senators and ambitious Equestrians, are the most likely to join in conspiracies to overthrow the government or collude with the enemies of Rome. Desperate and starving Plebeians and Freedmen become petty thieves [*furunculi*] — muggers, pickpockets and burglars. Organized crime also flourishes in Roman society due to the inequities between the rich and the poor. While bandits and pirates are the largest groups of organized criminals, the Imperium's cities also contend with urban gangs and trade syndicates. These underworld organizations conduct scams, protection rackets and large-scale thefts. They also specialize in bribery, forgery and threats. Unlike individuals engaged in similar misdeeds, members of organized crime are normally tried as public offenders, and are more severely punished when found guilty.



ANGUILLA

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Gangster [*Facinus*]

Attributes: I13, A13, P 6, V10

Humors: X2 (Nervous)

MP: 0, **WP:** 10/20, **HP:** 3

Patron: Mercurius

Skills: *Coin 6, *Move (Climb) 3, *Thief 5, "Trick 5, Box 3, City 4, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Dagger 3, Interrogate 3, Language (Greek) 2, Language (Latin) 2, Metals 3, Stealth 4, Strategy 5

Background: Lucius Antonius Flaccus, better known as the notorious "Eel" [*Anguilla*] among the criminal elements of the Roman underworld, sneers at honest work, preferring to swindle or coerce *sestertii* from his victims. He had been working a profitable "fire protection" scheme in the Subura where he would collect payments from apartment dwellers in return for not committing arson. Last spring, a landlord of many of these properties demanded a cut of the extortion money. When he refused to play along, the landlord's brawny associates persuaded Anguilla that he would be better off leaving town. A shrewd assessor of risk, the "Eel" promptly headed off to the Italian countryside, where he soon gained followers among the local banditry. For the past year, Anguilla has laid low, forming new alliances and gathering support for his return. The bandits value his experience in urban crime; the "Eel" is an expert in counterfeiting and ambush tactics.

PUNISHMENT [Poena]

Under Roman law, the intent of punishment is not to correct the behavior of the offender. Formal penalties and reprimands are meant to curb vigilante retaliation [*talio*] and deter further criminal acts. Citizens found guilty of private offenses must pay fines [*multa*] to the state or the wronged individual. Insufficient funds may lead to confiscation of property or beatings. Final judgment on a public offense takes into account the social ranks and wealth of the individuals involved.

The poorer segment of Roman society faces brutal punishments, including the death penalty [*poena capitis*]. Military personnel are decapitated with their own gladius. Slaves and Foreigners are crucified or condemned to being eaten by wild animals [*damnatio ad bestias*]. In Rome, murderers and traitors are thrown from the Tarpeian Rock, a high cliff on the Capitoline Hill. Those who are shown "mercy" are merely sent to work as diggers in the mines, laborers on public works, auxiliary soldiers on the frontiers or gladiators in the arena. Although the condemned elite may

suffer a similar fate, sometimes magistrates delay arrest, trial or punishment to allow a member of the upper class time to depart Roman soil. This voluntary exile [*exsilium*] is offered as an alternative to the death penalty. *Relegatio* is a form

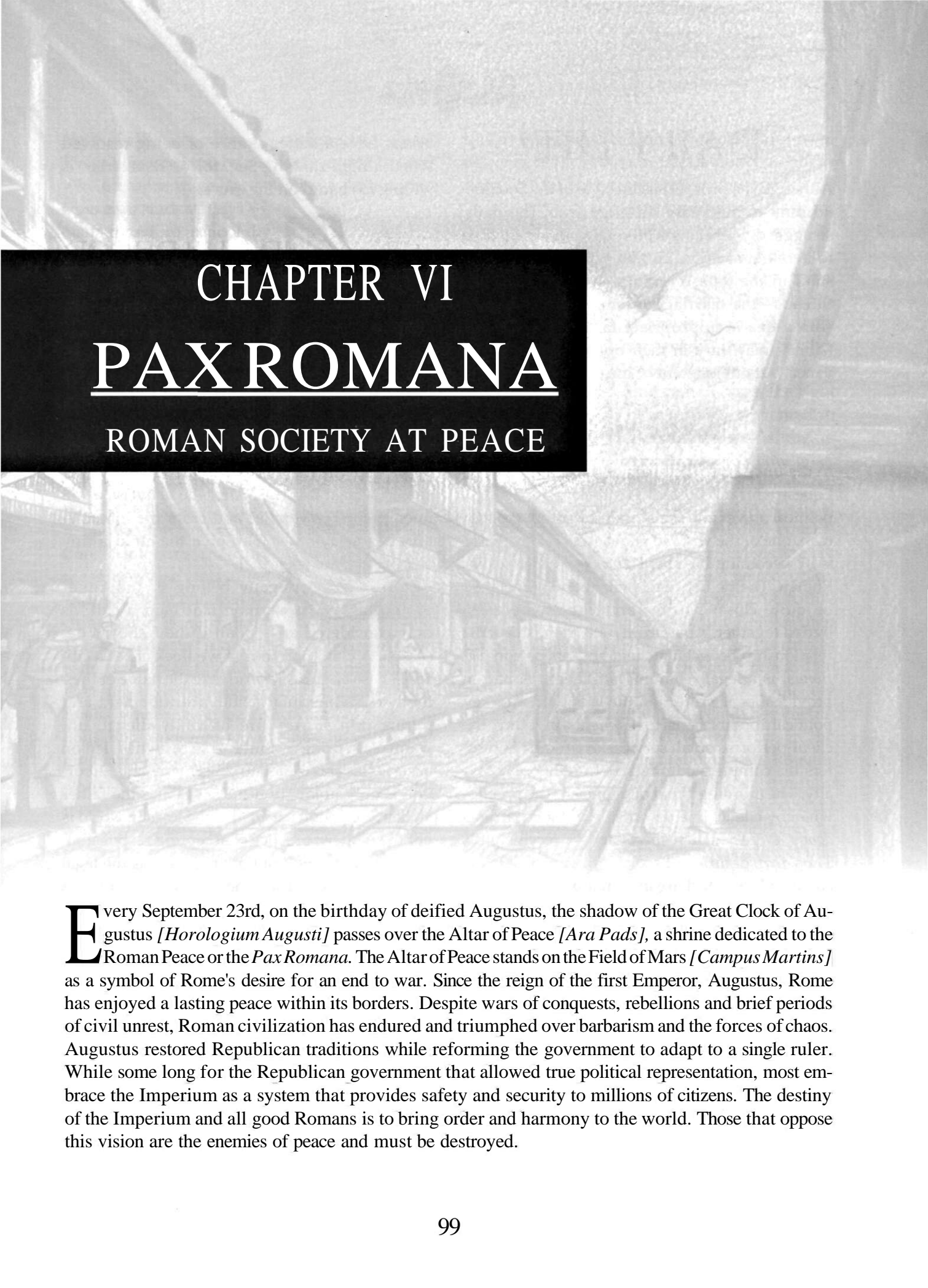
of temporary banishment for forgivable offenses. Permanent exile or *deportatio* is another punishment option for the rich and powerful. It is usually accompanied with a loss of citizenship [*infamia*] and seizure of assets and property.

As property, slaves may be beaten, whipped, branded or mutilated without a formal trial. Information gained from torture is the only admissible evidence from a

slave in a Roman court. If it is proven that a slave murdered his master, all of that owner's slaves are executed in public regardless of complicity. The public display of entire households of slaves nailed to crosses or thrown to the lions is intended to dissuade other slaves from even contemplating similar acts. This policy of mass slave executions, including the innocents, also has the salutary effect of encouraging loyal slaves to betray plots to their masters before they can be carried out.

PRISON [Career]

By itself, imprisonment is not a recognized form of punishment. People are detained in prisons as a temporary measure while awaiting trial or execution. The most famous prison in Rome is the Mamertine or *Tullianum*, reserved for state executions. Often torture is applied to extract confessions or the names of accomplices. For the condemned, flogging is a common punishment while jailed. On private villa estates, unruly slaves are assigned to chain gangs and are forced to live in the *ergastulum*, a dark prison cellar.



CHAPTER VI

PAX ROMANA

ROMAN SOCIETY AT PEACE

Every September 23rd, on the birthday of deified Augustus, the shadow of the Great Clock of Augustus [*Horologium Augusti*] passes over the Altar of Peace [*Ara Pads*], a shrine dedicated to the Roman Peace or the *Pax Romana*. The Altar of Peace stands on the Field of Mars [*Campus Martius*] as a symbol of Rome's desire for an end to war. Since the reign of the first Emperor, Augustus, Rome has enjoyed a lasting peace within its borders. Despite wars of conquests, rebellions and brief periods of civil unrest, Roman civilization has endured and triumphed over barbarism and the forces of chaos. Augustus restored Republican traditions while reforming the government to adapt to a single ruler. While some long for the Republican government that allowed true political representation, most embrace the Imperium as a system that provides safety and security to millions of citizens. The destiny of the Imperium and all good Romans is to bring order and harmony to the world. Those that oppose this vision are the enemies of peace and must be destroyed.

DAILY LIFE

Although the prosperous lifestyle of the Senatorial rank is markedly different from the daily struggle of Plebeians who rely on the grain dole to avoid starvation, certain traditions are constant in the tapestry of Roman society. These threads—the marriage ceremony, attitudes towards death, appropriate fashion and eating habits—may vary in their opulence or extravagance, but not in intent or meaning.

PATRONAGE

In the Imperium, members of the Senatorial and Equestrian rank possess great economic wealth, political power and social status. For the common man, one of the ways to gain access to this world is by becoming the client [*cliens*] of a prominent Roman. The tie between a client and patron can be quite close; patrons and clients are often buried together. Apart from such friendships, the relationship between a client and his patron [*patronus*] is a legally binding affiliation. A patron provides legal protection, financial aid and key political appointments to his clients. In return, the client performs small services or errands and offers his complete admiration, humility and loyalty. The morning ritual of *salutatio* is the practice whereby clients line up outside of their patron's *domus* to pay their respects and to receive gifts. Thus, men of different social ranks are able to exchange ideas and share information.

Clientele size is one of the measures of a Roman's prestige and influence; a Senator who can afford to support dozens of clients is more apt to be generous in other areas. In addition, the successful management of many individuals speaks to the Senator's skills as an effective and harmonious administrator. Upon manumission, a Freedman automatically becomes the client of their former owner. Whole cities may also become clients of a wealthy patron in order to gain influence in Roman politics. Local problems and

issues have a better chance of being resolved when a high-ranking Senator or Equestrian is willing to champion the cause.

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

The *lustratio* is a traditional naming ceremony that takes place nine days after the birth of a child in the atrium of the family's *domus*. One of the reasons for the delay is that childbirth is fraught with peril for both infant and mother; complications during the delivery account for high mortality. A Roman matron normally gives birth at home, seated upright in a special chair, assisted by a midwife [*obstetrix*] and surrounded by her closest female relatives. After the delivery, a wet nurse [*nutrix*] swaddles and rears the infant. A proud grandmother may give the child a tiny charm necklace [*crepudia*].

Since children legally belong to the father under the laws governing marriage, a child is only considered an orphan if the father is deceased. A child born out of wedlock is not a citizen. These bastards [*spurii*] take the name of their mothers. While infanticide, abandonment and selling into slavery are officially illegal, unwanted offspring continue to be drowned, left on refuse piles and traded to slave merchants. Abortion is only unlawful if the act denies the father an heir. Adoption [*adoptio*] in the Roman world is not the modern practice of accepting responsibility for children without guardians. It is the legal transfer of a son from one family to another. A Roman man without a male heir forfeits most of his estate to the Imperium upon death. For the powerful and wealthy, adoption is a means of allowing the family to pass its wealth on to legitimate descendants.

Until the age of six or seven, children amuse themselves with games and toys, such as dolls, balls and building blocks. Fortunate children from families with money then begin their education. The less fortunate go to work as kitchen helpers, stable boys, servants or shop assistants. The first

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stage of a Roman education is elementary school [*ludus litterarius*] run by a schoolmaster [*litterator*] who earns his wages by collecting a daily tuition from each student. Boys are chaperoned to school by *paedagogi*; girls by nurses [*nutrices*]. For five years, the *litterator* drills his class in three basic areas: reading, writing and arithmetic. Children are initially taught to scratch the alphabet on wax tablets with metal pens [*styli*] and later to copy scrolls on papyrus sheets with a reed pen dipped in ink. Learning is by rote memorization and repetition; adults try to avoid these noisy schools filled with shrieking children reciting Latin conjugations.

The schoolmaster is a strict disciplinarian, often using a rod to administer corporal punishment.

At age 11, girls leave school to return to the *domus* where they learn how to manage the household and spin wool. Boys and privileged girls carry on their education with a *grammaticus*, an instructor of grammar, literature, drama and poetry in Greek and Latin. For boys who may one day qualify to enter politics, the *rhetor* teaches the art of oratory and rhetoric. Aspiring orators must be able to conduct mock trials, espouse contrary views in the same debate and recite famous speeches flawlessly. For Equestrians destined to be financial moguls, math specialists [*calculatores*] offer advanced training with the abacus and counting pebbles [*calculi*].

MARRIAGE [*Matrimonium*]

Romans typically marry for political or financial reasons, not for love. One of the duties of the pater *familias* is to arrange an advantageous marriage

for his daughters. Legitimate citizens and heirs can only be the products of legal unions or adoptions. While there are minimum ages to wed (12

for females and 14 for males), Romans tend to marry later in life. Marriages rarely cross more than one social rank. Furthermore, Roman law only recognizes marriages between Roman citizens. In uncommon cases, the right of *connubium* is granted to a male citizen, allowing him to marry a Foreigner. Unions [*contubernia*] between slaves are not official but are carefully considered when relocating or manumitting slave couples.

To signify the betrothal [*sponsalia*], a Roman man

gives his fiancée [*sponsa* or *promissa*] a ring to wear on her left hand and the bride's guardian hands over a wedding dowry [*dos*] as a symbol of the union. Neither is mandatory, but they are traditional. The official marriage contract, in the form of a scroll, is a legal requirement. Romans are monogamous in marriage; a man can only take a new wife if he has divorced his current wife. Divorce is a simple procedure and may be initiated by either party for any reason. While there is no social stigma attached to this process, it is more difficult for a divorced woman to remarry.

Male children become adults at the age of 14 in a formal ceremony where they trade in their *bulla* charm and *toga praetexta* for the full toga of a registered citizen. For the Roman woman, the wedding [*ritus nuptiales*] is her coming of age ceremony. For good fortune, weddings are usually scheduled to avoid the unlucky month of May. Before the ceremony, the bride's home is festooned with garlands of flowers and freshly cut evergreen boughs and filled with Arabian incense. The bride dresses in a



plain white gown [*tunica recta*] woven in the ancient method on a handloom. A "knot of Hercules" belt [*cingulum Herculaeum*] binds her waist. Her hair is parted by a spear point and piled up into six sections [*sex crines*] held together by wooden fillets [*vittae*]. Over her elaborate hairdo she wears a bright, flame-colored silk veil [*flammeum*], secured by a wreath made of myrtle and orange blossoms. With family and friends in attendance, the actual ceremony is very brief; only requiring a witness [*auspex*] to conduct the proper pig sacrifice and place a seal on the wedding contract. A lavish banquet follows, including the sharing of the *mustaceum*, a cake soaked in wine and served on bay leaves.

The final part of the wedding ceremony is the *deductio* or the procession of the bride to her new husband's home. Three young boys whose parents are still alive guide the bride to her destination. Two hold her hands while the third carries a nuptial torch made of white thorn. Onlookers and celebrants play music, sing bawdy tunes, throw nuts as symbols of fertility and cry out "Talassio", an appeal to Talassius, the god of marriage, for health and happiness. The groom then carries his new wife [*uxor*] over the threshold lest she stumble and mark the occasion with an ill omen. Once inside, the husband offers her water to wash her feet and fire from his hearth. The maid of honor [*pronuba*] places a silver coin in the husband's palm, offers another to the gods of the household and tosses a third into the street. The other bridesmaids enter the home singing a nuptial

melody [*epithalamia*] and carrying the bride's personal belongings, including her distaff and spindle. The *univerae* or "bridesmaids who have

only had one husband" then undress the bride and arrange her on her bed. All of the celebrants then leave to allow the new couple to enjoy their wedding night.

Farreum is a solemn marriage contract practiced by members of the Senatorial rank, especially those of the Patrician class. In contrast to the traditional wedding, this ceremony [*confarreatio*] is performed in private with ten witnesses. An important priest always conducts the service; in Rome this is the chief pontiff [*pontifex maximus*] or the high priest of Iuppiter [*flamen dialis*]. The priest sacrifices a white sheep and spreads its skin over two chairs, upon which the

groom and bride sit. To symbolize the union, the newlyweds share a grain cake [*farreus panis*] prepared by virgins (preferably the Vestal Virgins). Once bound by the vows of the *confarreatio*, a couple may not divorce.

DEATH

"Let's admit it. In a large part of Italy no one wears a toga except when he's dead."

—Juvenal

Images of skulls and skeletons are present in Roman art as a reminder to take pleasure in life because death is inevitable. Despite the promises of immortality made by the state religion and the

EXTRAMARITAL AFFAIRS

It is assumed that men will have sexual relations outside of marriage. A Roman man may have sex with his own slaves since they are his property. He may also visit a brothel [*lupanar*] to purchase sexual favors. Prostitutes [*lupae*] are deemed necessary to a healthy society, yet they have a low status on par with actors and moneylenders. A concubine [*concubinus*] cohabitates with a man but is not eligible to become a legal wife. Lovestruck Romans often lavish attention and funds on these "barbarian princesses." A free woman who chooses to have a dalliance with a married man is a mistress [*arnica*]. Since marriage can only be entered between partners that can bear children, same sex unions are not legally recognized even though homosexuality is common in Roman society. Hadrian was an openly gay emperor who dedicated numerous temples and statues to his dead lover, Antinous.

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mystery cults, the end of one's mortal existence is unavoidable. The hundreds of tombs and grave-stones that line both sides of the Via Appia and greet travelers are sobering testaments to this fact.

When a Roman dies, it is customary for the closest living relative to capture his final breath into her own mouth. The relative then closes the deceased's eyes, says her final farewell [*Vale*] and places a coin in his mouth to pay Charon in the Netherworld.

To the Roman, death is a miasma that pollutes the living, evidenced by the effects of disease, malnutrition, old age and pain. Therefore, a family who loses a relation must cleanse themselves through ritual to be able to rejoin society. A simple funeral [*funus*] provides the required level of purification. Most Plebeians belong to one of the numerous funeral clubs [*collegia funeratica*], such as "The Servants of Serapis" or "The Worshipers of Apollo". The club's function is to arrange and pay for member burials. Those who cannot afford a funeral are buried by the "little wasps" [*vispillones*], who dump the charred remains of penniless corpses into mass graves.

A skilled undertaker [*libitinarius*] organizes a rich citizen's funeral. His slave morticians [*pollinctores*] wash the body in oils and perfumes while the undertaker makes a wax impression of the deceased's face for a mask. The late Roman, dressed in his finest toga and bedecked with all of his trapping of rank and honor, lies in state in his own atrium surrounded by smoldering cypress branches.

After nine days of mourning, the body is laid out on a couch or bier to be carried in a grand funeral procession [*exsequiae*]. This event is attended by friends, family and professional mourners provided by the undertaker, including the procession leader [*dissignator*] and wailing women [*praeficae*]. Proper male attire for a funeral is the black woolen toga *pulla*; women wear white dresses [*stolae*]. If manumitted, the deceased's Freedmen join the funeral procession wearing tall caps, symbolic of their new status. Only Senators possess the right to display wax

masks [*imagines*] of their ancestors during this procession. The funeral party might pause in the forum for a public eulogy [*laudatio funebris*] if the deceased was a well-known citizen. The procession leaves the city limits to reach the local cemetery. The funeral ends with a banquet [*cena novendialis*] at the family tomb.

Corpses are burned on pyres. The ashes are washed in wine or water and collected in an urn. The urn is placed in a marked niche [*loculus*] in the tomb. A funeral club will own a communal tomb called a "dovecot" [*columbarium*] because of the sheer number of niches in the walls. Some individual urns are buried under tombstones or simple grave markers. While cremation is presently more fashionable than burial in the Imperium, some wealthy citizens prefer to be interred in a coffin [*area*], especially an elaborately decorated sarcophagus made of Assian stone that can consume a corpse in 40 days. Others are embalmed using Aegyptian techniques or encased inside gypsum plaster.

APPEARANCE

Grooming and personal hygiene is a sign of being civilized. Only barbarians wear dirty clothes, have unkempt hair and refuse to bathe daily. Clothing must be cleaned frequently by a fuller [*fullo*]. Hair and makeup is applied by a trained slave girl [*ornatrix*]; men visit the barber [*tonsor*] daily for a trim and shave and the baths for exercise and a refreshing cold water plunge.

Attire

The toga, made from the finest wool, is the signature outer garment of the Roman male; only a citizen of the Imperium is allowed to wear it (with the strange exception of the female prostitute). Since it is expensive to purchase and clean, the toga is usually reserved for formal events. In addition, the large woolen toga is difficult to wrap around one's body in a proper manner. Attendant slaves are often necessary to create the *sinus* folds that fall from the left shoulder and the

umbo folds that can be used to form a hood during acts of piety. The tunic is the everyday article of clothing for citizens of the Imperium. Short-sleeved and tied at the waist, the versatile tunic may be dyed or decorated in many styles.

Women in the Imperium wear tunics as well, but a married woman will wear a long dress [*stola*] with a shawl [*palla*]. Sandals are the preferred footwear in the hot Mediterranean weather. Men, especially Foreigners and soldiers, might wear a military cloak [*sagum*], hooded cloak [*caracallus*] and trousers [*braca*] in colder climates. A *dalmatica* is simply a long-sleeved tunic but is considered effeminate by conservative Romans.

Hair

While clothing fashion has remained relatively the same for hundreds of years, hairstyles for women change frequently from simple buns to piles of curls to exotic braiding. To create these elaborate coiffures, *ornatrices* use an iron curling rod [*calamistrum*]. Dyeing is common, especially the blonde or red of a northern Foreigner. Since the new Emperor, a young man of 23 years, refuses to grow facial hair, most men have recently abandoned the philosopher's beard instituted by Hadrian in favor of the classic Roman clean-shaven face. The close-cropped legionary look is particularly popular among Senators and Equestrians.

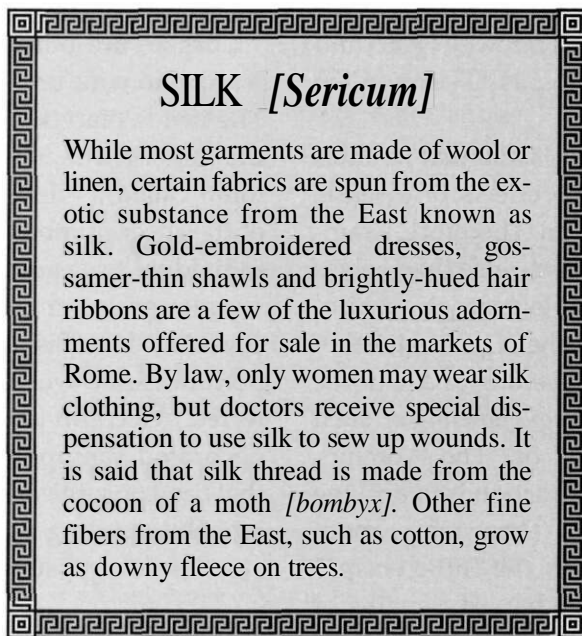
Makeup

Roman women spend considerable amounts of time carefully arranging their facial features in polished silver mirrors. To achieve a whitened face, a matron will apply a base layer of chalk or white lead. Antimony or saffron eyeshadow, ochre rouge and red lead lipstick complete a

woman's cosmetic kit. Women also use perfumes and creams to add to their allure.

Jewelry

The most essential piece of jewelry for any Roman is the brooch [*fibula*], a safety pin for fastening clothes. Women adorn themselves with earrings, necklaces, bracelets, armbands and anklets. On their fingers, Romans wear rings like the plain gold bands of the Equestrians, seal rings to make impressions in wax and magnificent engraved rings set with gemstones [*gemmati annuli*]. Certain Patrician families will only wear iron rings to symbolize the military victories of their ancestors during the Republic.



FOOD

"From the egg to the apples. [Ab ovo usque ad mala]"

—Latin idiom for comprehensiveness

The basic Roman diet consists of grain, olives and vegetables. Wheat is ground to make bread and barley to make a hot porridge [*puls*]. While olives are excellent snacks, most olives are pressed for oil used in cooking and as a condiment. Vegetables and legumes such as artichokes, asparagus, beans, beets, cabbage, carrots, celery, chickpeas, cucumbers, garlic, leeks, lentils, lettuce, onions, parsnips, peas and radishes supply vitamins and protein. More expensive and rare are fresh fruits, meats and fish. Orchards around the Imperium grow apples, dates, figs, grapes, pears, plums and pomegranates. Pork, beef and chicken supplemented by freshly killed game (venison, boar and

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quail) provide meat for stews and sausages. Seafood such as fish, eels, oysters, lobster and squid are kept in tanks until prepared. Romans rely heavily on spices and condiments because they generally dislike the natural taste of foods. Mortars and pestles grind fresh herbs and exotic spices, like black pepper [*piper*], saffron and cinnamon for flavoring dishes. *Garum* is a strong sauce made from fermented fish innards and herbs. *Lz-quamen* and *muria* are special varieties of fish sauce that use different combinations of fish and shellfish. Inventive cooks cater to the fanciful tastes of the elite by preparing delicacies such as dormice, snails, camel heels, lark tongues, flamingos, parrots and peacocks.

Cooking space is limited in the small apartments in the crowded cities. Even a small charcoal brazier is a luxury to a typical Plebeian family. Most city dwellers grab takeout meals from taverns [*thermopolia*]. For the rich who can afford a private kitchen, a cook [*coquus*] and his slaves prepare food over a charcoal or wood stove. Presentation and appearance is important when serving dishes at a formal dinner. For example, Petronius describes the main course of Trimalchio's dinner as a large platter of meats, seafood and other dainties arranged as the zodiac: a steak for Taurus, two mullets for Pisces, an African fig for Leo, et cetera.

The three meals of the day are breakfast [*ientaculum*], midday lunch [*prandium*] and an evening dinner [*cena*]. The first two meals of the day

are light, sometimes consisting of a piece of bread and some olive oil. The final meal is the main one and when formal, can be a lengthy affair. A proper upper class *cena* is comprised of

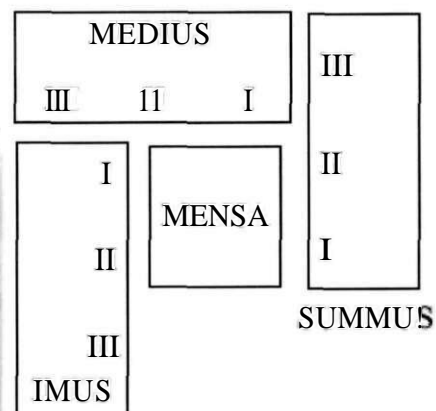
three courses, appetizers [*gustatio*], main courses [*primae mensae*] and desserts [*secundae mensae*]. Eggs, olives and raw vegetables are usually served to guests during the *gustatio*, accompanied by sweet or honey wines. The *primae mensae* are communal dishes of meat and fish, varying in style and preparation. Honey pastries, fresh fruit and cheeses are served as *secundae mensae*. Slaves serve these dishes on fine Samian tableware [*terra sigillata*], bronze vessels and glass plates to reclining guests on couches [*triclinia*]. Diners are arranged by social status around a square table [*mensa*] with

WINE [*Vinum*]

"In wine, there is truth. [In vino veritas]"
— Roman proverb

Wine is the universal beverage of the Imperium, enjoyed in all of its varieties from sweet whites to dry reds. Local vineyards spring up wherever grapevines can thrive. The most celebrated and expensive wines come from the Greek islands (Chian, Rhodian), the Alban hills near Rome (Velletrian, Setian), the plains of Latium (Caecuban), the northern borders of Campania (Falernian) and the coastline around Naples (Surrentinum). On the other end of the spectrum are cheap vinegary wines such as *acetum* and *posca*. Only Foreigners drink undiluted wine; civilized peoples cut raw wine with water in a mixing bowl [*cratera*]. Other ingredients are also added to wine, such as spices and honey. *Mulsum*, warm honey wine, is often served as an appetizer.

one side left clear for efficient table service. Medius III is reserved for the guest of honor, while the host generally reclines next to him at Imus I:





Formal parties call for a number of diners in multiples of nine to complete the seating chart. If a host and his wife are expecting ten guests for dinner, they must be sure to invite six more in order to have the required eighteen.

RELIGION

"I am afraid that some gods may perish simply from neglect."

—Varro

To a Roman, religion and faith are not coupled. Religion is an action, a prayer to be uttered, a ritual to perform, a sacrifice to be made or a taboo to be avoided. The continuation of sacred acts is crucial to the safety and prosperity of the Imperium. Augustus revived traditional Roman state religion because he believed that the proper rites had been neglected for too long and had actively contributed to the chaos of the Civil Wars. The gods simply require these things. It is mankind's duty to provide them.

Faith is a private belief. Roman society does value piety [*pietas*]. Peace and harmony with family, fellow citizens and the gods are essential to being a good Roman. However, there is no Roman holy book that codifies morals or ethics. With no official dogma, Romans are free to have disparate thoughts and opinions about the nature of the gods and the meaning of life. Schools of philosophy and several of the Eastern mystery cults ardently declare that they possess the true paths to enlightenment.

Romans are tolerant of other people's gods except where the god is irredeemably barbarous: requiring human sacrifice or promoting civil dissent. In fact, they are quick to associate a local god with a Roman equivalent in order to ease the assimilation of a conquered people into the Imperium. For example, before the Roman occupation of Britannia, the Britons revered a war god named Alator. Now the subjects of the imperial province of Britannia know him as Mars Alator, One religion that Romans find difficult to tolerate is Judaism because its followers refuse to worship any other deity other than Iotape, the Hebrew God.

CHAPTER VI PAX ROMANA

GUARDIAN SPIRITS [*Lares*]

The official state religion is expressed publicly in inscriptions, monuments, festivals and community rituals. A quieter, more private religion is conducted on a smaller scale. Pious Romans pray daily to the *lares*, the gods that look after the family and the home. A *lararium* is a room in the house that contains the shrine to these guardian spirits. *Dipennies* are also protectors of the household. The family sets aside salt and a small portion of every meal for these spirits. The chief guardian spirit of the family, the *genius*, lives inside the current *pater familias*. The *genius*, often represented as a snake, is venerated on the *pater familias*' birthday.

THE EASTERN CULTS

Some satisfy their need for spiritual knowledge on a personal level by participating in a mystery cult. These cults, imported from the Eastern provinces, offer a more individual revelation on the secrets of immortality and the meaning of existence. Celebrants of the Eleusinian mysteries gather each year in Athens to initiate new members into a thousand-year tradition. Although officially banned since 568 AUC (186 BC), the Bacchantes, the women followers of Bacchus, continue to engage in the *orgia* with wild abandon. Also known as Magna Mater, Cybele is a mother goddess originally worshipped in Phrygia. Her eunuch priests [*galli*] conduct strange rites, such as a ritual bath of bull's blood [*taurobolium*], for Cybele and her consort Attis. Egyptian priests of Isis, with shaven-heads and holy rattles [*sistra*], initiate new members into her mysteries where they learn about her husband Serapis and her son Harpocrates. Christianity, based on the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, puts forward a radical philosophy of universal love. Once considered a mere annoyance, more and more Ro-

mans view this sect as a threat to the Imperium's stability and have proposed plans for its extermination. While mainly restricted to members of the Slave rank, it is gaining a foothold in the numerous populations that bear a grudge against Roman oppression.

FESTIVALS

No special day is set aside each week for worship. The official religious calendar is made up of festivals [*feriae* or *dies ferialis*]. The following are some of the festivals in the Imperium. See CHAPTER VII: LUDI, p. 123-124 for more festivals.

Parentalia (February 13-21)

Honors the dead in private and a public ceremony [*Feralia*] on the final day. All temples are closed during this festival. No weddings may occur and Romans do not wear any symbols of their religious or political office.

Lupercalia (February 15)

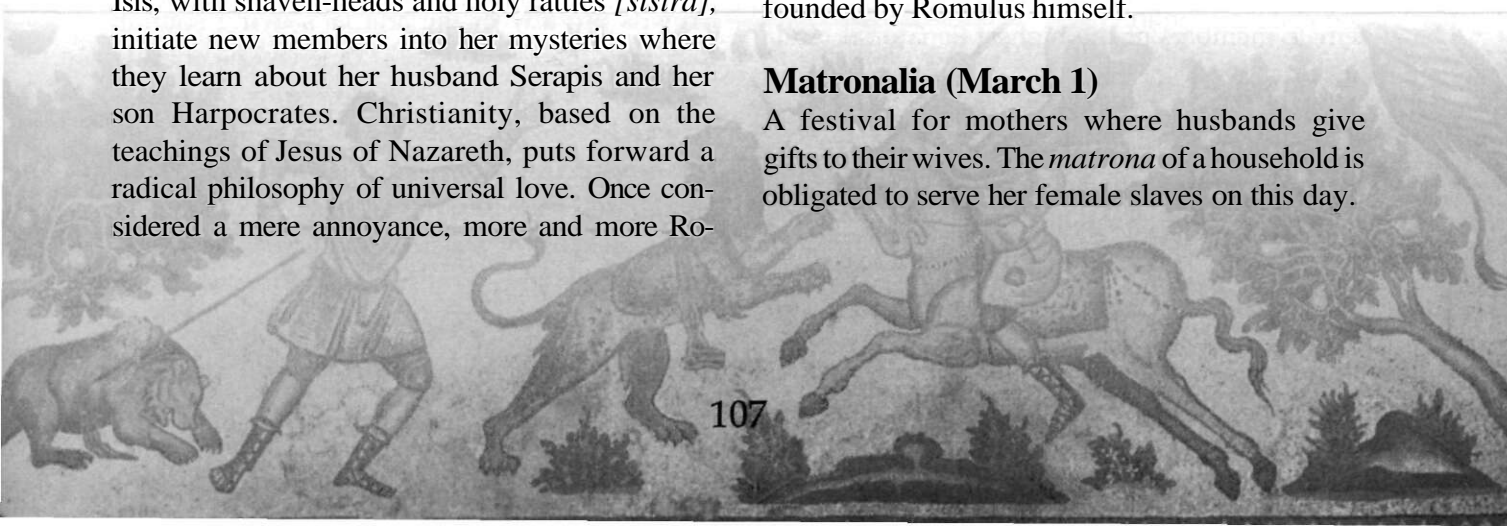
A fertility festival that involves a sacrifice of goats and a dog at the Lupercal cave where Romulus and Remus were reared by the she-wolf. The wolf-priests wipe the foreheads of naked young men of Senatorial rank with blood and wool soaked in milk. The men then run through the streets whipping bystanders with the bloody strips of the sacrificed goatskin.

Equirria (February 27 and March 14)

Honors Mars with horse races in the Campus Martius. This festival is said to have been founded by Romulus himself.

Matronalia (March 1)

A festival for mothers where husbands give gifts to their wives. The *matrona* of a household is obligated to serve her female slaves on this day.



Liberalia (March 17)

Celebrates the coming of spring. Citizens make sacrifices and recite crude songs for Liber Pater and his consort Libera. Traditionally, people hang hand-made masks on trees for good luck.

Parilia (April 21)

A festival for Pales, the god of shepherds. Farmers purify their sheep with sulfurous smoke and clean their pens. The shepherds dance around a bonfire after washing themselves with dew and drinking fresh milk.

Lemuria (May 9,11,13)

Appeases the roaming, unburied spirits of the dead. At midnight on each of the three days, barefoot Romans walked through their homes dropping nine black beans for the hungry ghosts.

Volcanalia (August 23)

Honors Volcanus and his consorts Maia and Hora. Those associated with the control of fulminata make sure that this festival is done right. No one wants a repeat of the Vesuvius disaster.

Fontinalia (October 13)

A festival for the god of springs, Fons. Romans toss garlands of flowers into bubbling springs and wells.

Bona Dea (December 3)

Conducted by the Vestal Virgins for the welfare of the Roman state. This secret ritual takes place at night at the house of a senior magistrate. Only female members of the highest Senatorial families can attend.

Saturnalia (December 17-23)

Honors Saturn, the god of seed sowing. A time of celebration, the Saturnalia involves the giving of gifts and the expression of good wishes. Busi-

nesses close and people wear colorful festival clothing, including the soft felt cap [*pilleus*]. Some rules are reversed during this time. For example, masters serve slaves on the final day and public gambling is legal.

PRAYER

Prayers are entreaties to the gods to fulfill a specific request, usually performed at a shrine or temple. Romans usually choose the god or goddess who has dominion over a particular sphere. For example, Roman citizens with romantic problems pray to Venus. A vow is similar to a prayer, but it is conditional. A person making a vow promises to carry out certain actions if the god grants the request. The pontiffs [*pontifices*] record vows of an official nature made by Senators.

SACRIFICE

A sacrifice is the offering of a physical item to the gods which often accompanies a prayer. Sacrifices may take the form of libations, incense, wheat cakes or animals. The ritual slaughter of an animal occurs on an altar outside of the god's temple. The animals, commonly pigs or oxen, must be unblemished and the appropriate color for the deity: white for the gods of the heavens, reddish-brown for the gods of the earth and black for the gods of the Netherworld. It invalidates the rite if the animal hesitates on its way to the altar or shrinks away from the knife. The priest's assistants secure the animal and kill it; the *victimarius* holds the animal steady while the *popa* slits its throat. A flute player [*tibicen*] drowns out any of the animal's dying sounds that could be considered ill omens. The entrails are burned on the altar as the offering to the god. To create billowing smoke, wine is poured on the roasting innards. The rest of the animal is cooked and shared in a communal feast. Every step of the ritual must be exact for the smallest mistake renders the sacrifice null and void.

DIVINATION

THE GODS

Romans look for omens because the gods send messages to mankind. The astrologer [*astrologus*] believes that these portents are in the stars, while the dream-interpreter [*coniator*] sees prophecy and meaning in a person's nightmares. The art of augury [*auspicium*] does not entail a prediction of the future, but rather an indication of divine approval. To determine a favorable or unfavorable answer for a specific course of action, diviners observe five types of events: phenomena in the sky [*ex caelo*], the behavior of wild birds [*ex avibus*], the feeding habits of the sacred chickens [*ex tripudiis*], the activities of four-legged beasts [*ex quadrupedibus*] and the incidence of unusual and dire happenings [*ex diris*] such as miracles [*prodigia*] and monstrous births [*monstra*].

Oracles or centers of divine prophecy exist in the Imperium, mostly in the Eastern provinces. At Delphi, the Pythia still delivers messages from her tripod chair; at Didyma, the prophetess of Apollo dips her foot into the sacred spring for revelation. The Sibylline Books are kept in the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine Hill. When presented with an extraordinary event or prodigy that no man can explain, the Senate will order the Board of Fifteen [*Quindecimviri Sacris Faciendis*] to consult the Books for an answer.

The Roman gods are not perfect beings, but they are both immortal and powerful. Many of them have distinct personalities and demand peculiar rituals, commanding every aspect of life from the wheat harvest to locks on doors. Supernatural spirits [*numina*], both great and small, are everywhere.

The twelve great gods [*di consentes*] of the Roman pantheon are the most commonly worshipped. The most important of the *di consentes* are Jupiter, Juno and Minerva who are known as the Capitoline Triad. Most Roman cities have a Capitoline temple dedicated to these three deities.

Apollo

God of Healing, Divination and the Arts. He is also associated with the sun. His shrines are often oracles of prophecy. He inspires poets and musicians.

Ceres

Goddess of Farming and the Countryside. She is the harbinger of spring and the regenerative power of nature. Her emblem is the wheat stalk. She causes the crops to grow for a bountiful harvest.

Diana

Goddess of Hunting, Nature and the Moon. She is the protector of women and the guardian of wild groves.

THE SACRED CHICKENS [*Pulli*]

The eating behavior of the sacred chickens [*pulli*] is an excellent predictor of success in military actions. They are kept in cages and accompany emperors and generals on campaign. The *pullarius*, an augur who specializes in interpreting their behavior [*ex tripudiis*] and is responsible for taking care of the caged birds. When the *auspices* are taken, the *pullarius* opens the cage and offered feed to the chickens. The sign of divine favor, called *tripidium solistimum*, is when the chickens eat quickly and greedily and the grain drops from their beaks to the ground. For this reason, the chickens are kept hungry before major battles.

Shortly before the naval battle of Drepana during the first Punic War, the consul Publius Claudius Pulcher was eager for the fight and ordered the *pullarius* to take the *auspices*. When he was told that the chickens would not eat, he angrily stated, "If they will not eat, let them drink instead!" He then seized the cage and threw the chickens overboard to drown. On that day, the Carthaginian navy handed Rome its greatest naval defeat, sinking 93 of 123 ships.

Iuno

Goddess of Childbirth and Fertility. She is the consort of Iuppiter. She looks after the state as a divine mother.

Iuppiter

God of Government and Leadership. He is the chief of the gods, lord of the skies, the hurler of thunderbolts and consecrator of oaths. As Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, "The Best and Greatest", he represents the might of the Imperium.

Mars

God of Warfare and the Frontiers. He is Mars Ultor, the bloody god that avenges and Mars Invictus, the invincible god who leads the legions against foes. His animals are the wolf and the woodpecker. He is also associated with farming.

Mercurius

God of Travel, Trade and Thieves. He is the messenger of the gods. He wears a winged hat and winged shoes and carries the caduceus staff. He oversees the activities of merchants and guilds.

Minerva

Goddess of Crafts and Strategems. She is the weaver and the virgin warrior who outthinks her opponents.

Neptunus

God of the Sea and Horses. He is the lord of the oceans, rivers and lakes. Armed with a trident, he commands the winds and waves to misdirect ships or wreck fleets.

Venus

Goddess of Sex and Well-Being. She is the consort of Mars. She may promote harmony or inflame desire in mortals.

Vesta

Goddess of the Hearth and Household. She is the eternal flame and is never represented as an an-

thropomorphic being. She is attended by the Vestal Virgins.

Volcanus

God of Fire and Engineering. He is the power of volcanoes and earthquakes. As Vulcan Mulciber, he is the god of smelting metals and smiths. His skin is stained black from the forge.

Romans also worship hundreds of minor gods such as Robigus (god of mildew) and Bellona (goddess of war). For the gods of the Netherworld [*di inferni*], see CHAPTER IX: ARCANA, p. 166.

Asclepius

God of Medicine. He is the son of Apollo and the mortal Coronis. He is the god of doctors and all those who heal by craft. A snake usually accompanies him.

Bacchus

God of Wine, Gambling and Culture. He is the Merry Lord who enjoys the fruits of life. He also has a darker aspect as the unbridled Wrathful Lord who encourages his followers to tear animals limb for limb. He wears a crown of ivy and often rides a panther.

Hercules

God of Victory and Enterprise. He is the deified hero of legend who lends his strength to mankind. He wears the Nemean lionskin and carries a club.

Ianus

God of Beginnings. He is the father of creation and the first god mentioned in prayer or sacrifice. He is the god of doorways and gates. He has two faces looking in opposite directions.

Quirinus

God of Secrets. He is the deified Romulus, the founder of the city and the keeper of its mysteries.

CHAPTER VI PAX ROMANA

Saturnus

God of Sowing. He is the germinating seed that creates life from the earth. His temple serves as the treasury for the Imperium.

Silvanus

God of Pastures and Uncultivated Fields. As King of the Wilderness, he is attended by satyrs and nymphs. He is a popular god among the rural population.

PRIESTS

The Imperium needs to placate the gods to ensure its survival. As the safety of the state relies on the successful execution of rituals, well-trained priests are a vital part of society. However, a priestly caste creates other problems. In Eastern kingdoms, priests have a history of using their religious authority to control vast temple treasuries and influence political affairs. So, the practical Romans decided that priesthoods should be public offices. Some are crucial for political advancement in the established career paths. Roman priests are organized into four major colleges (the pontiffs, the augurs, the board of fifteen and the feast organizers) and minor ones (the brothers of Arval, the wolf priests, the leapers of Mars and the companions).

The Pontiffs [*Pontifices*]

The most important institution of the Roman state religion is the Pontifical College [*Collegium Pontificum*]. Sixteen priests, the "bridge-builders" or *pontifices*, control the college and most official cult activity. The chief pontiff is the *pontifex maximus*, an appointment that has been held by the Emperor since Augustus. The pontiffs determine the yearly festival schedule and oversee the activities of the *rex sacrorum*, the Etruscan college, the *flamines* and the Vestal Virgins.

The King of Sacred Things

[*Rex Sacrorum*]

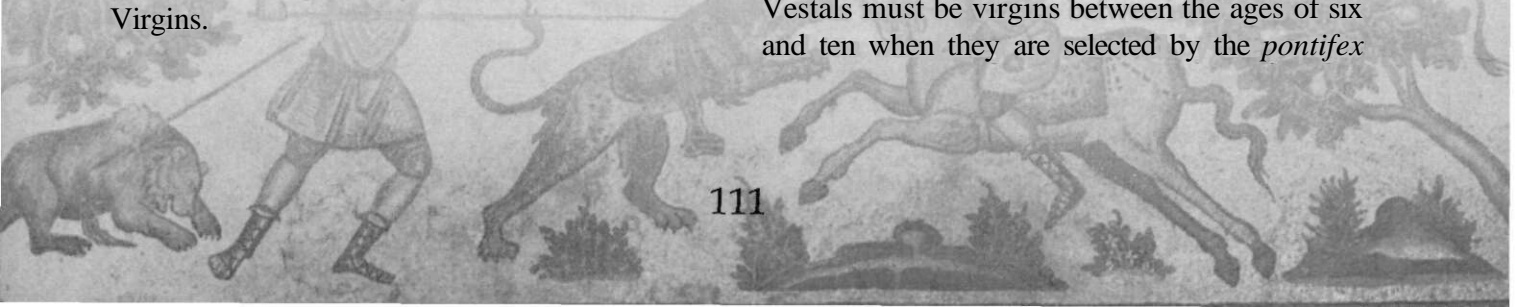
Under the Monarchy, the Etruscan priest-kings were the heads of the state religion. With the removal of the king in the Republic, his duties were transferred to a new official, the *rex sacrorum*. The King of Sacred Things is a member of the Senatorial rank (traditionally, a Patrician) who is not allowed to hold any other religious office. Assisted by his wife the *regina*, he performs major state sacrifices on behalf of the people of Rome.

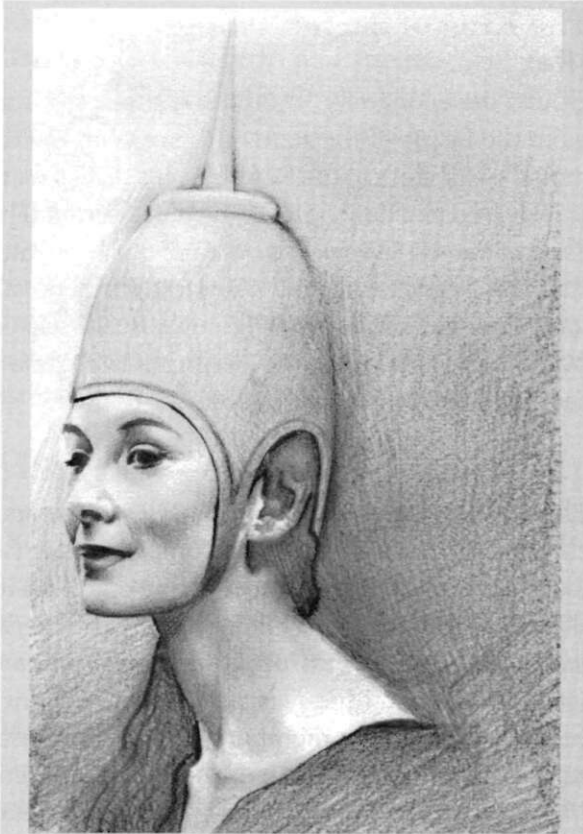
The Flamens [*Flamines*]

The *flamines* are priests appointed to serve specific gods in the Imperium. In Rome, there are fifteen flamens, each with a distinctive epithet. The three major flamens [*flamines majores*] are the *flamen dialis*, devoted to Juppiter, the *flamen martialis*, to Mars and the *flamen quirinalis*, to Quirinus. They must be members of the Senatorial rank. The remaining dozen, the minor flamens [*flamines minores*], are elected from the Plebeian rank and are devoted to other deities. Flamens hold the office for life, unless discharged for incompetence or failure to perform his functions. The *flamen volcanalis* of Pompeii surely would have been compelled to resign for his role in the Vesuvius disaster. In public, a flamen will wear a conical hat [*apex*] made of white leather and a woolen mantle [*laena*].

The Vestals [*Vestales*]

The Vestals are six select daughters from Patrician families who tend the sacred eternal fire [*ignis inextinctus*] of Vesta, goddess of hearth and household. The flame is a symbol of the Imperium; its extinction would be considered a fearful omen. These priestesses are responsible for other important rites, such as watching over the Palladium, the ancient wooden statue of Athena saved from the destruction of Troy. Expected to emulate Vesta's purity and chastity, the Vestals must be virgins between the ages of six and ten when they are selected by the *pontifex*





ANTONIA LOXA

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Priestess of Ceres [*Flamina Cerialia*]

Attributes: III, A 9, P13, V 9

Humors: S3 (Joyful)

MP: 6, **WP:** 9/18, **HP:** 3

Patron: Ceres

Skills: * Administrate 4, *Farm 4, *Forage 3, *Harvest (Wheat) 4, City 4, Coin 4, Customs (Plebeian) 5, Food 3, Harmony 3, Language (Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Magic 3, Scribe 3, Trade 3

Spells: Cornucopia 0, Forethought -1

Background: The ever-happy Antonia Loxa is the third of seven daughters for the Antonius family who are millers by trade, providing fresh flour to the bakeries in Rome and Ostia. Because of her family's fine reputation and the fact that she is such a delight to be around, her election to *flmnina* was a landslide. Antonia is scrupulous when it comes to performing her rites lest she incur the wrath of Ceres and invite famine or blight. However, she has been secretly learning spells from Eleazar, a ludeaen slave who works in the mill. She feels that as long as she limits her use of magic to beneficial acts, she is not transgressing against Ceres. Nevertheless, she keeps her new knowledge to herself.

maximus (i.e. the Emperor). They must remain so until the end of their service, a minimum of thirty years. A Vestal who fails in her duties receives a beating; one that violates her vow of chastity is buried alive. In contrast to this harsh discipline, the Vestals enjoy many benefits, such as choice searing and luxury transportation, at the expense of the state. They keep their hair very short and dress conservatively — a white linen stola and either a wreath of red and white wool [*torta infula*] secured by a white headband [*vitta*] or an oblong cloth headdress [*suffibulum*].

The Augurs [*Augures*]

The second college of Roman priests is the College of Augurs. Its priests, the *augures*, are diviners, interpreting the will of the gods from observed events. Augurs wear an embroidered toga [*toga praetexta*] and carry the sacred crooked staff [*lituus*] as symbols of their office. The augurs have authority over the Mithraic college.

The Feast Organizers [*Epulones*]

The newest of the four major colleges of Roman priests, ten epulones arrange public feasts, especially the great banquet of Iuppiter [*epulum Iovis*] that occurs after the games [*ludi*]. They are elected from among the Plebeian rank.

The Board of Fifteen

[*Quindecemviri Sacris Faciendis*]

Inexplicably, there are sixteen, not fifteen, priests in this college. The Board of Fifteen oversees the worship of all foreign gods in Rome, such as Isis and Cybele. These priests are responsible for guarding the Sibylline books, and for interpreting them at the Senate's request. Service on the Board of Fifteen is a customary step in a Senatorial career.

The Brothers of Arval

[*Fratres Arvales*]

The Emperor and eleven men from esteemed Senatorial families comprise the Brothers of

CHAPTER VI PAX ROMANA

Arval, the oldest group of priests in Rome. Their duty is to make public sacrifices to ensure fertility for the crops. The Brothers conduct their most important rite outside of Rome in their sacred grove near the Via Campania. This three-day festival is for Dea Dia, a mysterious goddess of sunlight and growth. The Brothers chant an ancient song [*carmen aruale*] during rituals. Its precise meaning has been lost over the years. Being a Brother of Arval is a lifetime appointment - this honor cannot be taken away for any reason other than death, including exile or imprisonment. A *frater arvalis* wears a crown of grain stalks [*corona spicea*] during official rituals.

The Wolf Priests [*Luperci*]

Any young man of Senatorial rank, especially of Patrician background, is expected to serve at least one three-year term as a *lupercus*. According to tradition, Romulus and Remus founded the priesthood. Thus, the wolf priests are separated into two rival colleges, the followers of Romulus [*Quinctilii*] and the followers of Remus [*Fabii*]. Their main function is to preside over the festival of Lupercalia in honor of the she-wolf who suckled the divine twins. Many older Romans — who forget that they too were once young — find the bizarre and indecent behavior of the *luperci* distasteful.

The Leapers of Mars [*Salii*]

As special priests of Mars, these men of Equestrian rank process through the streets of Rome performing a dance and singing the *carmen saliare* to inaugurate and close the traditional military campaign season. On March 19 and October 19, the Leapers don archaic battle gear worn by Roman soldiers during the Monarchy: a painted tunic [*tunica picta*], a breastplate covered by a short red cloak [*trabea*], a bronze conical helmet [*apex*], spear [*hasta*] and a figure-eight shield [*ancile*]. Juppiter gave one of these shields to Numa Pompilius as a gift; the rest are copies. Of course the *salii* do not reveal which is the original.

The Companions [*Sodales*]

Just as flamens serve the traditional Roman gods, Freedmen priests and priestesses called "companions" [*sodales*] tend to the cults of deified emperors. The twenty-one *sodales Augustales* attend to Augustus and the Julia family. Similar priests are assigned to Vespasian [*sodales Flavii*], Hadrian [*sodales Hadrianales*] and Avidius Cassius [*sodales Avidii*].

ECONOMY

The Imperium's economy is both vibrant and varied. Although its great prosperity depends largely on its agricultural plantations and slavery, Roman manufacturing and trade are extensive and quite profitable. Roman trade lanes are nearly global in scale, reaching from the now-conquered British Isles to the tribesmen south of Nubia to the exotic merchants that travel from India and China [*Serica*].

FINANCE

"Taxes are the sinews of the state."

—Justinian

Financial accounting and a regulated currency are major factors that contribute to the success of Roman trade. The responsibility for keeping accurate public financial records and collecting taxes falls to several political and military posts, such as a financial deputy [*quaestor*] and a legionary tribune [*tribunus*]. The Imperium needs taxes [*tributum*] from its subject provinces to fill the treasury [*fiscus*] in order to pay for defense, administration, infrastructure and social programs. The cost of maintaining a standing army and navy is extremely high, even without the added expenditure required to pay the salaries of government staff, to build new roads and harbors, to support the postal service [*cursus publicus*] and to underwrite the distribution of free

grain. Local tax collectors [*publicani*] keep account of applicable property tax [*solī*], poll taxes [*capitis*] and customs duties [*portoria*]. Other taxes are levied on the sale and manumission of slaves, transfer of estates in inheritance and the proceeds from public auctions.

Accounting and banking rarely net substantial profit. Most workers in the financial sphere are middle-class craftsmen such as the die-makers, engravers and artists employed to manufacture coins. Mint officials [*nummularii*] who oversee operations and check incoming lots for forgeries are well paid but do not retire rich. However, there is one despised class that regularly grows wealthy: the moneylenders [*argentarii*]. These private bankers change coins for a small fee, store valuables for a rental charge and offer short-term loans with a high rate of interest (6-10%). An *argentarius* usually owns or hires unsympathetic collection agents to recover payments from delinquent borrowers. An ex-gladiator or boxer is an effective tool for these loan sharks. Senators and Equestrians try to avoid these men of ill repute, opting to safeguard their own holdings and network within their own social status to secure interest-free loans.

Within the borders of the Imperium, people conduct business transactions with a unified and regulated currency. Coins are stamped from precious metals at mints. While the Emperor directly controls gold and silver coinage, the Senate or a local government may issue brass and bronze coins as long as they conform to Imperial standards of weight and purity. The obverse of a Roman coin depicts the current Emperor's portrait surrounded by inscriptions detailing his titles and honorifics. The reverse design often honors a deity or commemorates a victory. Markings on the reverse identify the mint and workshop [*officina*] where it was struck.

In the Eastern provinces of the Imperium, a *sestertius* is called a *drachm* and the *denarius*, a *tetradrachm*. The purchasing power of one *sestertius* is difficult to translate into a modern equivalent

since the economy of *FVLMINATA* is radically different. For example, a take-out meal from a *caupona* is typically one *as*, but a formal dinner party may cost upwards of 10,000 *sestertii*.

Currency of the Imperium		
Coin	Metal	Value
Aureus	Gold [<i>Aurum</i>]	100 <i>sestertii</i>
Denarius	Silver [<i>Argentum</i>]	4 <i>sestertii</i>
Sestertius	Brass [<i>Orichalchum</i>]	1 <i>sestertius</i>
Dupondius	Brass [<i>Orichalchum</i>]	¹ / ₄ of a <i>sestertius</i>
As	Bronze [<i>Aes</i>]	% of a <i>sestertius</i>

FARMING

Agriculture is the primary industry of the Imperium. The wealth of the Senatorial rank is invested in farmland. As Rome's landed aristocrats, Senators own and manage these vast holdings. The largest landowner is the Emperor. Although the small peasant farm and the villa-estate remain producers of agricultural goods, the large slave plantation [*latifundium*] in Italia and the provinces dominates the agricultural industry to meet the increasing demand for food by the expanding empire, its teeming cities and armies on campaign. Specialty crops, such as Greek honey and high quality vines, continue to be cultivated on private estates. See CHAPTER IV: IMPERIUM, p. 74 for more information on Roman villas.

Management of *latifundia* is more concerned with the volume and speed of growing and harvesting rather than the efficiency or quality. Overseers [*vilici*] drive hundreds of slaves to plow, seed and reap crops. Disobedient slaves are imprisoned in the *ergastulum*, a cramped underground dungeon. The harvest is stored in granaries or barns; wheat is threshed and milled

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for flour. Most of the wheat plantations are concentrated in the African provinces, especially Aegyptus. Olives and grapes are loaded into presses, crushed and stored in vats [*dolia*] to make oil or wine, respectively. Hispania is widely noted for its olive groves. Other slaves tend to livestock in stables and animal pens. Cattle produce dairy products, meat and hides. Pigs furnish meat and lard. Sheep are bred for wool and parchment skins. The best wool is from the city of Miletus in the province of Asia.

Slaves employ tools, such as the plow, scythe [*falx*] and hoe, to work the land. Oxen and mules assist in the heavy tasks. Since large-scale farming is based on slave labor and draft animals, there traditionally has been no incentive to harness technology to ease the methods of production. However, when the Imperium is confronted with shortages, Roman ingenuity corrects the situation with a small improvement. The Gallic reaping machine [*vallus*] leaves many stalks behind, but harvests grain faster than any man does. Grain is more easily separated from the chaff by the Greek threshing sledge [*tribulum*]. Mills on the frontiers have begun to

use water and wind power in order to provide enough flour for the legions. A multi-purpose implement, the *rastrum*, can be used to clear brush, break up earth clods after plowing and plant vegetables.

HUNTING AND FISHING

Wild game is a valued part of the Roman diet, a break from porridge and farm-reared pork sausage. Hunters [*venatores*] track and kill large prey, such as boars and deer, or drive smaller animals like hares into waiting netting. Professional fowlers catch ducks, geese, quail and pheasant with snares, nets and limed twigs. As this is their livelihood, hunters are seldom honorable and employ any trick to lure quarry, staking out decoys or beating young animals to attract worried mothers.

Hunting is a sport activity as well as a professional one. It is a popular pastime for the rich while visiting their country villas. The great mythic heroes and legendary ancient kings enjoyed hunting, especially on horseback with a pack of dogs. Boar, bear, deer, wolves and foxes are the most common pursuits in the Imperium; in all cases, the thrill of the chase outweighs the kill. Large game-parks in the Eastern provinces offer exotic game, such as lions and antelope.

While the most prized fish swim in the open waters of the Mediterranean, most fishermen [*piscatores*] stick to the inlets and rocky shores for their catches. Artificial fish ponds [*piscina*] and oyster beds [*ostriaria*] are more easily managed and provide a more consistent supply of seafood. Fish is preferably eaten fresh, but drying and salting preserves the meat for later consumption. Another way of preparing fish is to ferment their innards to create *garum*, *liquamen* or *muria*. Romans apply these pungent fish sauces to other foods as a condiment or relish.

SLAVERY

Like many aspects of Roman civilization, the institution of slavery in Rome began with warfare. Captured prisoners were forced into bondage to perform manual labor instead of being condemned to death. This practice still continues; slaves are part of the spoils for victorious legions. A child born to slaves becomes the property of the parent's master. Thus, most new slaves are a result of home breeding. Capture through military campaigns or purchase through a slave dealer are other ways of obtaining new slaves. In order to pay off debts, desperate people sell themselves or their children into bondage as well.

Slaves fall into two distinct categories, servants and laborers. Some servants care for the household and the needs of its

family, such as wet nurses [*nutrices*], handmaidens [*ancillae*], valets [*cubicularii*], carriage drivers

[*acasi*], concubines [*concubinae*], gardeners [*hortulani*] and hairdressers [*ornatrices*]. In addition, other slaves work in the Imperium's civil service as clerks or cashiers since most Romans despise routine deskwork. Equestrians may own private institutions, such as banks and shipping companies, but their workers are generally slaves, including site supervisors. Landlords in Rome use servants as real estate agents and rent collectors. Laborers are slaves that perform menial physical tasks in the mines, rock quarries or the fields of the plantations [*latifundia*]. Such slaves have little hope of escaping a life of drudgery and sweat. As long as the economy flourishes, slavery continues in the Imperium. There is no financial incentive to create machines to replace the work of slaves.

To maintain a docile slave population, the government aggressively enforces the laws pertaining to class distinctions. Slaves are forbidden from military or political service. The Imperium also supports the hiring of mercenary slave hunters [*fugitivarii*] to retrieve runaway slaves. For more information about Slaves and their duties, see CHAPTER H: PERSONAE, pp. 14-15.

INDUSTRY

Just as agriculture is controlled by the Senatorial rank, industry is run by the Equestrians. Local workshops employ Plebeian craftsmen, Freedman clerks and Foreigner agents to service regional needs. Merchants and members of the workshops organize into guilds [*collegia*] to promote their craft. For large-scale manufacturing and mining, Equestrian business magnates use slaves, prisoners of war and convicts to perform dangerous and laborious tasks. Most of these operations are under Imperial control, but are leased to private industrialists to manage.

Metals

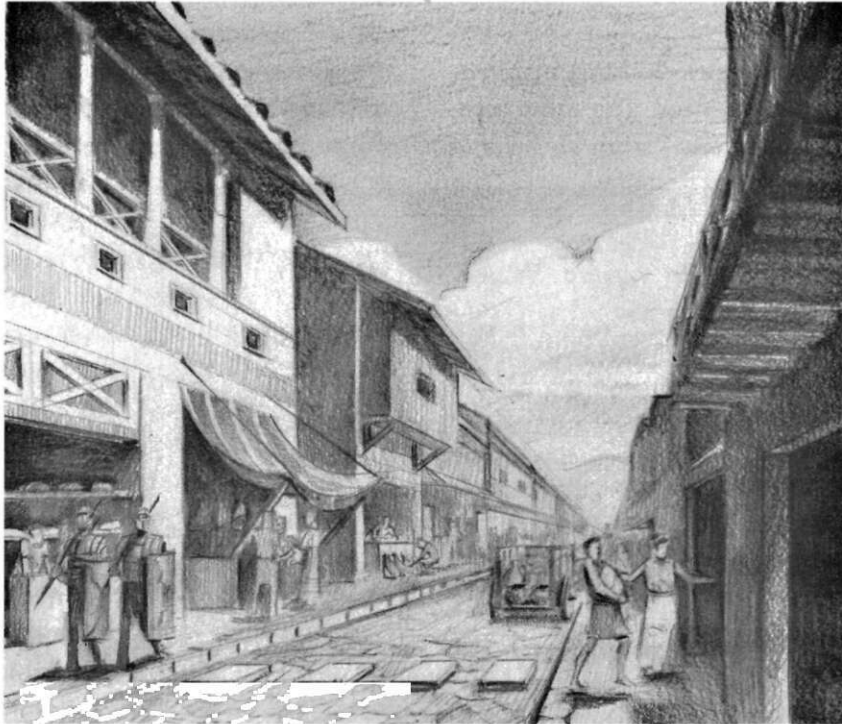
Precious and industrial metals are extracted from the earth by mining. A typical mine is a deep ver-

tical shaft with horizontal galleries carved out to access the richest veins. Mining is hazardous work; galleries and shafts can flood, collapse or trap poisonous air. Blasting with fulminata charges is also risky and only permissible with legionary supervision. Therefore, the workforce is mainly comprised of men condemned to serve in the mines [*ad metallum*]. By the dim light of oil lamps, these miners toil for hours wielding picks to loosen the rock, placing chunks of ore into baskets and hauling them to the surface for processing. Workers smelt the ores in furnaces to separate rock from metal. The liquid metal is then cast into ingots for transport. Gold [*aurum*] and silver [*argentum*] are used in coinage and jewelry. Copper [*cuprum*] mixes with tin [*stannum*] to form bronze [*aes*], with zinc to make brass [*orichalcum*]. With hammer and anvil, blacksmiths [*fabri ferrarii*] forge tools and weapons from iron [*ferrum*]. Lead workers [*plumbarii*] cast molten lead [*plumbum*] into molds to make pilum bullets, weights and water pipes.

Stone

Despite the utility of concrete, stone is a vital material in the building program of the Imperium. Its permanence and beauty is a symbol of the mighty Roman civilization. Augustus boasted that he had found Rome a city of brick and left it as a city of marble. Quarries generally supply local construction needs because of the cost and effort needed to transport immense blocks of stone over long distances. However, distinctive and highly desired stone, like Parian marble or Aegyptian porphyry, are exported across the Imperium. Quarry workers apply wooden wedges along the stone's natural cleaving planes to isolate a mass of stone. They then use chisels and hammers to cut the rough edges into a rectangular block. Stonemasons [*lapicidae*] oversee the construction of triumphal arches and monumental buildings. Sculptors shape the stone into tombstones, busts, statues or altars.

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Timber

Another key resource is timber. Although forests can be cut down for fuel or to create farmland, logs are the raw materials for manufacturing furniture, tools and weapons. Shipyards require abundant quantities of wood to build and maintain merchant boats and naval triremes. Oak [*quercus*], pine [*pinus*] and beech are the most common trees, especially in the heavily forested Germanian provinces. Lumberjacks [*lignatores*] fell trees with saws and axes. Carpenters [*fabri tignarii*] whittle and assemble the wood using rasps, planes, drills, lathes and augers. Furniture makers often cover inferior wood with veneers from more expensive wood, such as maple [*acer*], cypress [*cupressus*], citron [*citrus*] from Africa, ebony from Mauretania, and cedar [*cedrus*] from Syria.

Ceramics

Ceramics are the primary materials for the storage and protection of materials. Natural clay is dug from pits, processed and filtered. A potter [*figulus*] then shapes the malleable clay by hand

on a spinning wheel or packs the clay into molds. Clay objects, after being baked in kilns, are durable and functional; they can also be painted. Pottery vessels intended for food service range from coarse earthenware to bright red, glossy Samian tableware [*terra sigillata*]. Large two-handled *amphorae* store wine, oil and fish. Overlapping roof tiles of fired clay protect homes from thunderstorms; ceramic drainage pipes carry the rainwater away. Other items made from fired clay are oil lamps, votive figurines for temples or the *lararium*, jars [*dolia*] for storing wine and mortars [*mortaria*] for crushing herbs and spices.

Glass

Glass is formed by heating and fusing fine sea sand, soda and lime. A glassblower [*vitrarius*] turns the molten glass and fashions beautiful drinking vessels and plates. A glasscutter [*diatre-tarius*] may further enhance the value of the object by decorating it with engravings, friezes or cameos. Flat pieces of glass rolled out and set in frames form windows. Glass paste can imitate gemstones in costume jewelry.



Textiles

Textile manufacturing creates clothing, blankets, sacks, tapestries and floor rugs. The most common materials are wool [*lana*] from sheep and linen [*linteum*] from the flax plant. Silk [*sericum*] and cotton [*xylinum*] are exotic cloths from the East. Leather is reserved for more rugged uses, like sandals, shields, tents, saddles and harnesses. The first step in making cloth is to prepare the raw fibers for spinning. Sheared wool is combed thoroughly to remove impurities; harvested flax is pounded into loose strands. Secondly, the fiber is soaked in vegetable or shellfish dye for color. Next, individual fibers are drawn and wound as thread on a spindle. Weavers [*textores*] work the thread on a loom to create patterns. Spinning and weaving are still associated with the traditional role of women in Roman society, even though male weavers now outnumber females.

COMMERCE

While the private estates of Senators and Equestrians furnish the staples of wheat, oil and wine, the upper classes do purchase luxury goods. For most citizen consumers, food and finished prod-

sale in bazaars and shops. A trade agent [*negotiator*] represents a guild in all of its trading decisions and large business transactions. The details of trading in a specific commodity are left to individual merchants [*mercatores*].

The government regulates and subsidizes items considered vital to the public need, especially wheat for the distribution of free grain [*annona*] to all Roman citizens. The Imperium grants trade licenses (sometimes monopolies), ostensibly to the most dependable merchants and guilds, but more typically to the ones who curry political favor or bribe the right officials. The government has recently decreed that decorative stone and spices are vital commodities, leaving very few goods

(slaves, wild animals, silk, gems, ivory) outside of Imperial control.

Caravans over land routes exist, but the transport of most goods is by sea. A typical merchant vessel has two masts, matching steering oars and a deep hold for storing cargo. Shipwrights build these ships as sturdy as possible to sail long distances and line their hulls with lead to prevent leaks. Even so, shipping is a chancy undertaking; vessels founder on unseen rocks or misjudged shorelines, storms sink ships and pirates prowl

PIRATES [*Piratae*]

Robbers of the sea, pirates attack merchant convoys or raid coastal villages. They typically sail in swift *liburnae* or modified merchant vessels. Despite a few troublesome areas in North Africa and the Syrian coast, the Mediterranean is largely clear of piracy, largely due to the merciless campaigns undertaken during the late Republic. Pompey suppressed the legendary Cilician pirates by not only sinking their ships, but by destroying their bases. One of the tasks of the Imperial navy is to keep piracy in check. A ruthless Arabian pirate named Nabonidus currently operates in the Red Sea, menacing Roman shipping lanes. It is rumored that his flagship is a captured trireme. Fortunately, the Imperium rarely needs to ship *fulminata* through Nabonidus' territory to the legions in Nubia and Aethiopia.

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THE DOCTOR [*Medicus*]

"Physicians acquire their knowledge from our dangers, making experiments at the cost of our lives."

-Pliny the Elder

perium can accommodate the heavily-laden Imperial grain carriers that regularly shuttle between the ports of Alexandria and Ostia. Some harbors are fortified, doubling as military installations or naval bases. Thriving cities regularly spring up around busy ports.

In the cities, food and manufactured products are sold in forums, markets [*macella*] or individual shops [*tabernae*]. In addition to the daily markets, local farmers and businessmen might sponsor a fair [*mercatus*] to bring in merchandise from the countryside. Food spoils quickly, hence markets are extremely busy places, full of shoppers making their way through the crowds, merchants haggling at the top of their lungs and slave porters hauling sacks of grain or the occasional squealing pig. Food sellers measure goods on scales [*librae*] and hooked steelyards [*staterae*]. At the end of each business day, owners of butcher shops, bakeries, wine bars and jewelry stores safeguard their equipment and inventory by locking their storefronts.

MEDICINE

As with most Roman science, the art of medicine is based on Greek traditions. From Hippocrates to the anatomists of Alexandria, Greek doctors [*iatroi*] were the pioneers of diagnosis and surgery. Recent contact with India and Serica has revealed new areas of medical knowledge. The suffering throngs of the Imperium pay handsomely for the relief offered by doctors. Those who cannot afford medical care or have been given no hope for a cure, resort to prayer and folk cures. Soldiers and athletic competitors, such as charioteers and boxers, need constant medical support due to frequent injuries in dangerous activities. In *FVL MINATA*, medicine can do wonders for your ill or wounded personae. For rules on healing lost wound points, see CHAPTER III: TALI, pp. 55-56.

Most of the doctors in the Imperium are quacks who have little or no skill. To disguise their ineptitude, they employ convincing props and rely heavily on prayers and pseudo-magic. A true physician is able to charge exorbitant fees for service. Some skilled doctors are humanitarians and treat patients without checking their net worth. The role of the *medicus* is to keep temperaments in check by managing a patient's humors and to heal wounds. A doctor that specializes in surgical techniques is called a *chirurgus*.

The Roman army possesses a sizeable medical corps to promote a healthy environment and to tend to casualties. Other organizations with frequent life-threatening accidents, such as plantations [*latifundia*], chariot teams [*factiones*] and gladiator schools [*ludi*] maintain doctors and veterinarians on staff. Private doctors operate out of local clinics [*tabernae medicae*] where patients may come to see them. A successful *medicus* can earn annual fees approaching 400,000 sesterces per year. In addition, municipalities offer tax exemption [*immunitas*] to a certain number of local physicians who treat the poor. Wealthy families usually have an exclusive doctor on staff. The head physician of the Imperial court, the *archiater*, personally oversees the medical needs of the Emperor and his immediate family. While there are female doctors [*medicae*], women in medicine tend to be midwives [*obstetrices*] or nurses [*nutrices*].

TRAUMA

Doctors are also called upon to heal injuries sustained in accidents or warfare. In the congested cities, the threat of fire and collapse constantly looms for the shoddily built apartment blocks

[*insulae*]. Laborers fall off scaffolding, are hit in the head by falling roof tiles or are run over by carts. Casualties from the battlefield are rushed into a medical tent or a military hospital [*valetudinarium*]. Here, army field surgeons work long hours mending horrific wounds amid the smells of seared flesh, fresh and boiled herbs and smoky fires that keep the the cauterizing irons red-hot. In contrast to traditional medical theory that borrows from Greek philosophy, army doctors gain extremely useful practical knowledge under these difficult conditions. As the legions expand the frontiers of the Imperium, physicians and surgeons are gathering foreign medical knowledge, such as unusual suturing techniques and new drugs [*pharmaka*].

Abrasions and minor cuts are first washed with wine or vinegar to clean out debris. The wound is then treated and covered with a poultice in various combinations based on individual preference. According to ancient sources, metal shavings applied to an open wound provide faster healing. Some doctors swear by odd recipes: ointments of soot, grease and exotic spices; plasters of rennet, resin, gum and cobwebs or mixtures of fulminata, dung, crushed

RENOWNED PHYSICIANS

Hippocrates

The father of medicine; established a scientific basis for the treatment of illness; developed the original theories of the four bodily humors

Archagathus

The first physician in Rome; a wound treatment specialist [*vulnerarius*], he was nicknamed the "Executioner" [*Carnifex*] for his expert use of the scalpel

Asclepiades

A popular doctor in Republican Rome; felt that most illness was caused by stress and bad temper, as evidenced by his personal motto "Swiftly, Safely, Sweetly" [*Cito Tito lucunde*]; his most common prescriptions were wine, frequent baths and pleasant music

Cornelius Celsus

A scholar and physician during the reign of Tiberius; wrote eight books "On Medicine" [*De Medicina*] detailing the history of medicine, medical theory and surgical techniques

Archigenes

Famous doctor during Trajan's reign; focused on combating imbalances of bodily humors; developed a breakthrough theory on the nature of the pulse

Soranus

Talented physician and prolific medical writer; practiced in Rome specializing in trauma and gynecological medicine

Galen

Pompous genius from Pergamon; experimented on animals at his father's farm; studied in the medical school of Askepeion, Alexandria; acted as surgeon for the gladiator arena in Pergamon for three years; spent twenty-five years in Rome as *archiater* to Marcus Aurelius

snails and egg whites. Others maintain that wound dressings should be simple, like a compress made from the cleanest and softest wool. However, no doctor disputes the effect of the miracle drug, *ephedron*, on hemorrhages. Its mere touch staunches a patient's bleeding.

Surgery is any invasive procedure intended to treat an injury or deformity. In cases of severe trauma or growths, a *chirurgus* might be the patient's only hope. Since there are no anesthetics and only a few drugs that relieve minor pain like opium and henbane, surgeons are valued for their quickness as well as accuracy. A surgeon's tools are often his prized possessions—burnished metal hooks, scalpels, forceps, needles, pins and spoons. For specialized work, he has dilators, narrow catheters and woman's hair for fine stitching. A *collyrium* is a soluble medical stick used to probe wounds, especially those near the eye. Made of compressed starch, white lead and medical powders, the *collyrium* administers doses as the surgeon explores the injury. It can also be dissolved in a solu-

tion for imbibing. Surgical implements are carried in folding kits or in cylindrical "wound cases" [*thecae vulnerariae*].

DISEASE

Poor sanitation and diet among the citizens of the Imperium leads to disease. Colds and flus are common, with occasional outbreaks of the plague [*pestis*] decimating the populace. Overcrowded conditions help to spread the contagion in the cities or in the legionary camps. These deadly epidemics of typhus or smallpox strike young and old alike, sweeping through neighborhoods with no mercy. The Plague of Athens in 325 AUC (429 BC) claimed the life of the Greek leader Pericles. The last great plague occurred in 918 AUC (AD 166) during the reign of Marcus Aurelius when campaigning soldiers returning from the Eastern frontiers brought back a virulent souvenir to the Imperium.

Despite their impotence against plague, doctors seek to stamp out other diseases through prevention and cure. Army doctors regularly prescribe daily garlic cloves to soldiers to promote health. A healthy diet combats anemia, rickets and night blindness in young children. Even with these preventative measures, diseases may result from a severe imbalance of humors. To manage illness, doctors will prescribe bleeding, starving and purging to remove excess fluids. They will also recommend glasses of tepid water infused with herbs and spices to counteract humor imbalances. For example, sage is effective at lowering fevers. Adequate ventilation and compassionate comfort helps ease those suffering from tuberculosis and cancer.

Animal bites can transmit infection or poison as well. Spread by the swarms of mosquitoes on the humid Mediterranean coasts, malaria produces incapacitating fevers every three to four days. An incurable disease, malaria is often fatal. At best, it is extremely uncomfortable, especially in hot weather. For the bites of snakes, spiders and rabid beasts, doctors use a cure all called *theriac* that contains dozens of ingredients, one of which will hopefully counteract the poison. This universal antidote is also known as "Mithridates' Cure" [*Mithridatium*] or "tranquility" [*galene*].



EPIZELUS

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Field Surgeon [*Medicus*]

Attributes: I11, A13, P9, V9

Humors: Balanced

MP: 0, **WP:** 9/18, **HP:** 6

Patron: Apollo

Skills: *Chirurgy 6, *Medicine 6, City 2, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Dice 3, Forage 3, Gladius 3, Language (Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Move (Jump) 2, Move (March) 2, Pharmakon 4, Philosophy 2, Pilum 3, Scribe 3

Background: Lucius Aelius Epizelus is nearing his fiftieth birthday, which also marks the attainment of twenty years of service in the Imperium's legions as a field surgeon [*medicus*]. After his initial training in Athens and Alexandria, he spent the first five years of his medical career as a gladiator physician in the province of Hispania. There he learned to staunch bleeding, mend wounded tendons and reset broken bones. He also perfected quick stitch work and the application of dressings. He also learned a Stoic lack of sympathy; Epizelus does not have a warm bedside manner. At the age of thirty, Epizelus joined the legions and was assigned to a military hospital [*valetudinarium*] in Hibernia to support the campaigns against the Fiani barbarians. After fifteen years of bloodshed, Epizelus was reassigned to the VII Legion Gemina in Hispania.



CHAPTER VII

LUDI

GAMES OF LIFE AND DEATH

"Spectacles are necessary for the contentment of the masses"

—M. Cornelius Pronto

While the Senatorial and Equestrian ranks control the Imperium's government and military, Roman society could not endure without the support of the docile Plebeian masses. The government, in an effort to amuse and satisfy the Roman mob, spends huge sums of public money on public entertainment [*ludi*] during festivals. It also encourages magistrates to sponsor games with private funds, since popular support among Plebeians confers power to any Roman politician.

Public games are established by emperors or the Senate to honor a certain god or important military victory. To keep the games free for the public, the government lays out most of the expense, overseen by a committee of praetors [*Cum Ludorum*]. However, a Senator must pay the additional cost. That person is known as the *editor speculator urn*, or sponsor of the games. The Emperor himself is often the sponsor.

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The *ludi* consist of three main types of games: gladiatorial combat, chariot racing and theater. While these are the most popular, other performers participate in the *ludi*. Horse jumpers [*desultores*] and racers [*eques*] sometimes compete on the racetracks. Emperors, beginning with Hadrian, revived Greek-style athletics, especially the Olympian, Pythian, Isthmian and Nemean Games. Athletes [*athletae*] and wrestlers [*luctatores*] from the Eastern provinces compete in a variety of meets. Boxers [*pugiles*] beat each other senseless with heavy gloves [*caesti*] studded with iron spikes. With no weight-class divisions, giant bruisers dominate this brutal competition. An Imperium-wide athletics association, "The Sacred Traveling Athletes' Guild" represents these performers.

FESTIVALS

Whereas special games can be held to commemorate the crowning of a new Emperor or military victories (such as Trajan's games to celebrate his conquest of Dacia), the following presents the dates and descriptions of the most important *ludi* of the Imperium:

Ludi Megalenses (April 4-10)

Theatrical performances and circus races in honor of the eastern goddess Cybele who brought victory over Hannibal. Active participation in the festival is one of the sacred traditions for Patricians.

Ludi Cereales (April 19)

Occur on the final day of the Cerealia in honor of Ceres, with its only events being chariot races in the Circus Maximus. A required ritual to inaugurate the races is to let foxes loose with burning brands tied to their tails.

Ludi Florales (April 28-May 3)

Held during the agricultural festival of Floralia to celebrate the blossoming of the crops. The

games begin with extremely bawdy mime theater, continue with circus races and end with a sacrifice to Flora. The circus races are replete with symbols of fertility: attendants let loose rabbits and goats on the racetrack, and toss beans and flowers into the stands. It is customary to wear bright, colorful clothing to these events. Because of its sexual and showy nature, the Floralia has been adopted by prostitutes as their own. The dates of the Floralia commemorate the dedication of the first Temple of Flora on the Quirinal Hill (May 3) in 524 AUC (240 BC) and the second one on the Aventine (April 28) two years later.

Ludi Saeculares (June 1-15)

Originally a festival to thank Dis and Proserpina for the plague-curing waters at Tarentum, their altar in the Campus Martius, the Secular Games are now a celebration of the founding of Rome, scheduled to take place every one hundred years to herald in a new age. The last games were held in 900 AUC (AD 148). Most of the populace anxiously await the millennial games for 1000 AUC, which promise to be beyond compare.

Ludi Apollinares (July 6-13)

Consist of two days of circus races and two of theater. To honor Apollo and his ability to cure and avert plagues, celebrants wear garlands, especially when making sacrifices. Six days of lively markets and fairs [*mercatus*] follow the games.

Ludi Victoriae Caesaris (July 20-30)

Honor the victories of the Divine Julius Caesar through the favor of Victoria and Venus Genetrix.

Ludi Romani (September 4-19)

Celebrate Iuppiter Optimus Maximus and begin with a solemn procession from the Capitol to the Circus Maximus, where a sacrifice occurs. The games include gladiator combat, circus races and theater. A special Feast for Iuppiter [*Epulum Iovis*] takes place on September 13. These games are also known as the Ludi Magni.

Ludi Capitolini (October 15)

Private games sponsored by the priests of Iuppiter Capitolinus [*Collegium Capitolini*].

Ludi Victoriae Sullanae (October 26-November 1)

Honor the victory of Sulla over the Samnites at the battle of Porta Collina through the favor of Victoria. The games culminate with a full day of circus races.

Ludi Plebei (November 4-17)

Celebrate Iuppiter and the citizens of Rome. After the Ludi Romani, considered the most important games.

GLADIATORIAL COMBAT *[Ludi Munera]*

"We who are about to die, salute you."

—Gladiatorial address to the Emperor

In the era of fulminata and its destructive power, gladiatorial combat preserves the art of hand-to-hand fighting in its pure form. A legionary will use his gladius against an enemy, but more often than not, that enemy has been softened up by pilum and tormentum fire.

Tradition claims that the origin of gladiatorial combat lies with a burial custom of the ancient Etruscans, hence the name *ludi munera*, literally "games for the funeral". Slaves of prominent deceased Etruscans would fight to the death for the privilege of joining their master in the Netherworld. Literary references to funeral games for Greek heroes also reinforce this belief. However, others maintain that the Campanians instituted the first gladiator duels to reenact a military victory over the Samnites. From these beginnings, the *ludi munera* have evolved into bloody specta-

cles enjoyed by the citizens of the Imperium, embracing not only gladiatorial combat, but also mock animal hunts [*venationes*] and the execution of criminals and prisoners [*damnatio ad bestias*]. These games gain popularity during times of peace because they offer an outlet for the Roman lust for violence.

THE AMPHITHEATER

Gladiatorial combat takes place in an amphitheater [*amphiteatrum*], an oval stadium surrounded by tiers of seating. While the first amphitheater in Rome was introduced in 701 AUC (53 BC), the grandest one is the Flavian Amphitheater [*amphiteatrum Flavium*], finished by the emperor Titus in 832 AUC (80 AD). This building is commonly referred to as the Colosseum, named for the colossal statue of Nero that stands near it. The Colosseum has been recently damaged by a fierce lightning strike, making the augures and Etruscan lightning diviners [*fulguratores*] uneasy.

The Colosseum can accommodate an audience of 50,000. The seating area [*cavea*] is separated into wedges [*cunei*] by staircases and ramps [*vomitoria*]. The closest seats are reserved for Senators and Equestrians. Women sit in the rear; the only exception being the Vestal Virgins, who have ringside seats. Its 80 numbered entrance arches, corresponding to assigned seat tokens, allow spectators to enter or leave in less than fifteen minutes. However, impatient, disorderly fans time and again create a crush in the *vomitoria*, causing injuries and deaths. Four of the arches are not open to the public and are ceremonial: one for the Emperor, one for important magistrates, including the sponsor of the games and two for the gladiators. A canvas awning [*velarium*] which must be manned by a detachment of 1,000 disciplined sailors from the Imperial Navy provides protection against the sun.

The action takes place in the center, an enclosed pit covered with smooth sand [*arena*] that serves to soak up spilled blood. The spectators

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are protected by barriers and as a last counter-measure, wooden cylinders at the base of the stands to prevent animals from leaping into the audience. Beneath the arena are subterranean passages and chambers. This underground complex contains cages for the wild animals, the machines used to transport them via trapdoors into the arena and dressing rooms for the gladiators.

THE SCHOOL [*Ludus*]

"We solemnly swear to obey the *lanista* in everything. To endure branding, chains, flogging and even death by the sword."

—Oath of the gladiator

The Latin word for game [*ludus*] is also used to designate the school where gladiators are trained. In the Republic, private citizens owned these schools. The revolt of Spartacus in 681 AUC (73 BC) convinced the state that gladiators should be in the hands of the Imperium to prevent future uprisings and any ambitions of individuals to form a private army. Equestrian managers [*procuratores*] appointed by the Emperor oversee the finances and logistics for each *ludus*. The manager of a gladiatorial school is judged on his ability to consistently provide quality gladiators in a timely manner.

A typical *ludus* is comprised of administrative offices, barracks and a practice area. At Rome, the largest training school is the Ludus Magnus, which is directly connected to the Colosseum through one of the arches and an underground passage. Both the Ludus Matutinus, where the

hunters [*venatores*] train, and the Ludus Gallicus are nearby. The fourth school, the Ludus Dacicus, is between the Ludus Magnus and the Baths of Trajan.

The name *lanista* once designated the private owner of a gladiator school; the *lanistae* are now trainers who forge raw recruits [*tirones*] into lethal fighting machines. Most *lanistae* are former gladiators themselves. To offset the brutal training regimen and the constant promise of death, *lanistae* provide their gladiators with comfortable lodging, medical treatment and three wholesome

meals per day.

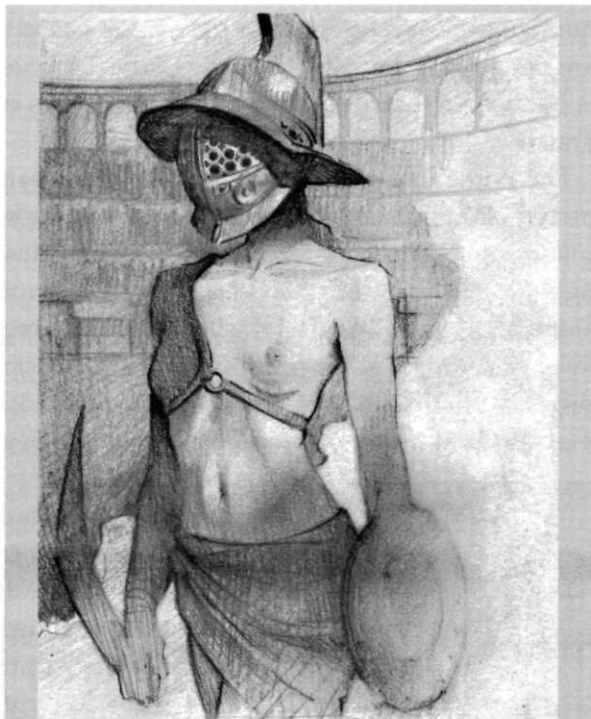
A recruit or *tiro*, armed with a wooden sword and wicker shield, is taught to strike at an upright stake [*palus*] until he masters a basic fighting technique. Advanced training [*armatura*] with actual weapons follows. A fully trained gladiator who has mastered one fighting style is labeled a "First Staker" [*Primus Palus*]. Higher ranks of "Second" and "Third Staker" are reserved for those who perfect other weapons.

THE FEMALE GLADIATOR [*Gladiatrix*]

Domitian introduced the female gladiator [*gladiatrix*] to the *ludi munera* as a novelty act. It is over 150 years later and the topic is still a controversial subject among avid fans of the arena. On one side of the debate, purists claim that the sight of half-naked women is a distraction to the art of personal combat. The other side concedes this point, but insists that it only serves to enhance the spectacle. Just as male gladiators are sex symbols to the women of Rome, female gladiators arouse the men.

THE GLADIATOR

Gladiators enjoy heroic status in the Imperium. When free men began to volunteer for the arena, the Emperor and the Senate were frightened that the public might rally around a populist idol. Augustus had attempted to ban Senators and Equestrians to preserve the *dignitas* and *pietas* of the upper classes. Avidius Cassius made it official in 947 AUC (AD 195); by Imperial decree, gladiators must be Slaves. Gladiators remain popular, but



ACHILLEA

Rank: Slave

Occupation: Thracian Fighter [*Thraeca*]

Attributes: 18, A12, P9, V13

Humors: F 2 (Jaded)

MP: 0, **WP:** 13/26, **HP:** 3

Patron: Mars

Skills: *Box 5, *Dagger 6, *Gladius 5, City 2, Customs (Patrician) 3, Customs (Slave) 3, Food 2, Language (Greek) 2, Language (Latin) 2, Move (Climb) 4, Move (Jump) 4, Spear 3, Stealth 3, Trick 4, Wine 2

Background: Achillea's life has been one of tragedy, leaving her indifferent to suffering and death. Her family was captured during the Parthian campaigns and auctioned off to L. Dexius Maior, the Equestrian *procurator* of Armenia. On her twelfth birthday, legionaries arrested the Dexius family for plotting to overthrow the Emperor. As a reward, the Emperor gave the entire Dexius estate to the legion who sold them to the Ludus Magnus in Rome. A curious girl, she begged the *lanista* to allow her to practice on the stake dummies. Her natural talent combined with the discipline of gladiatorial training soon propelled her into the top fighting ranks. Her fighting moniker, Achillea or the "Female Achilles", highlights the fact that no opponent has ever found her weak spot. The crowd enjoys her merciless attack style and signature finishing move, gutting opponents from groin to sternum like fish.

are not political threats. Roman women are notorious for their infatuation with gladiators, treating these grim fighters as sex objects. Juvenal remarks that a Senator's wife, Eppia, loved gladiators above all else, including her family and friends.

The typical gladiator is a prisoner of war or a criminal found guilty of a non-capital offense. He is given a memorable arena moniker to enhance the drama of the spectacle. Such names are drawn from myth (Diomedes) and history (Jugurtha) or, like a *cognomen*, describe an attribute of the fighter (Rapidus). A gladiator can earn freedom after surviving three years of combat in the arena. To symbolize the manumission of a gladiator, the *procurator* of the school will present the gladiator with a ceremonial wooden sword [*rudis*].

Keeping with the theatrical staging of these fights, gladiators use special armor and weapons, mostly different than the military equipment of the Roman legionaries. Many of the types of gladiators developed from fighting styles and dress of the defeated enemies of Rome. During training, a gladiator learns which combination of armor and weaponry best suits his or her talents. The two basic categories of gladiators are big shield-men [*scutarii*] and small-shield men [*parmularii*].

The Samnite [*Samnis*]

To heal the wounds of the Italic War in 667 AUC (87 BC), the Samnite [*Samnis*] was briefly renamed the Hoplite [*Hoplomachus*] in the early Imperium. However, not only did the emperor Clodius Albinus expand the Imperium through conquest, he revived the convention of naming gladiator types after the traditional enemies of Rome. Before encountering the Samnites in battle, the Romans had only used round or oval shields. Samnite infantry carried large trapezoidal shields [sew to] that provided the body a better defense. The left leg of a Samnite warrior was covered by one greave. To appear taller and fiercer, they wore crested helmets with two or three feathers as decoration. Thus, the *Samnis* is armed with a gladius and carries a large shield [*scutum*]. He wears a plumed, crested helmet [galea] with a visor, a wide leather sword-belt [*balteus*], one leather greave [ocrea] on

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his advancing leg and a banded gauntlet [*manica*] on his sword arm. Apart from this armor and a loincloth, the Samnite is practically naked. A special sub-type of the Samnite is called the Pursuer [*Secutor*]. The Pursuer wears a special helmet with no brim or feathers that is designed to foil the net of a *retiarius*.

The Gaul [*Callus*]

The *Callus* is the second type of *scutarus*. Like the Samnite, he was known by another name during the early Imperium—the Fish Fighter [*Myrmillo*]. The name *myrmillo* comes from the *murtnuros*, a Greek fish native to the Pontus Euxinus that decorates the crest of his helmet. Gallic warriors traditionally wore helmets crested with an animal or a wheel, the Celtic symbol of war. Unlike the Samnite's helm, the Gaul's helm has no visor. He carries a *gladius* and a long, hexagonal heavy shield [*scutum*].

The Net Fighter [*Retiarius*]

Although designated as a *parmularus*, the Net Fighter [*Retiarius*] wears only a loin cloth [*subligaculum*], a banded gauntlet [*manica*] and a metal shoulder-piece [*galerus*] on his left arm. The Net Fighter is meant to resemble a fisherman, hence his weapons are a net [*rete*] and a trident [*tridens*]. Net Fighters are known for speed and agility.

The Thracian [*Thraex*]

The Thracian or *Thraex* is a light, mobile fighter who carries a small shield [*parma*] and a curved dagger [*sica*]. He wears two thigh-length greaves [*ocreae*] and a helmet with a wide brim.

Other Gladiators

In addition to these main gladiator types, there are a number of unusual types trained for special occasions. These include: The Archer [*Sagittarius*] who has a bow and a limited supply of arrows; The Horseman [*Eques*] who fights on horseback using a lance and cavalry sword [*spatha*]; The Lasso Fighter [*Laquearius*] who employs a lasso

instead of a net; the Chariot Fighter [*Essedarius*] who drives a scythed battle chariot; The Armored Fighter [*Cruppellarius*] who is completely encased in iron armor; The Blind Fighter [*Andabata*] who fights wearing a heavy helmet with no eyeholes; The Butcher [*Scissor*] who wields a scimitar [*falx*]; The Challenger [*Provocator*] who has a chain whip and gladius; The Two-Knife Fighter [*Dimacha*] who fights with two long knives; and The Skirmisher [*Veles*], who is armed with a retrievable light javelin.

THE SPECTACLE

After everyone is seated, a gladiatorial show begins with a parade [*pompa*] of the fighters led by ceremonial trumpeters [*tubicenes*] and the sponsor [*munerarius*] of the games. Other musicians supplement the fanfare as the gladiators march two by two around the perimeter of the arena allowing the audience a close view of the competitors.

Beast Hunts [*Venationes*]

The program begins in the morning with the controlled hunting of wild animals. Exotic animals, like giraffes [*camelopardales*], *crocodili* and *hipopotami*, are shipped into Rome from the Imperium's provinces just to be killed in the arena. The Hunter [*Venator*] dispatches animals with a bow or spear, whereas the Beast Fighter [*Bestiarius*] fights them hand to hand. Both wear light colorful tunics and little or no armor. During one set of games, hunters used crescent-shaped arrows to decapitate ostriches by the score. These skilled hunters can literally slaughter hundreds of animals in one day. Animals may also be pitted against each other; a duel between a bull and a bear is a crowd favorite.

Public Executions

Between the beast hunts and the gladiatorial combats, executions of criminals take place at noon. These unfortunate souls condemned to death by beast [*damnatio ad bestias*] are herded

into the arena weaponless and then often tied to a stake. They are then beset by wild animals, such as lions, leopards or tigers. While most Romans enjoy the sight of starving animals mauling and eating unarmed people, some Equestrians and Senators tend to find it excessive and break for lunch.

The Duels

After whetting the audience's appetite with fierce animals and bloody executions, the stage is now set for the main attraction, duels between gladiators. The combatants enter the arena and salute the Emperor. Combat is normally fought in pairs with one small-shield man [*parmularus*] and one big-shield man [*scutarius*]. The classic match up is the Gaul and the Net Fighter. A single program [*manus*] of fights may involve hundreds of pairs. An expert gladiator represents a considerable expense for his *Indus*. Therefore, many fights between skilled gladiators do not end in a fatality, since they are trained in combat techniques meant to disarm or disable. A *trincus* is an extraordinary and extremely

rare duel to the death among three gladiators.

One of the *lanistae* acts as a referee during each bout. The combatants fight until one scores a disabling blow. Then, the *lanista* uses a long rod to restrain the victor while the vanquished gladiator raises his left hand with one finger extended as a request for mercy [*missio*]. The *munerarius* (not the Emperor, unless he happens to be the sponsor) consults the audience to make a decision. If the defeated fighter was cowardly or weak, the *munerarius* gives the infamous thumbs down gesture, indicating a killing blow. If he fought with courage and skill, the thumb remains tucked in the palm, signaling "mercy" [*missio*].

The winner receives prize money and a symbol of their victory, such as a golden medallion or crown. If the defeated gladiator is killed, two arena officials emerge from a trapdoor meant to represent a gateway to the Netherworld. One official is painted blue and costumed as Kharun, the Etruscan demon of death; the other as the god Mercurius, who guides departed souls into the

ANIMALS OF THE ARENA

Lion [*Leo*]

Attributes: I4, A17 (+3), P12, V 20 (+3)

Skills: Claws 8, Forest 3, Jaws 7, Move (Jump) 5, Stealth 8, Track 7

Attacks: Jaws (Dmg: E4*), 2 Claws (Dmg: E3)

Tiger [*Tigris*]

Attributes: I5, A18 (+3), P 6, V 25 (+4)

Skills: Claws 7, Forest 5, Jaws 6, Move (Jump) 8, Stealth 8, Swim 5, Track 7

Attacks: Jaws (Dmg: E4*), 2 Claws (Dmg: E3)

Panther [*Pantera*]

Attributes: I5, A17 (+3), P 4, V18 (+3)

Skills: Claws 8, Forest 4, Jaws 5, Move (Jump) 7, Stealth 8, Track 7

Attacks: Jaws (Dmg: E3*), 2 Claws (Dmg: E3)

Bear [*Ursus*]

Attributes: I5, A16 (+2), P 8, V 21 (+3)

Skills: Forage 8, Forest 7, Track 4, Claws 5, Jaws 5, Move (Climb) 4, Wrestle 7, Fish 6, Swim 4

Attacks: Jaws (Dmg: E3*), 2 Claws (Dmg: E4), Hug (Dmg: B3)

Crocodile [*Crocodilus*]

Attributes: I2, A13, P 5, V17 (+3)

Skills: Jaws 9, Sea 8, Stealth 8, Swim 12, Tail 5

Attacks: Jaws (Dmg: E4*), Tail (Dmg: B3)

Elephant [*Elephantus*]

Attributes: I7, A 9, P10, V 45 (+8)

Skills: Forest 4, Graze 6, Move (Trample) 3, Swim 3, Theater 4, Trunk 5

Attacks: Trample (Dmg: B5*), Trunk (Dmg: B1)

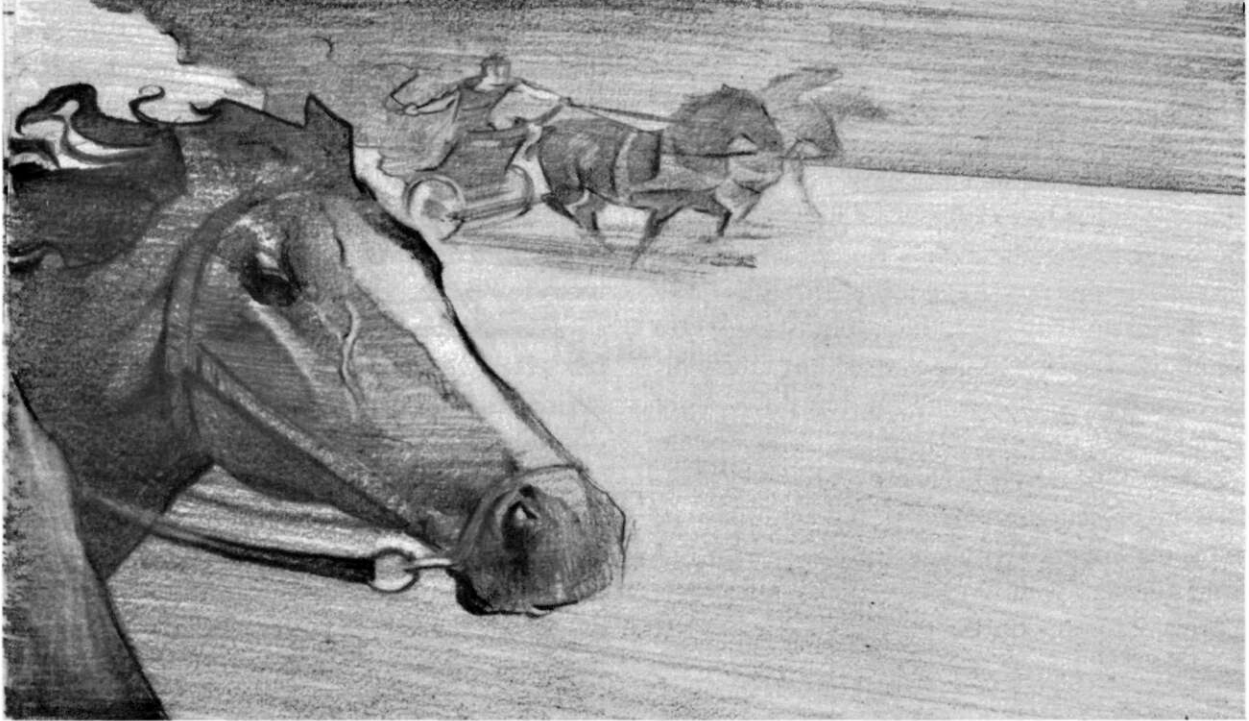
Rhinoceros [*Rhinoceros*]

Attributes: I3, A14, P 4, V 30 (+5)

Skills: Forage 4, Gore 6, Move (Trample) 5

Attacks: Gore (Dmg: E3*), Trample (Dmg: B3)

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Netherworld. The Mercurius official prods the corpse with a brand disguised as his *caduceus* wand. If the loser is still alive, the Kharun official directs crushing blows with his hammer on the defeated gladiator's head. After confirming that the gladiator is dead, the officials insert hooks attached to chains into the corpse and drag it through the Gate of the Goddess of Corpses [*Porta Libitina*]. After the body is removed, other attendants rake the bloody sand for the next fight.

Special Events

To vary the entertainment in the arena, a wealthy *munerarius* may commission a grand event involving dozens of gladiators organized into opposing teams. These are usually set pieces intended to simulate famous battles from history or legend—"Horatius at the Bridge", "Hannibal's Defeat at Zama" or "The Trojan Horse". For elaborate siege reenactments, engineers build movable combat towers [*falae*]. For sea battles [*naumachia*], they flood the Colosseum to simulate the open sea.

CHARIOT RACING [*Ludi Circenses*]

"The public...longs eagerly for just two things - bread and circuses"

—Juvenal

According to legend, Romulus introduced a chariot racing to the Roman people at the first celebration of the Consualia in honor of the agricultural god Consus. Romulus had invited other neighboring tribes, including the Sabinii, to attend the event. The spectacle proved to be a perfect distraction, for while the men watched the races, the Romans seized this opportunity to kidnap the Sabine women. The Sabine men were so enraptured by the chariot races, that not one of them had eyes or thoughts for anything else. Today, the *ludi circenses* serve a similar purpose. If the Plebeians are engrossed in the latest scan-

dal or rivalry among the chariot drivers, they may fail to notice the daily power struggles occurring in the Senatorial ranks.

Chariot racing is enjoyed by all of Rome's social classes and remains the most popular entertainment in the Imperium. Men and women are allowed to sit together, which makes a day at the races a popular social event and meeting place for friends and lovers. At one time, Slaves were not allowed to attend the games, but most citizens see the wisdom in appeasing this unruly and potentially rebellious segment of the Roman population. In case of emergency, the urban cohorts are present to keep order. If the Emperor or one of the Imperial family is present, Praetorians stand guard as well. Vigils patrol the city streets to prevent looting during the races.

THE CIRCUS

The stadium for chariot racing is called a circus; in the Eastern provinces, a *hippodromus*. It consists of a long oval track flanked by tiers of seats arranged along sloping valley sides or upon manmade foundations. Most large cities in the Imperium have at least one serviceable circus; first-rate ones can be found in Antioch, Alexandria, Emerita Augusta and Urso (which is also famous for its exceptional racing stables).

Rome has several circuses, but only one that counts: the Circus Maximus. Built in the Murcian valley between the Palatine and Aventine Hills, the Circus Maximus in Rome is the largest racetrack in the Imperium with a maximum spectator capacity of 250,000. Its length is 660 yards, with an average width of 220 yards. It was founded in the regal period, adorned during the Republic and rebuilt as a monumental structure by the emperor Trajan.

The facade of the building is arcaded like the Colosseum, housing shops for refreshments. At night the dark vaults that support the seats are home to prostitutes. On one end is a triumphal arch adorned with marble columns erected by

the emperor Titus in 833 AUC (AD 81) to commemorate the sack of Hieroslyma. A golden statue of a charioteer directing a team of four horses [*quadriga*] surmounts the arch.

At the other end of the Circus Maximus is the *oppidum*, a long, low gate housing twelve starting boxes [*carceres*] between two towers. The *carceres*, literally "prison cells", are fronted by wooden gates and topped by curved metal grilles [*cancelli*]. Between each starting box, a bust of Mercurius [*herma*] is mounted on a square stone post decorated with an upright phallus.

Most of the larger circuses in the Imperium, including the Circus Maximus at Rome, have a special shrine called the *pulvinar* that doubles as an Imperial viewing box. From this supreme vantage point, the Emperor and his family can watch the races in luxury. All others sit on tiered marble benches. The front seats are set aside for the sponsor of the games, his fellow magistrates and members of the Senatorial order. The Equestrian rank sits directly behind the Senators. Behind these reserved seats is open seating, and standing room only for the Plebeians, Freedmen, Foreigners and Slaves. These seats are ostensibly free, but the wealthier Plebeians are expected to purchase tickets for the better-quality seats behind the Equestrians. Unscrupulous ticket sellers [*locarii*] often buy up all the choice tickets and then resell them at inflated prices.

The central median strip [*spina*] defines the racetrack. To win a race, a chariot driver must navigate around this barrier seven times before his competitors. The *spina* is traditionally decorated with statues, water basins, fountains, war trophies and shrines. A 80-foot tall red granite Egyptian obelisk of Rameses II is the most prominent ornament on the *spina* of the Circus Maximus. Some of these decorations serve a practical purpose: two columns support a set of seven movable eggs [*ova*] that are removed one at a time during the race as the drivers complete one circuit. The eggs honor the Dioscuri, the divine twins Castor and Pollux who, according to myth,

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were present at the hatching of Helen from the egg produced by the union of Leda and Iuppiter (in his deceptive swan guise). Seven golden dolphins [*delphinae*], which also mark the laps, pay tribute to Neptunus, protector of horses.

At either end of the *spina* are the turning posts [*metae*], large gilded bronze cones fashioned to resemble cypress trees. Between the *metae* and the *spina* at the Circus Maximus, there are circular recesses dedicated to two gods: Consus and Venus Murcia. These altars give the turning posts their distinctive names: the *metae Consi* and the *metae Murciae*.

The racetrack itself is flat and covered with sand. For religious festivals, the sand is sprinkled with glittering particles of mica or red lead for aesthetics. The main stretch of track on either side of the length of the *spina* is called the *spatium*. The large space immediately before the *oppidum*, is called the *circus primus*. The smaller turning space near the triumphal arch, is called the *circus intimus*. In the Circus Maximus, the *circus intimus* is also called *ad Murciam*, from the altar of Venus Murcia.

THE TEAMS [*Factiones*]

"The masses were not interested in the speed of the teams or the skill of the drivers, but solely on the racing colors. If in the middle of a race, the colors were to be changed, the enthusiasm of the spectators would shift with them, and they would abandon the drivers and horses they had been urging on."

—Pliny the Younger

In the world of *FVLMINATA*, chariot racing is a serious business affair run by professional stables. These teams [*factiones*] supply drivers, horses and chariots to the sponsor of the games [*editor spectaculorum*]. The fee for a full day's races can cost upwards of 400,000 sesterces, enough wealth to qualify as an Equestrian. Part of this fee is the prize money that is awarded to the winning teams.

Each team has its own stable, trainers, admin-



SILVANUS

Rank: Slave

Occupation: Charioteer [*Agigator*]

Attributes: I9, A14, P10, V9

Humors: X2 (Nervous)

MP: 0, **WP:** 9/18, **HP:** 3

Patron: Iuppiter

Skills: *Chariot 6, *City 4, Coin 3, Craft (Mosaic) 2, Customs (Slave) 4, Dagger 4, Dice 4, Harmony 3, Horse 5, Language (Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Theater 4, Trick 4

Background: Silvanus is a small, wiry Egyptian with an uncanny ability to commune with horses. He and his family have been slaves in the household of P. Quinctius Primus since the annexation of Aethiopia into the Imperium. Silvanus was trained to clean and repair the Senator's mosaics. In his spare time, he would visit the stables to build a rapport with the steeds. When discovered, Quinctius offered him a chance to race. His nimbleness and natural empathy for horses has made him one of the star drivers for the Greens [*factio prasina*]. As a favorite driver with a huge following, Silvanus is expected to win. He finds it difficult to ignore the pressure; it causes his stomach to twist into knots, often forcing him to vomit waiting for a race to begin in the *carceres*. He already has earned enough prize money to emancipate his two younger brothers. He does not intend to risk his life to pursue riches beyond the minimum funds necessary to free the rest of his family and finally himself.

istrators, coaches, blacksmiths, vets and grooms. The teams also maintain affiliated clubhouses in Rome for important fans. The cost for paying the staff and maintaining these facilities is considerable.

The rivalry among the teams, and among their respective fans is intense. Riots will break out if an opposing team deliberately causes harm to a popular driver or is caught cheating. One distraught fan of the Red team committed suicide at the funeral of his favorite driver, Felix, by throwing himself on the funeral pyre. The remaining *factiones*, worried that this incident might heap glory on the Red team, spread rumors that the man had merely passed out from the heat and smell of the perfumed body.

In Rome, there are four teams identified by color: the Reds [*factio russata*], the Whites [*factio albata*], the Greens [*factio prasina*] and the Blues [*factio veneta*]. Domitian had added two more teams, the Purples [*factio purpurea*] and the Golds [*factio aurata*], but they, like that of the unloved and unlamented Emperor, were short-lived.

The Reds [*Factio Russata*]

One of the two original teams at Rome (the other being the Whites), the Red team wears russet-colored tunics. According to tradition, the team colors represent the seasons with the Reds symbolizing the heat of summer. Fans of the Red team tend to be Senators with Republican sentiments, Equestrians of moderate means, Plebeians who practice a trade and Foreigners. The current head [*factionarius* or *domini factionum*] of the Red team is T. Ateius Capito, an affluent Equestrian from Britannia who made his fortune supplying Rome's legions with a steady supply of lead bullets. His best drivers are Menander, Apollonius and Cerdo.

The Whites [*Factio Albata*]

The White team dons snow-colored tunics to represent winter. Senatorial families who boast a Pa-

trician lineage, Equestrians of dubious means, legionaries and Freedmen comprise most of the White team's fan base. The Whites are led by a former chariot driver, L. Didius Zeno, who recorded over 1,500 wins over a 25 year career. He was able to use his prize money to not only buy his freedom but to gain control of the team. Regardless of team affiliation, all serious racing fans respect Zeno for his legendary accomplishments at the circus. Zeno's star drivers are Liccaeus, Hilarius and Nicander.

The Greens [*Factio Prasina*]

Representing the spring growing season, drivers of the Green team wear leek-green tunics. Both Caligula and Nero were fervent supporters of the Greens. The Imperial family, Senators who curry favor with the Emperor, Equestrians aspiring to be Senators, Plebeian merchants and shopkeepers are fans of the Green team. P. Quinctius Primus, a pompous Senator who became an Equestrian to pursue his love of racing, is the current head of the Greens. He obviously enjoys his Imperial support, spending lavishly on victory dinners and buying up the most talented charioteers and horses to ensure continued success. His drivers, Epigonus, Alexander and Silvanus (see sidebar on page 131), are considered the best in Rome.

The Blues [*Factio Veneta*]

The Blue team wears azure-colored tunics to symbolize the clear skies of autumn. The emperor Domitian despised the Blues; under his short-lived rule, drivers from this team were under Imperial orders to lose. Supporters of the Blue team are mostly Senators who run the senatorial provinces, insanely wealthy Equestrians, members of the priestly colleges and Slaves. Four brothers named M. Vipsanius (Migio, Calamus, Dareus, and Fausus) manage the Blue team. Their father, the former proconsul of Asia, was a lifelong fan of the Blues. Although the elder Vip-

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sanius had hoped that the eldest son, Migio, would follow a proper senatorial career, an ugly scandal involving Migio and the wife of another Senator left little political opportunities for the Vipsanius family. The starting drivers for the Blues are Lydius, Xanthus and Germanicus.

THE DRIVER

[*Agigator*]

A typical chariot driver [*agigator* or *auriga*] is a slave hailing from one of the African or Hispanian provinces. Others are Freedmen or poor Plebeians who desire the public adulation and wealth that accompanies victory at the circus. A few successful Slave charioteers are able to accumulate enough prize money to buy their own freedom. Some, like Zeno of the Whites, make use of their wealth to gain control of a racing team.

Future charioteers often begin their careers as stable boys or grooms. The boys who show promise in practice start racing in their late teens. If a driver survives the dangers and continues to win, he gains more popularity and prizes. An *agigator* with more than a thousand wins is called a *miliarius*. The best charioteers are sought after by the competing teams. This concept of free agency does not apply to Slaves, however; a team owns a Slave's driver

contract, which can be sold or traded to other teams.

Underneath a colored runic that identifies team affiliation, charioteers wear padded armor and light metal helmets (Def: B1). During the race,

they employ a short whip to urge their horses to greater speeds. Reins are wrapped around the charioteer's waist, which enables the driver to use his entire weight against his horses by leaning backwards. Unavoidably, this practice greatly enhances the danger of a crash because the driver risks being dragged by his own horses. Therefore, charioteers carry small knives or billhooks at their waists to cut themselves free in the event of a crash.

THE HORSE

[*Ecjuus*]

"Whether you win or
not, we love you,
Polydorus"

—Mosaic inscription
to a chariot steed

As with the best drivers, the finest horses come from the African and Hispanian provinces,

most notably Mauretania. The majority of chariot-horses are stallions; winning horses that retire are extremely valuable to the team's stud farms in order to raise the next generation of champions. New horses transported to Rome on

LEGENDS OF THE CIRCUS

C. Appuleius Diocles

Charioteer from Lusitania who raced for all of the teams except the Blues; earned over 36 million sesterces over a 24 year career (age 18 to 42); won 1,462 of 4,257 races; retired to the good life in Praeneste

Scorpus

Charioteer from Africa Proconsularis and the darling of Rome; won 2,048 races before he died in a crash at the age of 26; his short life was eulogized by the poet Martial

P. Aelius Gutta Calpurnianus

Charioteer from Hispania Baetica who raced for each team; won 102 for the Whites, 78 for the Reds, 583 for the Blues and 364 for the Greens; bought his freedom and retired

Crescens

Charioteer from Mauretania and considered the most-talented driver ever; started at 13 and was killed by trampling horses at 22

Polydus

Charioteer from Macedonia and champion for the Reds; he and his lead horse "Embracing" [Compressors] went undefeated for 100 straight races in the Circus Maximus

a specialized type of ship called a *hippago*. Some celebrated horses have their own tombstones. Avid racing fans can identify a champion horse by sight and know its pedigree and win record by heart.

Horses bred for the circus are trained at age three and begin racing at age five. Since chariot races are long and grueling, stamina and the ability to follow commands are more important than absolute speed when judging the quality of a horse. The fact that a driverless chariot could still win a race illustrates the importance that the teams place on well-bred steeds.

Racing chariots are not military chariots - they are light, wooden contraptions built for speed and afford little support or protection for the driver. The charioteer balances on a wooden platform placed on top of a moving axle. The most popular chariot for circus racing is the four-horse chariot [*quadriga*]. Competitions involving the two-horse chariot [*biga*] or the three-horse chariot [*triga*] are not as common, while six-horse or ten-horse novelty races are occasionally run to vary the entertainment.

For the race, horses are adorned with feathers or palm leaves and their tails are clubbed to avoid entangling in the reins. For a *quadriga*, the two outside horses are called the traces [*funalii*] and the two inside horses harnessed to the char-

iot pole are the yoked [*iugales*]. The best steed is usually placed as the left trace horse so that it can help the other horses negotiate the tight turns.

THE RACES [*Missi*]

A normal program for a full day of racing has 12 to 24 races. On special occasions, the sponsor will hold a 25th and final race named the Bronze Race

[*missus aerarius*], because in early times, the expense to hold another race was defrayed by a collection of bronze coins from the spectators. To vary the racing program for the amusement of the audience, the *editor spectaculorum* may sponsor feats of bravery and acrobatic skill or throw gifts into the crowds.

Most races are single entry races - with one driver from each faction. A double entry race with eight drivers or a triple entry with twelve drivers is more unusual, but more exciting. In multiple entry games, drivers from the same team will cooperate to attain victory for the factio.

Before the start of the day's events, a procession [*pompa circensis*] makes its

way into the circus. First comes the sponsor of the games, outfitted to honor Iuppiter with a ceremonial purple tunic, an ivory baton and golden crown. He is followed by members of the priestly colleges (i.e. the Vestals, Flamens and Augurs). Next are the statues of the presiding gods, most of

ON CIRCUS HORSES

According to Pliny the Elder:

"Horses yoked to chariots in the Circus show beyond doubt that they understand encouragement and praise. In the races at the Circus, which were part of the Secular Games put on by Claudius, a charioteer of the Whites named Corax was thrown out of his chariot at the start; his team were in front and hung on to the lead by crowding their opponents and throwing everything into the race against their rivals - which they would have had to do under a skilled driver - but because they were ashamed for human skill to be surpassed by horses, on completing the prescribed course they stopped dead in their tracks at the chalk finishing line."

A typical chariot horse has the following statistics:

Horse [*Equus*]

Attributes: 14, A17 (+3), P10, V17 (+3)

Skills: Jaws 2, Move (March) 4, Move (Jump) 4, Move (Trample) 1

Attacks: Trample (Dmg: B3), Jaws (Dmg: E2)

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which are associated with horses: Neptunus, Consus, Castor and Pollux. The light statues are born on litters [*fercula*] and the heavier ones are transported on divine chariots [*tensae*]. The *tensa* that bears the statue of Iuppiter is called the *lovis Plaustrum*. Lastly, there are musicians and the drivers in their painted chariots.

Having drawn by lot for their positions in race [*missus*], the drivers and their horses stand ready inside the starting gates [*carceres*]. A trumpet blows and the sponsor signals the start of the race by dropping a broad white cloth [*mappa*]. At the same time, a member of the Praetorian Guard fires his *pilum* into the air. Hearing this, attendants [*armentarii*] pull a lever springing a catapult system that forces out the latches of each stall, enabling the gates to fly open.

The horses burst from the gates and thunder counter-clockwise around the *spina*, finishing after seven laps when the first team reaches the chalk finish line [*alba linea*]. The winner takes all; no prizes are awarded to the other contestants. A tie is possible if no one can tell who crosses the line first. To the fanfare of trumpets, the winner of each race climbs on to the *spina* and accepts the palm branch of victory, laurel crowns and gold neck chains. The team receives the prize money from the presiding magistrate (10-60,000 sesterces), part of which is later awarded to the charioteer. The *domini* of the flocks own trained pigeons with legs painted to match their team colors.

With each win, these birds are released to relay the race results to the gamblers in Ostia and Praeneste.

The most hazardous part of the race is the turning point at either end of the *spina*, where only one or two chariots can navigate side by side. Cut the

turn too close and you crash, move out too far and other chariots will squeeze between you. Crashes, called shipwrecks [*naufragia*], are common at the start of a race and often fatal. Although a collision is a horrific jumble of horses, wheels and bodies, many fans regard this aspect of chariot racing as its greatest draw. After a crash, attendants from the racing teams run out to rescue the driver, corral the horses and clear the debris.

THE ODDS [*Alea*]

"These kinds of Romans spend all their life with wine and dice, in low haunts, pleasures and the games. Their temple, their home, their assembly and the height of all their hopes is the Circus Maximus".

—Ammianus Marcellinus

Whenever a series of races is announced for the Circus Maximus, Rome goes racing mad. Programs are posted all over the city and pamphlets [*libelli*] of the participating drivers and horses are

handed about. A palpable wave of betting ensues from the rich *domi* on the Palatine Hill to the squalid *insulae* of the Subura. The wagering is so intense and the rewards are so high that each *factio* must take precautions against unfair tactics. Rival teams have been known to drug or poison opposing teams' drivers and their horses, bribe drivers to throw a race, use magic against drivers and sabotage

chariots by replacing iron linchpins with soft lead or wax. During the race, unscrupulous drivers may direct whip blows to other horses' eyes and drivers. Bumping chariot wheels to trigger an accident is also a popular underhanded ploy.

A BINDING SPELL

Inscribed on a lead tablet [*lamella*] and buried under a circus track:

"Help me in the Circus on 8 November. Bind every limb, even/ sinew, the shoulders, the ankles and elbows of Olympus, Olympianus, Scortius and Iuvencus, the charioteers of the Red. Torment their minds, their intelligence and their senses so that they may not know what they are doing, and knock out their eyes so that they may not see where they are going - neither they nor the horses they are going to drive."

Game Play

The following examples illustrate the special game mechanics of chariot racing in *FVLMINATA*:

Actions	Rolls	Actions	Rolls
Drawing for Favorable Positions in Starting Gates	Assign positions based on Effect table, highest hand to lowest hand	Determining the Severity of a <i>Naufragia</i>	Based on Effect Table; Base Effect Multiplier x Dmg: B4 <i>Senio</i> , <i>One Pair</i> , <i>Two Pair</i> - <i>Minor</i> Crash; chariot is ruined; driver still attached to horses; driver must cut himself free to avoid dragging <i>Three of a Kind</i> , <i>Venus</i> , <i>Vultures</i> - Major Crash; chariot and horses are incapacitated; fallen driver must now worry about oncoming chariots
Determining the Racing Attribute for a Team of Horses	Add all horses' A and V. Divide by the number of horses. Divide by two. Subtract 10. Add the I of the left trace horse.	Pulling Self up Using Reins	V + Chariot; driver takes dragging damage (Dmg: B2) each turn until succeeds
Racing Down the <i>Spatium</i>	Racing Attribute + Chariot <i>Failure</i> - Lose one position <i>Senio</i> , <i>One Pair</i> , <i>Two Pair</i> , <i>Three of a Kind</i> - Hold position <i>Venus</i> - Advance one position <i>Vultures</i> - Advance two positions Chariots with the same position enter turn together	Cutting Reins While Being Dragged	A + Dagger; driver takes dragging damage (Dmg: B2) each turn until succeeds; freed driver must now worry about oncoming chariots
Negotiating the Turn	If entering turn alone, team succeeds. If entering turn with other chariot(s), all must roll (A + Chariot), failures are a crash (Dmg: B4).	Dodging Oncoming Chariots	A + (5 - number of oncoming chariots) to avoid trampling damage (Dmg: B4 for each <i>quadriga</i>)

THEATER [*Ludi Scaenici*]

"Bring on the bear!"

—Typical cry of a bored theater audience

Once fashionable during the Republic, Roman theater has had to compete with the variety of spectacles arranged by the government to please the Plebeian masses. From its formal Greek begin-

nings, theater has developed into two diverse styles: pantomime [*pantomimus*], a silent, interpretative dance and mime [*mimus*], a bawdy vaudeville act. Like chariot racing and gladiatorial combat, plays are produced during major festivals, especially the Megalesian Games [*Ludi Megalenses*]. Plays are always performed during the day. The crowd has been known to become disorderly at the racier productions of mime, so the Emperor usually orders a special detachment from the urban cohorts to keep order in the theater.

THE THEATER

Unlike a Greek theater built into natural surroundings, such as a hillside, a Roman theater [*teatrum*] is

constructed on a vaulted concrete substructure. Its D-shaped plan consists of a backdrop wall [*scaenae frons*], stage [*scoena*] and *orchestra* surrounded by a semi-circle of multi-tiered seating [*cavea*]. The *scaena frons*, a multi-storied building as high as the highest tier of the *cavea*, is divided into three sections, meant to represent a typical Roman street [*platea*] or a luxurious palace facade. It is decorated with numerous columns and niches featuring theatrical masks and statues of Apollo and the Muses. Traditionally where the chorus performed, the *orchestra* is now where Senators, priests and magistrates sit. The stage itself is raised three feet above the *orchestra*. Holes in the stage are used to fasten the movable scenery.

Between the stage and the *orchestra* is a trench for the curtain [*aulaeum*], which is lowered into the trough at the beginning of a play and raised at the end. Smaller curtains [*siparia*] are used to hide elements of the *scaenafrons* for later revelation during a performance. To guard against the sun's rays or the rain, a canvas awning [*velarium* or *velum*] can be pulled over poles set in blocks on the top tier of the *cavea*.

Stages are also equipped with trapdoors and special machinery to hoist backdrops into place, move pieces of scenery or lift actors on ropes as required by the play. A feature of Greek tragedy is

the *deus ex machina* or "god from the machine", which is the practice of using this equipment to lower an actor playing a god onto the stage to

resolve a difficult situation. Traveling acting troupes often carry collapsible stages so that they can perform even if a city lacks a permanent theater.

The three major theaters in Rome are in Regio IX (Campus Martius): the Theaters of Pompey, Balbus and Marcellus. All three theaters have undergone extensive restorations under the patronage of the Avidian emperors. Most large cities in the Imperium also boast a working theater. Mainly due to its place in traditional Greek culture, theater is more popular in the Eastern provinces. In addition, the *odeum*, a

smaller type of theater dedicated to musical performances, is in widespread use.

NATIVE INFLUENCES ON ROMAN THEATER

Two Republican traditions of comic performance influenced the development of Roman comedy:

Rhinthonian Farces [*Fabulae Rhinthonicae*]

Also called *phylakes*; parodied well-known historical and mythological stories; featured actors in grotesque masks; its main playwrights were Rhinthon, Scauras of Tarentum and Sopater of Paphos

Atellan Farces [*Fabulae Atellanae*]

Named after the town of Atella in Campania; provided a humorous glimpse of rustic life in a small Italian town; featured stock characters: The Fool [*Bucco*], The Clown [*Maccus*], The Glutton [*Dossennus*], The Chewer [*Manducus*] and The Old Man [*Pappus*]; its main authors were L. Pomponius, Novius and Aprissius

TRAGEDY

The popularity of formal Roman drama reached its height during the Republic. The tragedians Seneca and Ennius, introduced graphic theater to Roman eyes. In traditional Greek plays, horrible actions, such as Oedipus' self-mutilating blinding and the murder of Jason's children, take place off-stage and are reported to the audience by a witness. In Roman tragedies, these events tend to occur on stage, complete with fake blood and screams.



CORYTHUS

Rank: Foreigner

Occupation: Playwright [*Fabularum Scriptor*]

Attributes: I12, A 8, P12, V10

Humors: S 2 (Cheerful)

MP: 0, **WP:** 10/20, **HP:** 3

Patron: Bacchus

Skills: *Customs (Patrician) 4, *Customs (Plebeian) 4, *Customs (Slave) 3, *Myth 5, *Theater 6, City 2, Language (Greek) 5,

Language (Latin) 5, Law 2, Music (Lyre) 3, Philosophy 2, Poetry 3, Rhetoric 3, Scribe 5

Background: Corythus is a satirical Greek playwright whose sheer talent is the only thing that saves him from exile or execution. He writes comedies set in the fictional Kingdom of Amoria, a thinly veiled surrogate for the Imperium Romanum. Although commentaries on the Roman political scene are officially forbidden, the young Emperor tolerates Corythus since the plays mainly poke fun at the buffoonish Old Men [*Senexes*] who serve as advisers to the King of Amoria [*Rex Amoriae*]. His latest play, "The Warlike War" [*Bellum Bellicum*], satirizes the military campaigns against Parthia. In it, grim-faced soldiers of Amoria have difficulty fighting the confusing and effete Thrapi, who wear gaudy over-sized clothing and have a tendency to break out into pantomime on the battlefield.

COMEDY

Roman comedy falls into two categories: *fabulae palliatae*, "comedy in Greek dress" and *fabulae togatae*, "comedy in Roman dress". The *palliatae* are copied from Greek originals replete with boastful soldiers, wily Slaves and cheating wives. The plots mainly revolve around misunderstandings and exposed love affairs. Mixed in with the action of the play, actors sing arias [*cantica*]. The main writers of *palliatae* were Plautus, Terence and Luscius Lanuvinus.

The *togatae* are similar, but concentrate on Roman life and customs. And unlike the *palliatae*, Slaves are not craftier than citizens of rank. One of the most popular stock characters in comedy is the parasite [*parasitus* or *kolax*]. He flatters and runs errands for his patron in return for free meals. This character is the object of slapstick humor during the course of the play, receiving many blows from his displeased patron. Titinius, L. Afranius and T. Quinctius Atta were the most highly regarded playwrights of this style.

In the Imperium, while learned men lament the dearth of new comedies and tragedies in the Greek style, tastes in Rome have forced the theater to compete with the circus and the gladiator shows for the public's fickle attention. The successors in this art form are pantomime and mime.

PANTOMIME [*Pantomimus*]

Pantomime combines acting and dancing, but without dialogue. A solitary masked dancer [*pantomimus*] acts out a tragic myth or historical event using only gestures and his body movements. The *pantomimus* plays multiple roles during the performance and must keep the audience engaged while he changes masks. Certain traditional dances, like "Thyestes Devouring his Children", are choreographed step by step. Rival *pantomimi* use these as benchmarks to rate technical ability.

Musicians and a chorus support the *pan-*

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tomitnus. *Scabillarii* keep the beat by pressing their foot rhythmically against a *scabillum*, a small wooden instrument fastened on the sole of the sandal. The solo arias [*cantica*] from formal Roman comedy have transformed into accompanying choral songs.

MIME [*Mimus*]

Mime is a series of short vulgar sketches interspersed with songs, acrobats, jugglers, magicians, puppeteers and performing animals. The lead actor [*archimimus*] and second [*strepidus*] are the stars of the majority of these burlesques. Mime actors were often called *planipes* or "flatfeet", because barefoot clowns used to stand on Roman street corners, tell jokes and improvise comic skits.

Each sketch in a mime play is a simple episode from everyday life or myth, but spiced up with sex and violence. Actresses are disrobed on stage and condemned criminals, serving as stand-ins, are burned alive or crucified in full view of the audience. The themes of these sketches are correspondingly depraved: incest, rape, torture and drunken debauchery. If the audience becomes too unruly and excited, the manager of the troupe will call for silence or threaten to raise the curtain. Despite its low comic appeal, even the Imperial family is amused by mime. But because of its popular fascination and possible influence, mime plays cannot touch upon political subjects.

THE ACTORS [*Histrioni*]

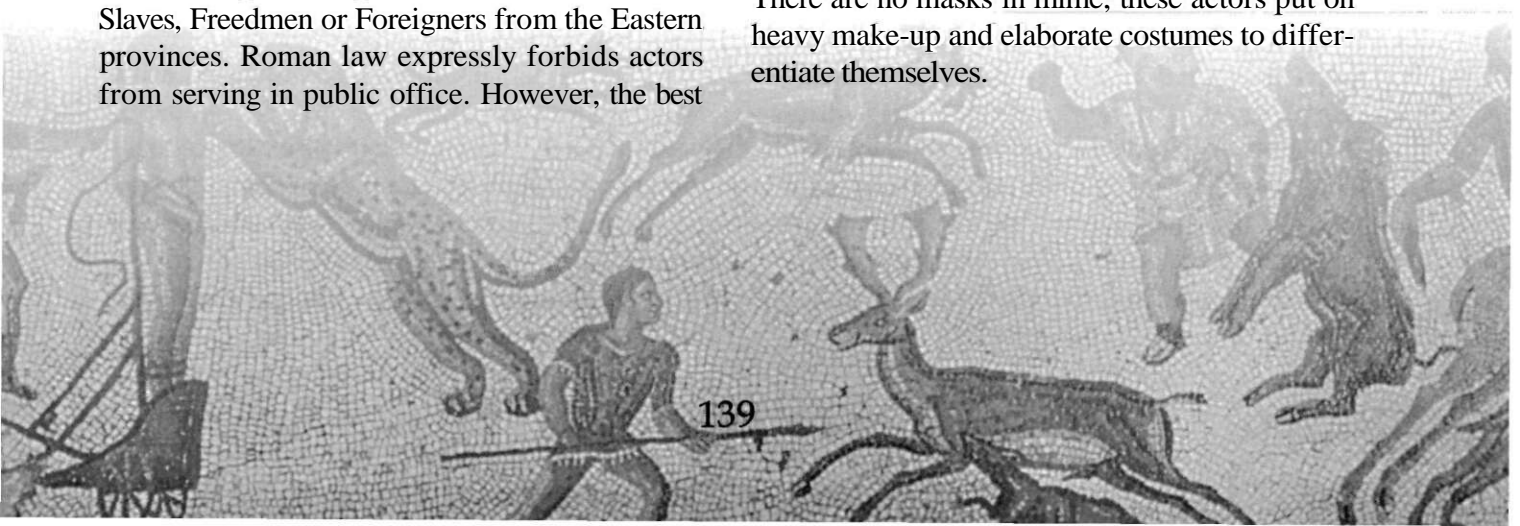
Like chariot racing and gladiatorial combat, acting is not a respectable profession. Most actors are Slaves, Freedmen or Foreigners from the Eastern provinces. Roman law expressly forbids actors from serving in public office. However, the best

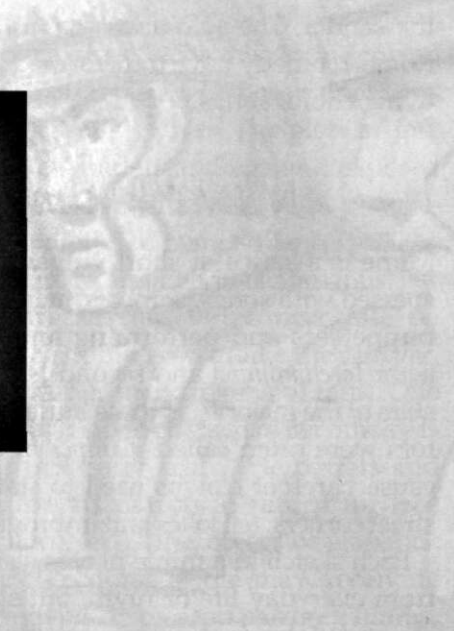
actors command high salaries and become celebrities. Marcus Aurelius personally freed L. Aurelius Pylades, the most popular actor of his time.

Actors, musicians and managers assemble into troupes that travel from city to city performing their repertoire. The emperor Hadrian organized these troupes into an Imperium-spanning guild called the "Artists of Dionysus". The guild serves its members by securing contracts for shows, exemption from military obligations and immunity from local taxes. A guild agent [*negotiator*] accompanies each troupe during its touring season. The guild's headquarters are presently in Alexandria.

In formal tragedy and comedy, actors don masks so that the audience instantly recognizes the character. While brown-colored masks represent male characters, white ones portray women. A conical device in a dramatic mask allows the wearer to project his voice. Tragic masks have frowns or horrified expressions; comic masks, smiles and obscene grins. During the reign of Avidius Cassius, Iulius Pollux of Naucratis categorized the 44 distinct masks used in comedy. In pantomime, the mask is even more important since the *pantomimus* must act out multiple roles during the course of a recital. At the beginning of his performance, the *pantomimus* usually wears a simple silk costume, a hooded cloak [*ricinum*] and a mask with closed lips symbolizing the artist's prohibition from speaking.

In formal Roman drama and pantomime, male actors play all the characters. In mime, women act out the female parts. Women actors are infamous for their sexual attraction, especially among young men. Cytheris, a former mime actress, was the mistress of Marcus Antonius. There are no masks in mime; these actors put on heavy make-up and elaborate costumes to differentiate themselves.





CHAPTER VIII

BELLUM

THE ART OF WARFARE

"[The Romans], the brigands of the world, have exhausted the land by their indiscriminate plunder, and now they ransack the sea. The wealth of an enemy excites their greed, his poverty their lust for power. East and West have failed to sate them. They are unique in that they aggressively attack the poor as they do the wealthy. Robbery, butchery, rape — the liars of Rome call this Imperium; they create a desolation and call it peace"

—Cicero, according to Tacitus

The *Pax Romana* enjoyed by millions within the borders of the Imperium owes its existence to the might of the Roman military which follows three simple orders: conquer, defend and control.

In war, the army pursues the single-minded goal of complete victory. A defeated enemy should expect no mercy. Massacres and brutal atrocities can be justified in the relentless pursuit of victory. Enemy troops are forced to march under the yoke [*iugum*] as a symbol of submission. Prisoners

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of war are executed or sold on the slave block. While the subject peoples of a conquered land may eventually assimilate into Roman society, the immediate consequences of a Roman occupation are devastating. Soldiers seize property and Slaves as war spoils. Martial law rules the new province; troublemakers and criminals are dealt with harshly in the aftermath.

Once the new borders of the Imperium are established, the army protects the frontier against any enemies that lie in wait just beyond. Strategic forts and batteries guard likely invasion zones. The Albis (Elbe) and Danuvius (Danube) are dotted with stone watchtowers. Hadrian built his famous wall in Britannia to keep the Picti from raiding Roman territory before Caledonia could be pacified.

Within the new province, the armed forces must also control restless native populations with well-placed garrisons and shows of force. If an uprising does occur, the army rapidly moves to crush the rebellion. Instigators are crucified en masse or sent to the arenas. The Jewish population in Iudaea have kept the legions busy in three separate insurrections. In 995 AUC (AD 243), a neo-Carthaginian revival faction gained control of the Hispanian town of Scallabis and proclaimed independence from the Imperium. The VII Legion Gemina mobilized a detachment of two cohorts that quickly breached the city's defenses and captured the faction's ringleaders.

Rome's formidable army was once a mere citizen militia assembled for war or in times of trouble. In 296 AUC (458 BC), a Patrician farmer named Cincinnatus left his farm to raise an army to fight the Aequi. Within fifteen days he had defeated the Aequi and returned to his plowing. While this story is still related to young Romans as a moral parable, modern listeners take pleasure in the romance of the story as a folk tale. The concept of the gentleman farmer who doubles as a brilliant warrior is the stuff of legend. The Imperium's vast dominion now requires a full-time army. The Roman knack for administrative efficiency has created a professional army with uni-

forms, hierarchy, standard organization and training regimens.

The legions have served Rome well in its large-scale military campaigns. With the monopoly on *fulminata*, the frontiers have never been more secure. The legions are still the preeminent fighting force but other military units are evolving new tactics to be more mobile and flexible to respond to crises. Sea power is becoming more important as Rome extends her influence past the Mediterranean. Cavalry is being adapted from lightly armed troops that harass enemy lines to heavy charging units that project irresistible power on the battlefield. Smaller detachments [*vexillationes*] from the legions play increasingly significant roles, especially the elite commando units or *decuriae peregrinae*.

CIVIL WAR [*Bellum Civium*]

Power struggles and scheming are venerable traditions in Roman politics. A civil war is the most extreme method of settling an internal crisis. If the public is discontent with the current government or perceives weak leadership at the helm, ambitious generals and statesmen may take this opportunity to seize the purple. Often a power vacuum precipitates the crisis. The assassination or accidental death of an Emperor may lead to confusion in the Senate and in the army. When two or more factions vie for the Imperial throne, Rome is plunged into civil war. Politicians and generals take up arms against each other instead of fighting the enemies of the Imperium. Not only does this upset the fabric of Roman society and the *Pax Romana*, but a civil war distracts the army from its primary duties. Native populations are more apt to express their grievances in open rebellion. Foreign kingdoms attempt to reclaim lost territory or adopt an aggressive expansionist policy.

The Imperium itself was born out the third major

civil war between Augustus and Mark Antony. Sulla and Marius fought for control in the first civil war, Caesar and Pompey in the second. It has been almost two hundred years since the last civil war when Vespasian emerged triumphant from the Year of the Four Emperors in 81 AUC (AD 69). A war between Commodus and Avidius Cassius seemed inevitable after the death of Marcus Aurelius in 937 AUC (AD 185), but the conflict was resolved with the treacherous assassination of Commodus by his own supporters.

SIEGECRAFT [Obsidio]

"What soldier can match the Roman in entrenching? Who is better at enduring toil?"

—Livy

Just as armor protects the flesh from hostile attack, walls defend a city's inhabitants. The art of siegecraft aims to capture a town in the most efficient way possible. Roman commanders are expected to know the basic strategies for besieging a city, especially in Eastern campaigns where the Parthians rely on heavy fortifications to protect their desert cities. Neither side enjoys a lingering blockade. For the attacker, it wastes valuable time and resources. For the defender, there is the specter of starvation and disease.

To discourage resistance to a siege, Roman commanders invariably follow two rules. First, the town is spared if the enemy surrenders before the siege begins. But once the battering ram (or tormentum blast) is employed against the gates, the city and its inhabitants become the property of the attackers if they are victorious. After a long siege, it is impossible to restrain soldiers who have waited impatiently for the walls to be breached. What follows are acts of cruelty born of frustration—setting fire to buildings, plundering temples, raping and butchering.

Second, a siege, once begun, is *never* abandoned. Ambassadors from a besieged city once told the Roman general that the effort was a waste of time since the city possessed enough food and water to last ten years. The general, without blinking, thanked them for this information and replied that now he knew that he would capture the city in the eleventh year. Shaken, the city soon surrendered. Strict observance of these rules has given the Roman army a fearsome reputation, convincing many towns to immediately capitulate lest they be destroyed. Roman commanders would rather a city surrender than be razed; better to divvy up the spoils of war with a *stylus* than a *gladius*.

The basic strategy of Roman siegecraft is called circumvallation. Soldiers encircle the city with forts or encampments to blockade the town so that its inhabitants cannot escape. This fortified perimeter is constructed of trenches, ramparts and traps. Particularly nasty are pits of pointed stakes covered with light brush called "lilies" [*lilia*]; a persona who falls into one of these pits will suffer wound points (Dmg: E3). If the threat of enemy reinforcements looms, the fortifications are extended in an outward ring as well.

The next stage of the siege is the assault [*opugnatio*], which hinges upon a successful breach of the city gates or walls. The first way to gain entrance to a city is to topple a wall or smash a gate with siege weapons. To break down gates, soldiers use a battering ram [*aries*] swung on ropes or fitted on a wheeled frame. While the tormentum has enough force to destroy stone fortifications sooner or later, Roman gunners tend not to waste fulminata on this laborious pursuit. A well-placed tormentum ball is much more effective against wooden gates or groups of defenders. Troops without fulminata weaponry must rely on bolt-shooting and stone-throwing artillery such as the catapult, ballista and scorpion. Engineers have devised a better way to use fulminata in a siege. By digging under the city's fortifications, engineers can place fulminata charges in key locations to bring down walls.

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The second way to breach a city's defenses is to go over or around them. Soldiers use earthen work ramps [*aggeres*] and ladders [*scalae*] to scale the walls. Attacking armies may also construct a rolling siege tower or movable gallery called the "little mouse" [*musculus*]. Both are protected from missile fire by wicker screens and wet leather hides. Eastern armies use more advanced machines derived from ancient Greek innovations, such as complex machines that systematically pull down walls. Romans prefer the brute force tactics that exploit the tenacity and ferocity of the legionary. If the assault fails, the siege continues as a waiting game until the trapped inhabitants surrender, starve or commit mass suicide.

THE LEGIONS [*Legiones*]

The elite infantry unit of the Imperium is the legion [*legio*], an offensive military unit that strikes fear into the hearts of Rome's enemies. Since the time of Marcus Aurelius, the legions have been "armed with the lightning" [*fulminata*], mercilessly pounding enemy troops with tormentum bombardments and pilum fire. A legion with ample ammunition is virtually invincible if commanded effectively, even when outnumbered. No wonder that many legions continue to paint the image of the thunderbolt on their shields, a powerful symbol of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus.

Each legion is assigned a number in keeping with military tradition dating back to the Republic. During civil wars, opposing sides may have legions with a like number. The legions retain this odd and confusing numbering system resulting in several legions sharing the same number. If a legion is destroyed or disbanded, its number is never used again. The Varian disaster in Germania in 761 AUC (AD 9) stipulates that no future legion may use the numbers XVII,

XVIII and XIX. To further distinguish between legions, legions are awarded or adopt nicknames [*cognomina*]. These nicknames can indicate conduct in battle (Victrix, Fortis), province in which they were raised or served (Gallica, Macedonica) or favored deity (Minervia, Apollinaris). For example, the VII Legion Hispana ("Spanish") and the I Legion Germanica ("German") merged to become the VII Legion Gemina ("Twin"). 31 legions are currently stationed in the following imperial provinces:

Province	Legion(s)
Aegyptus	II Traiana Fortis
Aethiopia	II Italics
Arabia	III Cyrenica
Armenia	III Gallica, XVI Flavia Firma
Assyria	1 Avidia Parthica, XII Fulminata
Caledonia	II Augusta
Dacia	V Macedonica, XIII Gemina
Germania Maior	VI Ferrata, XXX Ulpia Victrix, VII Augusta
Germania Minor	1 Minervia, XXII Primagenia
Hibernia	VI Victrix, XX Valeria Victrix
Hispania Tarraconensis	VII Gemina
Iudaea	X Fretensis
Mesopotamia	XXII Ixionaris, XV Apollinaris
Moesia Inferior	1 Italica, XI Claudia Pia Fidelis
Moesia Superior	IV Flavia Felix, VII Claudia Pia Fidelis
Nubia	III Augusta
Pannonia Inferior	II Adiutrix, XIV Gemina Martia Victrix
Pannonia Superior	1 Adiutrix, X Gemina Equestris
Syria	IV Scythica

A legion is partitioned into ten cohorts, each of which is divided into six centuries of 80 men, except for the first cohort [*prima cohors*] that had five centuries of 160 men. The smallest unit of a

legion is the squad or *contubernium*, eight legionaries who share a tent and pack mule. They work, eat and fight together. Non-combatant specialists and a small contingent of legionary cavalry (see pp. 150-152) bring the total number of soldiers in a legion near 5,500.

When the legion is entrusted to fulfill a special mission, the legion's officers form a detachment [*vexillatio*] to accomplish the task. These missions range from guarding a fulminata shipment to keeping order in a rebellious town. Vexillations may be asked to escort high-ranking dignitaries and their families or speed a message to the Emperor. The Emperor has established permanent "wandering vexillations" [*decuriae peregrinae*] made up of ten elite legionaries. These mobile and flexible units combat the guerilla tactics of rebellious provincials and serve as commando troops to perform dangerous missions behind enemy lines.

OFFICERS

If only one legion is stationed in an Imperial province, a military governor [*legatus Augusti*] of Senatorial rank controls the legion. Otherwise, the governor oversees individual generals [*legati legionis*] of Senatorial rank who command the legions. The exception is Aegyptus; two Equestrian prefects command the sole legion, the II Traiana Fortis, in that province.

One senior tribune "of the broad purple stripe" [*tribunus latidavius*] of Senatorial rank and fivejun-

ior tribunes "of the narrow purple stripe" [*tribuni angusticlavii*] of the Equestrian rank assist the governor or general. Third in command of the legion is the prefect of the camp or *praefectus castrorum*, an Equestrian officer who

had once been the senior centurion [*primus pilus*] of a legion. Each legion has two soldiers charged with carrying the Imperial standards. The eagle bearer [*aquilifer*] carries the legion's eagle standard into battle. The *imaginifer* bears the official portrait of the Emperor.

A centurion [*centurio*] of Plebeian rank leads each century [*centuria*]. He is a career soldier who has been promoted because of his bravery, loyalty and intensity. A harsh taskmaster, the centurion is responsible for the discipline and training of his troops. One of the symbols of his office,

the vine staff [*vitis*] is also an instrument of punishment. A notorious centurion was nicknamed "Bring Me Another" [*Cedo Alteram*] because he frequently broke his *vitis* while striking disobedient or slovenly legionaries. The most senior centurion in charge of the first century of the first cohort is called the *primus pilus* or "first musket". The *primus pilus* enjoys great prestige and automatic entry into the Equestrian rank upon retirement. Each century has three other officers [*principales*]: a deputy [*optio*] to assist the centurion in training, an officer of the watch [*tesserarius*] to supervise guard duty and the daily password and the standard bearer [*signifer*]

THE EAGLE [*Aquila*]

The emblem of every legion is its gold eagle [*aquila*] standard. Before the reforms of Marius, legions had various symbols such as bears, wolves and astrological signs. Like most military standards, the eagle serves as a rallying point during battle. When the trumpeters play the legion's unique melody, all eyes glance at the eagle to receive the general's orders. Simple movements of the standard convey basic commands.

To the men the eagle is sacred; on the legion's birthday, the eagle is garlanded and anointed with oils. It remains in a special shrine [*sacellum*] in camp until the entire legion goes on a march. The *primus pilus* and the first cohort are responsible for its protection. If the eagle is captured by enemy troops and not recovered by the legion, the legion is disbanded. Emperors will go to great lengths to recover these standards.

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to carry the century's standard and manage the soldiers' money.

Legionaries classified as specialists [*immunes*] are exempt from normal tasks. The legionary cavalry is excused from guard duty and heavy infantry drills since it has its own regimen of training. Experts oversee the use of fulminata weaponry: gunner [*tormentarius*], armorer [*custos armorum*], ammunition maker [*plumbarius*] and weapons officer [*fulminatus*]. Musicians communicate charges and advances in battle: bugler [*bucinator*], trumpeter [*tubicen*] and hornplayer [*cornicen*]. Experienced crews of legionaries construct fortifications and the Imperium's numerous engineering projects: master builder [*architectus*], surveyor [*agrimensor*] and chief engineer [*praefectus fabrum*]. Artisans or *fabri* create and repair everyday items for the troops: bronze smith [*aerarius*], carpenter [*carpentarius*], blacksmith [*ferrarius*] and stonemason [*lapidarius*]. Medical staff tend to the fallen and wounded: medic [*capsarius*], field surgeon [*medicus*] and veterinarian [*veterinarius*]. Intelligence agents conduct the dark and secret activities of the "Guardians of Smoke": executioner [*carnifex*], torturer [*questionarius*] and intelligence officer [*frumentarius*]. And lest the general forget that the Imperium is a bureaucracy, the legion also needs a full staff to handle all of the required paperwork: bookkeeper [*librarius*], accountant [*exactus*], clerk [*beneficiarius*] and senior clerk [*cornicularius*].

THE LEGIONARY [*Legionarius*]

The typical foot soldier [*miles* or *legionarius*] of the legion is a volunteer of Plebeian rank from a poor provincial family. In the Eastern provinces, a Foreigner or Freedman with a letter of recommendation might be allowed to join and immediately become a citizen of Rome. After taking the oath [*sacramentum*] to the Emperor, the legionary signs on for 25 years of duty. Legionaries receive generous pay (1,200 sesterces per year) and fre-



RUFUS

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Chief Engineer [*Praefectus Fabrum*]

Attributes: I10, A11, P11, V10

Humors: Balanced

MP: 0, **WP:** 10/20, **HP:** 6

Patron: Volcanus

Skills: *Machines 4, *Metals 5, *Monuments 4, Tormentum 3, City 3, Code 3, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Food 2, Fort 3, Fulminata 3, Gladius 4, Horse 1, Language (Latin) 3, Move (Jump) 2, Move (March) 2, Pilum 4

Background: Born and raised in Hispania, Marcus Flavius Rufus is the youngest son of a Freedman family that had once been slaves for the Flavius family, wealthy Equestrians. Rufus was born shortly afterwards, the first full citizen of the new Flavius family. His mother died in childbirth; Rufus has recently come to terms with this and is at peace with himself; his humors are in balance. Rufus joined the legions to see the world, but was assigned to the VII Legion Gemina in his native Hispania. Although Rufus loves horses, he cannot ride very well. Fortunately, engineering, a skill that he does excel at, also fascinates him. He reveres Aufidius Caelus Mulciber, who he considers the greatest man to ever walk the earth. Rufus dreams of rediscovering the secret of the fulminata and reestablishing the primacy of the Cyclopes, engineers who were the original disciples of Caelus. These thoughts are kept private lest his opinions become twisted into sedition against the Emperor.



quent bonuses [*donativa*] of up to five times annual salary. Booty is also a possibility during an active campaign. Upon retirement, a legionary can expect to receive land and money equivalent to 15 years of pay as a gift. After two and a half decades of living with their fellow soldiers, legionaries usually retire to a colony [*colonia*] of veterans from the same legion near their old bases.

A legionary must possess a good physique (equivalent to a Vis rating of 9 or greater) in order to march for miles carrying a 90-lb load of armor, weapons and equipment. While the mule assigned to each *contubernium* bears the load of the tent [*papilio*] and other bulky equipment, the legionary on campaign doubles as a pack animal, one of the many timely reforms instituted by the general Marius to standardize the legions. Thus, the common nickname for a legionary, "Mule of Marius" [*Mulus Marii*].

Standard issue legionary armor consists of a helmet [ozssz's], banded steel [*lorica segmentata*] and large shield [*scutum*]. Military sandals [*caligae*] are fitted with hobnail soles

for traction and long marches. Centurions have silvered armor and do not carry shields. They wear a leather harness decorated with military awards and pendant disks [*phalerae*], engraved greaves and a transverse crest [*crista transversa*] of feathers or horsehair on his helmet. The *signifer* traditionally puts on a bearskin over his helmet and shoulders and carries a small shield [*parma*] in place of the scutum. Senior officers (generals, tribunes and prefect of the camp) wear a muscled cuirass [*lorica*] with a knotted sash around their waist, a Greek symbol of authority adopted into Roman uniform.

The legionary is armed with a pilum, gladius and dagger [*pugio*]. Senior officers carry a pistol [*hastula*], gladius and a small dagger called a *parazonium*. If the soldier carries a shield, the gladius is worn on the right side so that it can be drawn without interfering with the shield arm. A legionary keeps his *pugio* and *fulminata* charges in his belt [*cingulum*].

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A legionary's kit [*loculus*] is carried on his back using a T-shaped wooden frame called a *furca*. Inside the kit are personal items, rations, a cooking pot, a drinking bowl [*patera*] and a leather wineskin or bronze water flask [*calix*]. *Afulminatus* will also keep his measuring tools and tinderbox in his kit. Hanging or strapped to the frame is cape [*sagum*] for foul weather, wall stakes [*pila muralis*] for the camp and several iron tools such as a saw [*serra*], a turf cutter for making ramparts or a pickaxe [*dolabra*] for digging trenches. The infrastructure of the Imperium owes a great debt to the legions. During times of peace, the legion keeps busy by constructing roads, bridges and aqueducts with these tools.

manner. Finally, soldiers learn how trumpet blasts and movements of legionary standards convey commands from officers.

Legionaries prepare for melee combat in much the same manner as gladiators, attacking fixed stakes with wooden swords and wicker shields. The soldiers then graduate to mock fights in full armor and blunted weapons where apply what they have learned in maneuvers training to realistic combat situations. For pilum practice, centurions emphasize rate of fire over accuracy since a Roman pilum lacks a rifled barrel and is not really effective past 30 yards. A decent soldier is expected to fire three volleys in one minute, even under combat conditions.

In an offensive, the primary goal of Roman battle tactics is to break the enemy's resolve and com-

pel it to flee. To accomplish this generals begin with an artillery barrage intended to demoralize and soften up the other side. When the tormenta are too hot to continue firing, the legionaries who are already in formation begin a deliberate, but silent advance. This is meant to unnerve the enemy in sharp contrast to the deafening onslaught of cannon. Once within 30 yards, the legionaries halt, kneel and volley with pilum fire until the enemy charges or flees. The legionaries then unsheathe their gladii and close to attack hand to hand, exposing any weakness in the

SPECIAL MANEUVERS

Wedge [*Cuneus*]

In the Wedge maneuver, legionaries form a small, tight group to attack looser enemy formations. This maneuver was developed to break enemy lines and exploit the effectiveness of the short thrusting gladius.

Saw [*Serra*]

The more advanced Saw maneuver is used against more disciplined troops. The front line of the attacking unit contains regularly spaced gaps like the teeth of a saw. From this vantage point, the reserve legionaries keep watch for a weak spot in the enemy line. When spotted, the soldiers quickly exploit it with a rushed charge.

Tortoise [*Testudo*]

To defend against enemy missile fire, Roman soldiers are trained to interlock their shields in either a standing or marching formation. Because it resembles a tortoise shell, this formation is called the Tortoise [*Testudo*]. The Porcupine [*Hystrix*] maneuver is a variant configuration where the legionaries stick out pila from their *scutum* notches to resemble bristling quills.

DISCIPLINE

The basic principle of legionary drills is to train a soldier to obey orders so that his behavior becomes automatic. A further benefit from this hard work is fitness, toughness and strength. To attain this iron discipline, legionaries are drilled once per day, twice if they are raw recruits. Basic training includes lessons in marching, running, jumping and swimming. Next the legionary learns battlefield maneuvers such as advancing, charging, flanking and retreating in an orderly

enemy line in order to force a retreat. At the same time, the cavalry thunders into the fray, hoping to outflank the enemy to achieve the same purpose.

In a defensive situation, the key is to hold formation. History has proven that the army that panics first loses the battle. Discipline and tenacity are more important than physical strength or agility. Most barbarian warriors tower over their Roman legionary counterparts. For example, at the battle of Noviomagus, the German tribesmen fell like ripe wheat to the determined legions as the Germans fled from the battlefield.

THE FORT [*Castra*]

When the army is on the march, legionaries camp in a temporary fort [*castra*] often in hostile territory. The prefect of the camp [*praefectus castrorum*] and the centurions direct the efforts of the soldiers to layout the dimensions of the encampment, mark out the gates and avenues and construct its breastworks comprised of ditch, rampart and palisade of stakes [*pila muralia*]. The general's tent is called *thepraetorium*. Nearby are the command headquarters [*principia*] and the ammunition tent [*volcanula*] or "Little Volcano". The legionaries sleep in an eight-man leather tent or "butterfly" [*papilio*], so named because a rolled up tent looks like a cocoon from which the tent emerges. In a highly mobile military campaign, the legion builds and dismantles a new fort every day.

Each legion has a permanent fortress [*hiberna*] in its home province. It has a more extensive defensive perimeter and instead of tents, the men sleep in roofed barracks. Amphitheaters, baths and military hospitals [*valetudinarium*] that cater to the legionaries are often nearby. Civil settlements [*canabae*] have a tendency to spring up around these bases, attracted by the security of the Roman presence and the spendthrift legionaries willing to part with gold.

DECORATIONS [*Dona Militaria*]

Soldiers are awarded military decorations for conspicuous bravery and achievement. These are presented in solemn ceremonies following a formal parade, usually in front of the entire legion. Common soldiers may receive medals based on Celtic spoils of war: pendant disks [*phalerae*] stamped with scenes from legend and myth and silver torques and armbands [*armillae*]. The gold crown [*corona aurea*] is a laurel wreath festooned with gold ribbons given for valor in combat. These awards are not restricted to individuals; entire units can be awarded the same decoration.

Other decorations are reserved for individuals. The civic crown [*corona civica*] or oak-leaf crown [*corona quercā*] is awarded to a legionary who saves the life of a citizen by holding his ground. Three crowns reward legionaries for bravery in the face of enemy battlements. The wall crown [*corona muralis*] and the rampart crown [*corona vallaris*], both made of gold, reward the legionary who first enters a besieged town and who first enters an enemy encampment or fortress, respectively. The *corona obsidionalis* is made of grass gathered near the walls of a besieged city. Commanding officers who successfully raze a hostile city may receive this rare and coveted honor. Centurions of the first cohort and junior tribunes [*tribuni angusticlavii*] may be given the blunted silver spear [*hasta pura*] for killing an enemy in single combat. The naval crown [*corona navalis*], also called the *corona classica* or *corona rostrata*, may only be awarded to officers of Senatorial rank for saving a fleet or army from destruction.

For spectacular victories, the Senate may approve a triumph [*triumphus*]. This honor is restricted to members of the Imperial family. The celebrant or *triumphator* rides through Rome in a four-horse chariot [*quadriga*] and dresses like the cult statues of Iuppiter Optimus Maximus with a

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painted red face, an embroidered toga [*toga picta*] and an Etruscan crown [*corona Etrusca*]. A slave stands behind him holding a laurel wreath above his head and whispering "You are but a man". The chariot follows a procession of white oxen and the priests [*victimarii*] that perform the sacrifice that culminates the ritual. The Emperor may consider sanctioning a lesser ceremony called an ovation [*ovatio*] for a Senator who has had a great military victory. Priests conduct the sacrifices on the Alban mount outside of the city and the Senator enters Rome the following morning on horseback wearing a myrtle crown.

THE AUXILIARIES [*Auxilia*]

Not all military situations call for the heavy infantry of the legions. As part of its standing army, Rome retains foreign troops to assist the legions on campaign and to perform the routine duties of frontier defense, such as patrolling and keeping bandits in check. These units are called "helpers" or auxiliaries [*auxilia*]. Roman generals need to be flexible in order to counter enemy tactics. Foreign troop types that specialize in different fighting styles can prove invaluable when devising a complete battle strategy. The number of auxiliaries in an Imperial province is roughly equal to the number of legionaries.

Auxiliary units are named after a commander, nationality or location. For example, the I Cohort Ulpiana was formed under Trajan and the I Cohort Afrorum was initially recruited from Africa. Auxiliary units are usually stationed near their homeland if at all possible. Exceptions exist because of the threat of mutiny. For example, Roman commanders still distrust the loyalties of British troops even though it has been nearly

two hundred years since the revolt of Queen Boudicca.

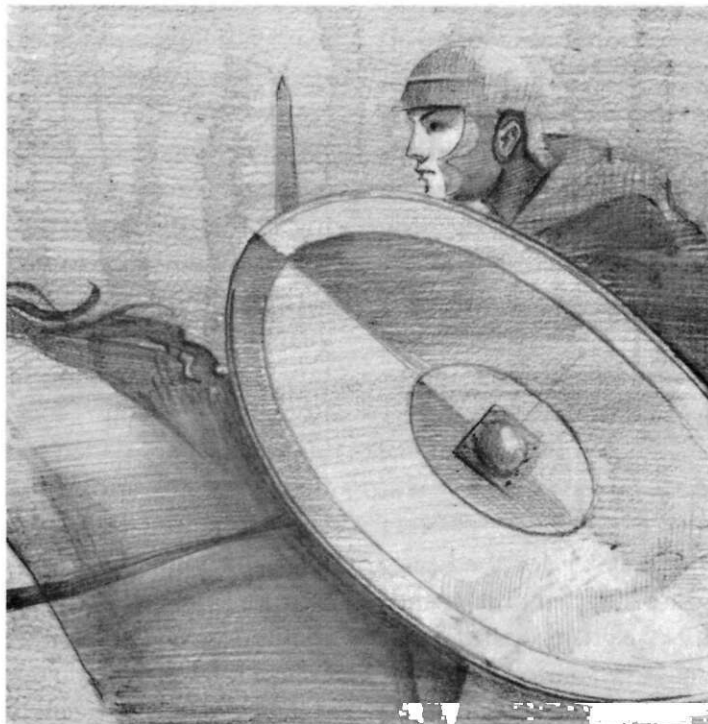
The auxiliaries are organized into cohorts of 500 men [*quingenaria*] in six centuries, or 1,000 men [*milliaria*] in ten centuries. A prefect [*praefectus cohortis*] of Equestrian rank commands a *quingenaria* unit, while a tribune [*tribunus cohortis*] leads a *milliaria*. As with the legions, each century has a centurion, *optio*, *signifer* and *tesserarius*. Native officers often assist the prefect or tribune. Auxiliary forces are paid 900 sesterces per year.

The auxiliaries are open to all free men, including Roman citizens who couldn't pass the strict legionary entrance exams. While some are conscripted, most are volunteers because after 25 years of service, an auxiliary is awarded a military diploma granting him and his family full Roman citizenship. Since the two bronze plates [*diplomatae*] are nailed to the Temple of the Deified Augustus and Minerva in Rome, an auxiliary soldier must purchase a replica to display in his own home. On rare occasions, entire units may be awarded early citizenship. In these cases the unit receives the title *civium Romanorum*; the cohort retains this title permanently even though it does not apply to newly recruited members.

A typical auxiliary wears chain mail [*lorica hamata*] or scale mail [*lorica squamata*] and fights with a spear, gladius and oval shield [*scutum*]. Other auxiliaries are armed with native weaponry and exotic clothing such as trousers and curious headgear. It is not uncommon to see Parthian archers in skirts and unarmored Balearic slingers on the march with the legions. Irregulars [*numeri*] are especially motley. Any allied foreign unit that cannot form an ordered cohort according to Roman regulations is designated as a *numeri* unit. Mauri and Palmyrani raiders are good examples of *numeri* recruited from warlike tribes with discipline left to its own native leaders. *Numeri* are paid but they do not have fixed lengths of service nor do they receive citizenship.

THE CAVALRY [*Equites*]

The native inhabitants of the Italian peninsula are not known for horsemanship. The Romans are no exception. The Roman cavalry was originally comprised of the wealthy elite who could afford to own and maintain horses. Although horses came to be cared for with public funds, the richest segment of the population continued to fill the ranks of the cavalry. This elite eventually became the Equestrian rank. The Romans lost major battles in the Punic Wars because Hannibal's Celtic, Spanish and African cavalry outperformed the Roman horsemen and outflanked the legionary infantry. These losses led Roman military leaders to adopt the Carthaginian strategy of hiring mercenary horsemen who were "born in the saddle" to make up its cavalry units. In the Imperium, the citizen cavalry has been completely replaced by hired foreign troops forming the auxiliary cavalry. Imperial horse farms in the North African and Eastern provinces supply fresh cavalry horses for the Roman war effort.



commands the *ala*. This cavalry commander [*praefectus equitum*] is an experienced soldier who was required to have previously served as a military tribune [*tribunus angustidavius*] of the legion and a prefect of the auxiliary infantry. Each wing has an *imaginifer* to hold the Emperor's image and

a *vexillarius* to support the prefect and carry the *ala*'s unique flag into battle. The *vexillarius* is occasionally named the *draconarius* because of a special standard used by some wings. Adopted from a Scythian and Dacian cavalry tradition, the dragon standard [*draco*] is a gilded bronze dragon head mounted on a pole. The back of its head is attached to a long, colorful windsock.

When filled with air,

the gaping mouth makes a hissing sound and the windsock snakes as if were alive.

Each wing is further divided into 16 (24 for an *ala milliariae*) squadrons [*turmae*] of 32 men each commanded by a decurion [*decurio*]. In rank, the decurion corresponds to a centurion in the legions. Underneath the decurion are two other officers, the *duplicarius* and the *sesquiplicarius*, corresponding to a legion's *optio* and *tesserarius*, respectively. These names are derived from their relative salary grades: *duplicarius* or "double-pay man" and *sesquiplicarius* or "once and a half-pay man". Each squadron has its own standard [*signa*] and standard-bearer [*signifer*]. An officer called the curator is responsible for looking after the horses and maintaining the riding equipment.

The Imperial army currently boasts 90 cavalry wings, 30 of which are *ala milliariae*. Like the le-

THE WING [*Ala*]

The basic unit of the auxiliary cavalry is the wing [*ala*]. An *ala quingenaria* is 512 horsemen strong; an *ala milliariae*, 768. However, like the auxiliary infantry, a Roman officer of the Equestrian rank

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gions, the *ala* are primarily stationed in Imperial provinces, especially on enemy frontiers. The military uses standard conventions to give each *ala* a unique name. Names of individual squadrons or *turmae* are derived from the decurion's personal name.

Example: Ala I Pannoniorum Sabiniana.

"Ala" designates the unit type, in this case a cavalry wing. "I" is an assigned Roman numeral to distinguish the unit among similarly named units. "Pannoniorum" refers to the province of origin of the levied troops. For this unit, the horsemen are of Pannonian heritage. "Sabiniana" is a qualifier indicating the name of the original, current or most decorated cavalry commander. Since this wing won many of its battles under the command of Sabius, it was named after him.

THE CAVALRYMAN [*Eques*]

As members of the auxiliary forces, horsemen in the Roman cavalry also receive citizenship after 25 years of service. However, their annual salary [*stipendium*] is equivalent to that of a legionary. Because of this fact, a potential recruit must meet rigorous physical requirements and possess appropriate letters of recommendation in addition to being skilled in horsemanship.

Cavalrymen are drilled in riding maneuvers — mounting and dismounting in armor and shield from either side, vaulting into one's saddle, negotiating rough terrain, wheeling in formation, jumping over obstacles and charging at full speed — and mounted combat. Gifted riders are trained in advanced techniques such as mounting a galloping horse and guiding a horse to move backwards. Cavalry horses are regularly exercised to keep them in battle condition. While a horse will refuse to charge an oncoming cavalry unit or a phalanx bristling with long spears, they are taught to ignore distractions like pilum and tormentum fire.

The cavalry is prized for its speed and mobility on the battlefield. Whether the cavalry unit

is comprised of light skirmishers or heavy shock troops, it plays a significant role in combat. Light cavalry harasses the enemy while keeping out of range of missile fire. Heavy cavalry charges into the flank or rear of enemy infantry to disrupt battle lines and force a rout.

Most cavalrymen wear a helmet and scale mail [*lorica squamata*] or chain mail [*lorica hamata*] for ease of movement during mounted combat. They carry a small round or hexagonal shield [*parma*], a light spear [*lancea*] and the long cavalry sword [*spatha*]. Cataphracts wear heavier armor [*lorica clibanaria*] and use a heavy lance [*contus*]. A rider's military sandal [*caliga*] is equipped with an iron or bronze spur. Horses, especially those

HIPPIKA GYMNASIA

To impress the local inhabitants and to practice horsemanship, the cavalry puts on a bimonthly display of martial prowess known as the Cavalry Games or *Hippika Gymnasia*.

During the Games, the riders and their horses don lavish parade armor including polished shields and masked helmets with colorful plumes. The face on each mask is molded in the shape of either a male or female warrior to symbolize the mythical combat between the Greeks and Amazons. Underneath their armor, the riders wear brightly-hued tunics and fitted trousers. Horses wear coats of mail decorated with ribbons and pendant disks [*phalerae*].

The Games feature complex choreographed drills involving charges, turns and flanking maneuvers and horse tricks like jumping and riding backwards. The squadrons also compete in mock combat, dividing into teams and throwing blunted javelins at each other. Individual weapons competitions follow as well.

FOREIGN HORSEMEN

Celts [*Celtae*]

The Celts of Gallia and Hispania have always been considered superb horsemen. New units continue to be drawn from these tribal populations.

Germans [*Germani*]

Germans are fierce warriors on horseback, especially the Batavians [*Batavi*].

Sarmatians [*Sarmatae*]

Originally from the steppes of Russia, the Sarmatian tribe known as the Roxolani moved west to obliterate the Scythians. They are famed for their *cataphracti*, cavalry units where both rider and horse are heavily armored in chain mail. *Cataphracti* are armed with the heavy lance [*contus*].

Thracians [*Thraces*]

Thracians are actively recruited. Most worship Sabazius the mysterious Rider God. The Illyrian tribes [*Illyrii*] in Dalmatia and Pannonia are expert horsemen as well.

Numidians [*Numidae*]

These North African nomads ride completely unarmored and use no bridle or spurs. They are deadly mounted archers.

Moors [*Mauri*]

The "Ferocious Moors" [*Mauri Fences*] from Mauretania have long fought in the Roman cavalry. Lusius Quietus, a Moorish chieftain and cavalry commander, led an independent fighting force of *Mauri* cavalry in Trajan's many campaigns. He was well rewarded but was later executed for conspiring to overthrow Hadrian.

Arabians [*Arabis*]

The military prowess of desert nomads of Arabia was born from centuries of raids and border skirmishes. In addition to standard cavalry units, specialized ones are formed from local soldiers, such as Syrian archers and camel riders [*alae dromedariorum*].

of the cataphracts, are sometimes equipped with armor to protect their backs, chest and eyes. A Roman saddle is basically a wooden frame covered with leather. Four bronze horns at each corner hold the rider in place since stirrups have not been invented yet. Cavalrymen control the horse with spurs and a complex bit and bridle designed to produce immediate responses from the mount. Cavalry horses do not use horseshoes.

OTHER CAVALRY UNITS

The legionary cavalry [*equites legionis*] serve as scouts and dispatch riders. In addition, special units of cavalry scouts [*exploratores*] perform reconnaissance and patrol duty in advance of the marching legions to prevent ambushes. The cavalry arm of the Praetorian Guard is known as the Imperial Horse Guard [*Equites Singulares Augusti*], a unit of 1,000 crack horsemen recruited from the auxiliary *alae*. The Horse Guard accompanies the Emperor on campaign as his personal cavalry unit. Nicknamed the "Batavians" [*Batavi*] since early Imperial times, they are renowned for their unswerving loyalty, ferocious fighting and ability to ford rivers by swimming in full armor. The mounted cohorts [*cohorts equitatae*] consist of mixed infantry and cavalry who function as escorts and military police in the provinces.

THE PRAETORIAN GUARD

[*Cohors Praetoria*]

The Praetorian Guard serves as the Emperor's bodyguard while in Rome and his personal army when engaged in a military campaign in the provinces. As an official body, the Guard has

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only been in existence since Augustus, yet their name is an echo from the Republic: the original *cohors praetoria* were the bodyguards of the consular generals. Their proximity to the Emperor lends them considerable informal power and influence, mainly during a crisis such as the sudden death of the Emperor where there is no clear line of succession. In 793 AUC (AD 41), fearing a return to the Republic after the assassination of Caligula, the Guard found Caligula's uncle Claudius hiding behind a curtain and proclaimed him Emperor. On other occasions, the Guard met with failure. L. Aelius Seianus used his influence to purge his personal enemies. However, his ambition eventually undid him. Tiberius denounced him as a traitor and conspirator to the Senate who had him and his entire family executed. In 937 AUC (AD 187), Marcus Aurelius died and his designated successor, Avidius Cassius, was returning to Rome. The Praetorian Guard ignored popular opinion and shakily saluted Commodus as Emperor. Before Avidius Cassius could take action, thoughtful minds prevailed among the Praetorians and did away with the unstable Commodus. Since then, the Praetorians have remained neutral, working to preserve the status quo of the Imperium. Some fear they are merely waiting for the right moment to reenter the dangerous world of Roman politics—the Praetorian Guard has always relished its role as kingmaker.

The Praetorian Guard is currently made up of nine cohorts (numbered I—IX) of 1,000 men each, although the number of cohorts and the number of men in them frequently vary based on the whim of the Emperor. It is in reality a double-strength legion in everything but name and is only referred to as a Guard in order to adhere to the rule that forbids the legions from entering Rome. A praetorian prefect [*praefectus praetorio*] of Equestrian rank commands the Praetorians since no Emperor would allow a potential Senatorial rival to control his bodyguard. The praetorian prefect also acts as the Emperor's agent in hearing legal appeals from Imperial provinces. A praetorian tribune of Equestrian rank commands



GEMELLUS

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Praetorian Guardsman

[*Miles Cohortis Praetoriae*]

Attributes: I8, A12, P11, V11

Humors: M 3 (Avaricious)

MP: 0, WP: 11/22, HP: 3

Patron: Mercurius

Skills: *Coin 6, *Move (Jump) 4, *Move (March) 4, Trick 5, City 4, Craft (Mosaic) 1, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Dice 3, Gladius 5, Groom 3, Guard 4, Language (Latin) 2, Pilum 5, Stealth 3

Background: Marcus Veturius Gemellus was a vain and spoiled child. Gemellus' father, is a famous artist who specializes in immense and detailed color mosaics depicting historical battles. His father used his influence among the wealthy to obtain Gemellus a commission in the Praetorian Guard. Like most of the Guard, Gemellus is a tall handsome youth, resplendent in his parade armor. His vanity is only matched by his greed, a trait no doubt born from his father's lax discipline and overindulgence. Despite his love for gold, he is a disciplined soldier of the VI Praetorian Cohort who single-handedly thwarted an assassination attempt on the life of the Emperor's cousin by a Hibernian Fiani warrior who had infiltrated the slave staff of the Imperial Palace and drawn a knife to slay the child. He is immensely pleased with his handsome award.

each cohort, which is divided into ten centuries of 100 men. These in turn are commanded by praetorian centurions all of equal standing save for two: the *trecenarius*, who is in charge of the 300 scouts [*speculators*] distributed among the ten cohorts of the Guard and the *princeps castrorum*, who sees to the defenses and provisions of the praetorian fortress in Rome.

Unlike the legions where citizen soldiers are recruited from the entire Imperium, the Praetorian Guard obtains most of its new members from Italia and its neighboring provinces. Only the tallest and fittest are selected for this service. The majority of Praetorians are of Plebeian rank, yet they enjoy privileged status, allowing them unrivalled access to the elite circles of Roman society, including the Senate and the Emperor himself. Officers are frequent guests in the homes of the rich and powerful. The Guard is handsomely paid, receiving more than three times the base legionary salary or about 4,000 sesterces per year. In addition, they are pampered with luxurious living quarters, the best food and frequent gifts from the Emperor. Upon accession, an Emperor traditionally bestows a sizable donative upon the Praetorian Guard. After serving a required 16 years, Praetorians are eligible for retirement or more prestigious appointments as members of the Imperial reserve [*evocati Augusti*], including a legionary centurion or tribune of the night watchmen [*vigiles*]. Beyond this may be a centurion post in the Urban Cohorts and then possibly a coveted centurion post in the Praetorian Guard.

One Guard cohort is always on duty at any one time the Imperial palace in order to protect the Emperor from an assassination attempt. They also routinely eavesdrop on visitors to root out any possible conspiracies. The other nine cohorts are garrisoned in a fortress [*castra praetoria*] in the northeast corner of Rome near the Viminal Hill (Region VI). The main gate [*porta praetoria*] faces west toward the city. Inside are the usual barracks, practice areas, officer's quarters and ware-

houses common to legionary forts, but more elaborately built and decorated. In addition, the *castra* boasts numerous small temples to Mars and to the *genii* of divine Emperors.

The Praetorian Guard patrols Rome armed with pila, dressed in ceremonial armor based on Republican-era styles—burnished cuirasses, plumed helmets, oval shields and purple cloaks. When on duty at the palace, a Praetorian wears plainclothes, a simple toga or tunic, with a *hastula* concealed in its folds. On military campaign, they are indistinguishable from regular legionaries except for the fineness of their equipment. For example, Praetorian *signiferes* wear the skins of lions instead of bears. Their shields are decorated with a scorpion device; a centuries-old practice started under the emperor Tiberius whose birth sign was Scorpio. Since these are the Emperor's own troops, the Praetorian standard features images of the Imperial family and records of his personal victories and awards.

THE URBAN COHORTS

[*Cohortes Urbanae*]

"[The Urban Cohorts are there] to control the slaves and those citizens whose natural boldness gives way to disorderly conduct unless they are overawed by force"

—Tacitus

In 758 AUC (AD 6), Augustus established the Urban Cohorts, a permanent police force to keep the peace and protect the citizen body. Considered a part of the Imperial army, the cohorts would be called upon as a last defense against a foreign invader threatening the gates of the city. There are eight cohorts, four of them in Rome. They are numbered beginning with ten (X) to follow the Praetorian cohorts:

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Unit	Base of Operations
Cohort X	Rome
Cohort XI	Rome
Cohort XII	Rome
Cohort XIII	Carthage
Cohort XIV	Rome
Cohort XV	Puteoli
Cohort XVII	Ostia
Cohort XVIII	Lugdunum

The cohorts in Carthage, Puteoli and Ostia ensure the security of the grain trade. The cohort in Lugdunum guards the Imperial mint. Nonius Festus disbanded the missing cohort, XVI, for its involvement in organized crime.

A standard cohort is comprised of 500 officers and soldiers divided into six centuries of 80-100 soldiers, officers and specialists. As in the Praetorian Guard, a tribune commands each cohort and a centurion each century; but unlike the Praetorians who report to an Equestrian prefect, supreme command of the Urban Cohorts is with the prefect of Rome [*praefectus Urbi*], a senior Senatorial post (see CHAPTER V: RES PUBLICA, p. 93). In Rome, the Urban Cohorts are garrisoned in the Urban Fortress [*Castra Urbana*] near their previous residence, the Praetorian Fortress. This building was financed by an anonymous group of Senators who, according to the dedicatory inscription, only wished to "express their profound appreciation for those who watch over the Senate and people of Rome." A cynical citizen added in graffiti "but mostly the Senators."

Recruits, the majority being Italian Plebeians, are paid 2,500 sesterces annually and must serve

for 20 years. A member of the Urban Cohorts could expect a transfer into the Praetorian Guard within three years if he performs his duty well and meets rigorous physical requirements. On patrol, a policeman wears *lorica segmentata* and carries a gladius. He is not armed with a pilum nor a shield.

THE NIGHT WATCHMEN [*Vigiles*]

Fire is a constant hazard in a city lit by oil lamps, candles and torches. Cooking over open flames

in the kitchen contributes to the danger. Augustus knew that Rome not only needed policemen, it needed firemen as well. He created the *vigiles* or night watchmen to walk the city at night to prevent blazes and thwart crime. Despite their lower social status, the *vigiles* proudly take over the night patrol after the daytime Urban Cohorts have retired. They are made up of seven cohorts

of 1,000 men with each cohort responsible for two regions in Rome:

Unit	Base of Operations
Cohort 1	Regions VII and VIII
Cohort II	Regions III and V
Cohort III	Regions IV and VI
Cohort IV	Regions XII and XIII
Cohort V	Regions 1 and II
Cohort VI	Regions X and XI
Cohort VII	Regions IX and XIV

SEBACIARA

Night watchmen honor their fallen comrades in a solemn ritual called the *Sebaciara* or "Candle Ceremony". On the anniversary of a watchman's death, a *contubernium* from his district carries a lit candle from their station to the place where the vigil died. After a brief prayer and offering, the candle is snuffed. This act is performed for a deceased vigil up to the point where the watchman would have completed his six-year tour of duty.

Each cohort is organized in a similar fashion to the Urban Cohorts with tribunes and centuries. The tribunes report to a prefect [*praefectus vigilum*] of Equestrian rank who also acts as judge for petty offenses that occur at night. Each cohort has a main base [*castra*] and two stations [*excubitoria*]. Cohort I occupies the original base established by Augustus on the Via Flaminia near the Porta Ratamena. Two detachments of four centuries apiece are always on duty in Ostia and Puteoli. These are six-month assignments that rotate through the cohorts.

Night watchmen are recruited from Freedmen and Plebeians, assigned to a district [*vicus*] within each region and serve for six years. They patrol the dark streets of Rome on the lookout for muggers, burglars, runaway slaves and wanted criminals. To fight fires, *vigiles* usually work in a team of eight [*contubernium*]. Their firefighting equipment includes padded mattresses [*centones*] soaked in cheap wine [*acetum*], ladders [*scalae*] and brooms [*scupae*]. A *sifonarius* works the water pumps, while the *aquarius* keeps it filled by fetching buckets of water. For huge blazes, water is useless and the flames must be allowed to burn out. Hook-men [*uncinarii*] and axe-men [*falcarii*] knock down walls to slow the flames. A small catapult [*ballista*] is often used to demolish a building before it can set another building ablaze. A *medicus* is on staff to treat injuries, burns and the effects of smoke inhalation.

THE AMAZONIAN GUARD

[*Cohors Amazona*]

"Who hasn't seen the wounds in the dummy on which she drills with continual stabbings and hits with her shield and works through the whole course of exercise - a matron, the sort you'd expect to blow the trumpet at the Floralia. How can a woman who wears a helmet be chaste? She's denying her sex, and likes a man's strength. But she wouldn't want to turn into a man, since we men get so little pleasure."

—Cicero

The Amazonian Guard [*Cohors Amazona*] is ceremonial unit of female warriors assigned to protect the women of the Imperial family. The Empress Nonia Gellia, second wife of Avidius Cassius, commissioned the guard in 950 AUC (AD 198) and is still an honorary member of the Guard's first cohort. A novelty when it was founded, the five cohorts are 2,500 strong, made up of the fiercest women fighters from all over the Imperium. Since the *Cohors Amazona* is stationed in Rome permanently, it has seen no action in its fifty years of existence. Most of its



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time is spent polishing bronze armor and marching in parades. As part of a training program, soldiers from the Amazonian Guard undertake short tours of duty with other services, such as the Urban Cohorts and the legions. The Amazonian Guard wears archaic helmets and highly decorated armor reminiscent of the Homeric age.

THE IMPERIAL NAVY

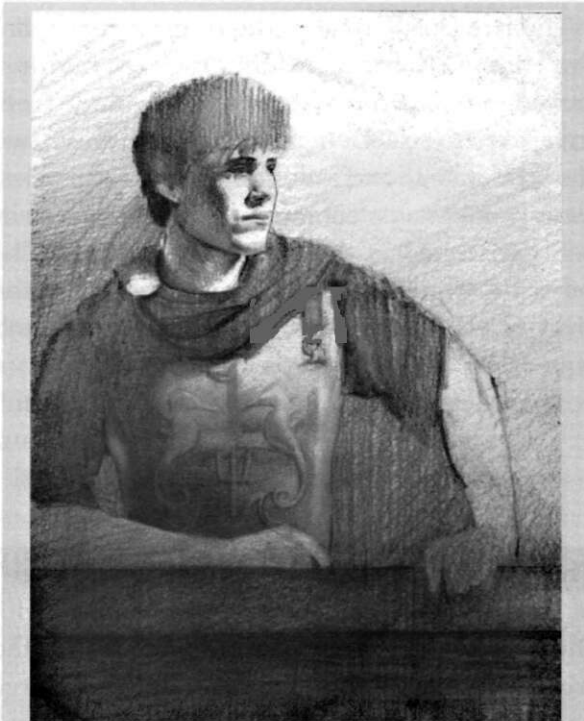
Dome's initial rise to power was based on its JTvsuperior infantry and land warfare strategy. It was only during the Punic Wars that Rome even needed warships to defeat Carthage, the preeminent maritime power in the Mediterranean. Subsequent events—the invasions of Mithridates, the raids of the Cilician pirates and the decisive Battle of Actium in the Civil War—prompted Augustus and his successors to establish a permanent Imperial Navy to protect Rome's dominion on the seas.

The two main fleets of the Imperial Navy are the Misene Fleet and the Ravenna Fleet, both stationed in Italia and sworn to protect Rome from invasion by sea. Detachments from these two fleets operate in and around Italia's coastal cities. Each fleet has a detachment of sailors in Rome itself garrisoned in the Praetorian Fortress. The other fleets guard vital Imperial interests in the provinces. Fleets are further divided into squadrons of ten warships.

THE WARSHIP [*Navis Longa*]

The basic fighting ship of the navy is the "three" or trireme [*trieris*], a long and narrow galley with three banks of oars on each side. While the trireme is equipped with a main mast and large square sail, oarsmen provide a consistent and predictable source of power in contrast to the fickle Mediterranean winds. Triremes are designed for warfare and therefore are not particularly seaworthy in storms or practical for long voyages. They require frequent stops for repairs

Unit	Base of Operations	Ships
The Misene Fleet [<i>Classis Misensis</i>]	Italia—Misenum and Ostia; the Tyrrhenian Sea	40 triremes; 8 quadriremes; 2 quinquiremes; 1 sexireme flagship
The Ravenna Fleet [<i>Classis Ravennas</i>]	Italia—Ravenna and Salonae; the Adriatic Sea	26 triremes; 2 quadriremes; 1 quinquireme
The Syrian Fleet [<i>Classis Syriaca</i>]	Syria—Seleucia Pieria; the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea	12 <i>libumae</i> , 2 triremes
The Alexandrian Fleet [<i>Classis Alexandrina</i>]	Aegyptus—Alexandria; the North African coast and the Nile	30 <i>libumae</i>
The Red Sea Fleet [<i>Classis Rubrae</i>]	Aethiopia—Adulis; the Red Sea and the Arabian coast	12 <i>libumae</i> ; 2 triremes
The Black Sea Fleet [<i>Classis Pontica</i>]	Cappadocia—Trapezus; the Black Sea	24 <i>libumae</i> , 6 triremes
The Moesian Fleet [<i>Classis Moesica</i>]	Moesia Inferior—Tomi; the eastern Danube and the northern coast of the Black Sea	15 <i>libumae</i>
The Pannonian Fleet [<i>Classis Pannonica</i>]	Pannonia Superior—Carnuntum; the western Danube	15 <i>libumae</i>
The German Fleet [<i>Classis Germanica</i>]	Germania Maior—Colonia Agrippina; the Rhine and the North Sea	24 <i>libumae</i> , 2 triremes
The British Fleet [<i>Classis Britannica</i>]	Britannia—Rutupiae; the English Channel and the Irish Sea	18 triremes; 2 quadriremes



LYSIMACHUS

Rank: Foreigner

Occupation: Captain [*Trierarchus*]

Attributes: I12, A11, P9, V10

Humors: XI (Confident)

MP: 0, **WP:** 10/20, **HP:** 3

Patron: Neptunus

Skills: *Fish 3, *Harpax 5, "Sail 6, *Sea 5, *Swim 4, Command 5, Customs (Plebeian) 4, Gladius 3, Guard 3, Language (Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Machines 3, Navigate 5, Pilum 3, Spear 3, Strategy 4, Tormentum 4, Train 3

Background: Originally from Miletus in the province of Asia, Gaius Pompeius Lysimachus adopted a Roman name upon enlisting as per naval custom. A stout and able seaman, Lysimachus spent his early career in a *liburna* patrolling the Red Sea. Successful actions against pirates led to his promotion to captain. His current assignment is captain of the trireme Thetis, one of ten warships that form the Ostia detachment of the Misene Fleet. When not on board the Thetis, he spends most of his time rubbing shoulders with the merchants and officials that live in Rome's port city. He feels that the navy is the guardian of commerce—the true lifeblood of Roman society. He despises the legions for the excessive praise and honors that they garner. He is of the firm opinion that the navy, now armed with cannon, is on the brink of achieving its destined greatness. *This persona was built using 60 skill points to reflect his experience.*

and are traditionally anchored in port or hauled up in the winter months. The *liburna* is a faster attack ship used by provincial fleets and on rivers. It has two banks of oars pulled by one or two rowers. A *liburna* is light enough to be transported over land with rolling logs.

Both the "four" or quadrireme [*tetreris*] and the "five" or quinquireme [*penteres*] are larger, but less maneuverable versions of the trireme. They have the same oar configuration as a trireme, but increase the number of rowers per oar. The "six" or sexireme [*hexeris*] flagship Augustus moored in Misenum is essentially ceremonial and only enters a sea battle once Roman victory is well assured. Individual warships are named after gods or bodies of water, often Latinized versions of Greek names, such as Xanthus, the river that Achilles fought in the Iliad. A carved figurehead on the prow often reflects the name of the ship. For example, the trireme Nilus has a crocodile design.

At the base of the ship's prow, flanked by painted eyes is the beak [*rostrum*], a huge jutting piece of timber sheathed in bronze used to ram enemy vessels. The *harpax* is a grappling harpoon invented by M. Vipsanius Agrippa. It is designed to deeply penetrate an enemy's hull so that legionaries can board. Beaks from captured ships serve as war trophies, the most famous being those of Carthaginian warships that decorate the rostra or speaker's platform in the Roman forum. The *harpax* quickly replaced the *corvus* or "crow" boarding ramp used in the Punic Wars. In addition, Roman warships keep component pieces of collapsible fighting towers in their hold. When assembled for battle, the towers provide a strategic firing position for cannon fire. Naval cannon [*tormenta*] are smaller than land-based artillery but are extremely effective in sinking ships, killing sailors and shelling coastal targets. Cannon are fixed on rotating wooden platforms so that they may be aimed in multiple directions.

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THE SAILOR [*Nauta*]

Although naval service is open to any free man, sailors [*navatae*] are mainly recruited from the Foreigner rank, since citizenship is one of the rewards for completing the mandatory 26 years of service. Note that no Slaves serve as sailors aboard Imperial vessels, even as rowers. Slaves conscripted for emergency service are manumitted immediately. It is a tradition of the Imperial Navy to adopt a Roman name upon enlistment. A sailor's annual salary is roughly half that of an auxiliary or 500 sesterces. Common sailors are perceived to have a lower status than their infantry counterparts, a fact that encourages "clueless sailor" jokes among the legions and fuels the rivalry between the land and sea armed forces.

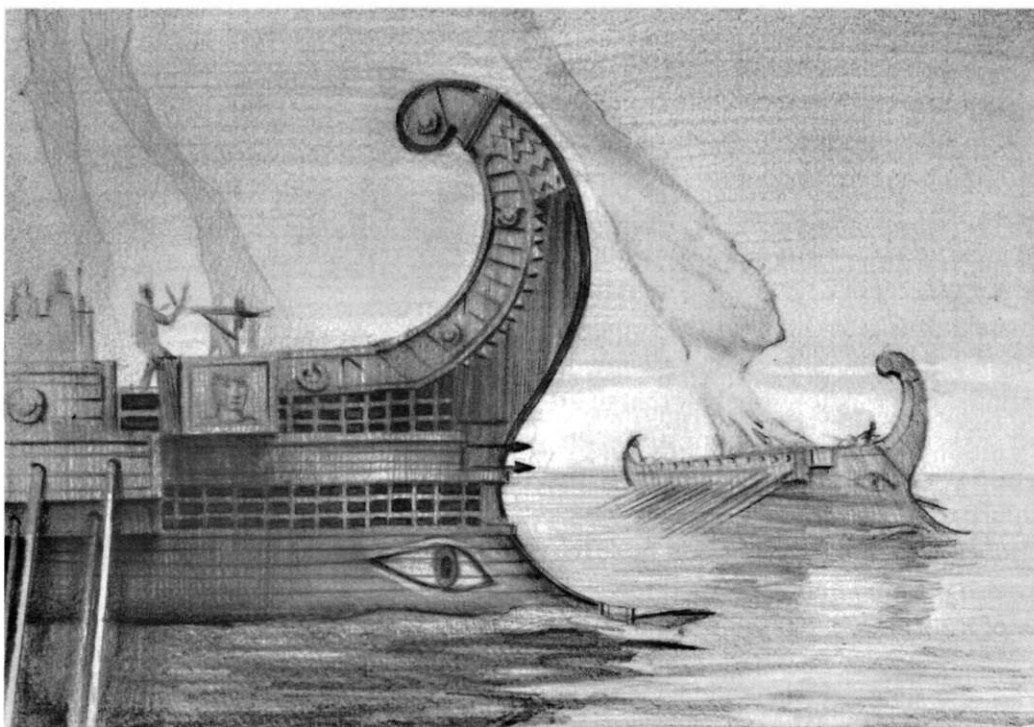
The crew of a trireme is 200 sailors, including 50 officers and specialists. Each sailor is expected to row, keep watch, clean the decks and make ship repairs. Half of the sailors are designated as *velarii* or "sail men" who assist in navigation and see to the sails and rigging. The remainder are marines [*manipularii*] who man the ship's weaponry, grapple and board enemy vessels and engage in amphibious attacks. Officer posts in the Imperial Navy are captain [*trierachus*], squadron commander [*navarchus*] and fleet commander [*praefectus classis*]. While a sailor might aspire to become a trierarchus or even a navarchus, the fleet commander is always a member of the Equestrian rank. The prefect of the Misene fleet [*praefectus classis praetoriae Misenensis*] is an important step in the career of an ambitious Equestrian. Pliny the Elder held this post when he lost his life in the eruption of Vesuvius. The captain of a warship is its master and commander with regard to sailing and naval tactics. However, a naval centurion [*centurio*] assumes authority during grappling and boarding to lead the marines in close quarters combat. The centurion conducts weapons drills, enforces discipline,

metes out the captain's justice and supervises the weapons officer [*fulminatus*] who maintains the naval cannon and powder stores. As in the legions, he is assisted by an *optio*. Also aboard each ship are trained specialists: the helmsman [*gubernator*], the boatswain [*pausarius*] who regulates the timing of the rowers, the chief carpenter [*nauphlax*] and numerous clerks serving as the captain's staff. The flagship of a *navarchus* will also have a ship's surgeon [*medicus*].

NAVAL TACTICS

In times of peace, the navy's main duties are to escort merchant ships, particularly the Imperial grain carriers from Aegyptus; combat piracy; and convey military personnel to their assignments in the provinces. In wartime, the navy engages enemy warships, transports invading armies and bombards hostile coastal cities. A trireme can hold an extra 75 men; it would take 80 triremes to transport an entire legion and its siege equipment.

Before battle, the crew rushes to dismantle the mast and stow the sail in the hold. Despite the deadliness of naval cannon, ramming is still the preferred tactic in naval combat. The rowers must pull the oars at a great speed in order to execute a successful ram that would penetrate the enemy's hull. Warships are built as offensive vessels and are easily sunk if its hull is breached. However, a ship that has rammed another runs the risk of being stuck fast and made helpless in the water or worse yet, dragged down with its sinking victim. Boarding is also popular; Roman sailors like to engage in melee to break the monotony of rowing. Newer captains are exploring the full benefits of fulminata weaponry, experimenting with raking maneuvers and long range sharp shooting to influence the outcome of an encounter.



ENEMIES

Foreign troops may make up the auxiliary forces of the Roman military machine but they may also be a menace to peace and security. The troop types recruited for as auxiliaries or cavalry could always form into a hostile army through rebellion or an alliance with a kingdom outside of the Imperium. In addition to these groups, unfriendly armies threaten the Imperium's borders. On the eastern frontier lies the great Parthian Empire, the successor to Carthage as Rome's archenemy. Even with fulminata weaponry the legions struggle against its countless mounted archers and cataphracts. Beyond Parthia are more potential foes—Bactria, a once powerful

empire fading from glory; India, a fabulous land of spices, jungles and war elephants; and Serica, the kingdom of the mysterious "Silk People" [Seres]. To the north, the imperial province of Hibernia is far from pacified; Fiani blood warriors wage a guerilla campaign to reclaim their homeland. Nearby in Caledonia, the Picti, tattooed and adorned with blue warpaint, raid Roman settlements. Migrating Germanic tribes also put pressure on the quagmire province of Germania Maior. Sarmatian nomads threaten the security of the Danubian provinces. In the south, Berber and Moorish nomads harass Roman forces in the North African provinces. The new provinces of Nubia and Aethiopia are still in the process of Romanization and subject to border skirmishes.



CHAPTER IX

ARCANA

SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE

"It is madness, complete madness, to leave our world to examine what lies beyond, as if our knowledge of the world and its inhabitants were perfect."

-Pliny the Elder

In Rome, interest in the supernatural is traditionally an affront to *Pietas*. A citizen who abandons his mind to exaggerated rituals and charlatans has forgotten his Roman sense of dignity. Romans have always cast Foreigners in the role of the superstitious barbarian, attributing every event to divine wrath or whim. The fact that Roman religion, especially in rituals, has always had elements of magic and superstition does not seem to bother most Romans.

In *FVLMINATA*, the universe behaves according to the ancient worldview, which allows your persona to inhabit a world of mystic secrets, spirits [*numina*] and potent magics.

GUNPOWDER

[*Terra Fulminata*]

"Separate Earth from Fire, the subtle from the coarse, but be prudent and circumspect as you do it."

—Precept VII of Hermes Trismegistus

The Romans are a practical people. In government, they prefer efficient administration to a discourse on the nature of the ideal state; in science, engineering to pure theory. Before the coming of Aufidius Caelus, experimentation and scientific inquiry were the pursuits of effete Greek natural philosophers. His followers, known as the Cyclopes, after the mythic helpers of Volcanus, continue to perform experiments with machines and minerals. The Cyclopes were quick to exploit the properties of fulminata in military technology. Aufidius' notes clearly indicated "small objects that had been resting on the table were now imbedded in the walls" and that "several iron counterweights had been driven with such force through weak plaster, that they wounded a dog asleep in the next room."

Caelus, haunted by

memories of Vesuvius, vowed to discover Volcanus' fiery secret. He felt that if he could artificially create the exploding substance that destroyed his home, he would eventually be able to harness or extinguish its power. For fifteen years, Caelus studied in Alexandria and labored, mixing various ingredients and heating them over an open flame. Caelus observed that volcanoes were always associated with death and heat: ash, cin-

ders and lifeless rock. In fact, the volcanic crater at Avernus is a known entrance to the Netherworld. One of his working theories was that the unknown material must be comprised of lifeless elements from all of the spheres of nature affected by fire: animal, plant and earth. One fateful day in 848 AUC (AD 96), he was working with three components: nitre in the form of air-dried pig dung (animal), wood charcoal (plant) and powdered sulfur (earth). When he mixed the key combination of six parts nitre, one part charcoal and one part sulfur, it exploded, maiming two fingers on his left hand. The bright flash combined with the sound of thunder, led Caelus to call the mixture, "earth armed with lightning" or *terra fulminata*.

Caelus worked for several months refining the mixture to produce a consistent and dramatic

SULFUR

"No other substance is more easily ignited, which clearly shows that it contains a great fiery force. Thunderbolts also give off a smell of sulfur and their light is of a sulfurous nature."

—Pliny the Elder

Even before its importance as an ingredient of fulminata, sulfur was regarded as a remarkable mineral with extraordinary qualities. There are three types of sulfur: *apyron* or "untouched by fire" sulfur, *gleba* or "dirt-clod" sulfur and *egula* or "little extract" sulfur. *Apyron* is obtained by mining and is used for fumigation, medicine and in the manufacture of fulminata. *Gleba* and *egula* are both found mixed in volcanic dirt. Fullers employ *gleba* to bleach and soften wool togas. *Egula* is used for making lamp wicks.

In its raw state, sulfur deposits are mixed with various other rocks, such as limestone and gypsum. These deposits most often occur near volcanic activity. Slaves who are condemned criminals mine the sulfur because it is dangerous work. The fumes inflame the lungs and the intense heat causes the miners to lose their hair and fingernails. After being removed from the earth, slaves extract and purify the sulfur using fire.

The province of Sicilia has numerous Imperial mines controlled by Equestrians in the Mithraic College. There are significant sulfur deposits in Campania and the Aeolian Islands between Italia and Sicilia as well.

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blast. His colleagues in Alexandria, who later became the Cyclopes, helped him realize the practical applications of his discovery. Over the next several years, they helped him construct an iron pipe that would use a packed charge of fulminata to propel a round stone into an amphora. Although an Equestrian, Caelus enlisted the aid of the Plinius family to present his findings to the Emperor and Senate in 853 AUC (AD 101). The demonstration was a startling success: with a thunderclap and belch of flame, the first cannon shattered the amphora to the delight of the Senators. Within decades of Caelus' breakthrough, the Cyclopes applied fulminata technology to military hardware. The cannon [*tormentum*] was first used in combat in 885 AUC (AD 133), the musket [*pilum*] in 903 AUC (AD 151) and the pistol [*hastula*] in 963 AUC (AD 211). See pp. 63-64 in CHAPTER III: TALI for the details of Roman gunpowder weaponry. The legions took full advantage of the superior firepower to expand Roman territory and secure peace within the borders of the Imperium.

Caelus stubbornly refused to divulge the true nature of fulminata during his lifetime so that no other person would be able to reproduce his discovery. When pressed by Imperial authorities, including the emperor Hadrian, he passed off a fabrication as the actual truth: that fulminata is a unique substance mined from volcanoes. For his service to the Imperium, Hadrian conferred the honorific *agnomen* Mulciber to Caelus in 886 AUC (AD 134). Etruscan diviners [*haruspices*]

will only refer to Caelus by the name Mulciber out of religious awe.

As every Roman schoolboy knows, Caelus died tragically in 891 AUC (AD 139) attempting flight off of the cliffs of Dubris (Dover) in a contraption inspired by bird anatomy. He left instructions in his will to convey his notes to his most trusted colleagues, the Cyclopes. Key notes detailing his experiments were diverted from the intended beneficiaries by two lawyers, one allied with the Mithraic priests [*mithraces*] and one with the *haruspices*. Thus, the fulminata monopoly passed from the greatest mind of the Roman world to two rival priestly colleges,

who both continue to claim expert knowledge of the arcane essence.

The actual formula and method of production of fulminata is one of the most guarded secrets of the Imperium. It is never discussed openly or written plainly. In speech or in documents, all aspects of fulminata, including production, storage, and transportation, are always transmitted in cipher. Only trustworthy adepts of the Mithraic and Etruscan colleges are entrusted with this knowledge. The Mithraic college teaches the formula to members of the Lion [*Leo*] grade as part of their core curriculum. Etruscan diviners learn it immediately before initiation into the Huth grade. As cover, both colleges take means to ensure that Caelus' original lie remains the official "secret"; two special detachments of the XXII Legion Ixionaris guard both Mt. Vesuvius and Mt. Aetna through the colleges' com-

CHARCOAL

"Other substances benefit from being subjected to fire more than once. Charcoal starts to acquire special powers when burnt and quenched; when it is apparently dead its potency increases."

- Pliny the Elder

Caelus burned trees that had taken root on the slopes of Vesuvius to obtain the original wood charcoal for his experiments. Even though charcoal is easily obtainable, the Etruscan college continues the tradition of only using Campanian trees to create fulminata charcoal. This custom allows the *haruspices* to perpetuate Caelus' volcano story by maintaining a fake mining operation near Mt. Vesuvius. Under the pact with the Mithraic college, the Campanian charcoal is freely exchanged for Sicilian sulfur.

bined influence. Initially the two colleges fought to gain a monopoly on fulminata production. They soon realized that an internal power struggle might jeopardize their dual control over fulminata. Both sides met in secret and agreed to a truce that has lasted almost a hundred years.

The basic formula for weapons-grade fulminata is fifteen parts nitre, three parts charcoal and two parts sulfur. In chemical terms, the burning of the charcoal releases additional oxygen from the nitre, which in turn oxidizes the sulfur. The resulting rapid expansion of gases is what propels an object. When that object is left with only one way to escape, such as the open

end of a gun barrel, it can be directed as a projectile weapon. Within each rival college, the magi have devised special recipes with slight differences in ingredient ratios to achieve different explosive effects. The Etruscan college jealously guards its proprietary mixtures from the Mithraic magi and vice versa. For example, "Forge of Velchans" is an Etruscan blend known for thundering noise and power tailored for land-based artillery. A less smoky Mithraic powder called "Nabarze" is used for trireme cannons since visibility confers a distinct advantage in naval combat.

Under Imperial law, only military units composed solely of citizens may use fulminata-based weaponry. Thus, the legions, the navy and the Praetorian Guard are equipped with cannon, muskets and pistols, but the urban police, vigils and auxiliaries must make do with swords and spears. Exceptions are made for the Emperor's Horse Guard and city defenses under the command of a citizen soldier.

Fulminata is produced in workshops near the two mining facilities at Aetna and Vesuvius. It is stored in sacks or amphorae for transport to the legions. Wherever there exists a large quantity

of fulminata, there is a military weapons officer named the *fulminatus*. Even if he does not know the secret of fulminata, he is trained well enough to manufacture individual ammunition rounds for the troops from the main fulminata stores. His tools, a small shovel [*rutella*] and measure [*modius*] were originally designed for grain distribution. Following the proper recipe, a *fulminatus* will be able to measure large tormentum charges as well as small

amounts of powder for hand weapons. He will also be able to neatly wrap the lead ball and powder in a linen cartridge for a musket or pistol.

NITRE

Nitre is used extensively in Aegyptian magical rituals, producing an impressive display of pale purple flames and billowing smoke when thrown into a fire. It is a difficult substance to procure since it rarely occurs in a large natural deposit. Nevertheless, it can be created by air-drying animal dung or "grown" as crystals on damp cellar walls. The Etruscan *hams-pices* maintain large pig and sheep farms, ostensibly to breed animals for divinatory purposes, but primarily to harvest nitre. The sacred underground grottos [*speleai*] essential to Mithraic cult activity are convenient places to harvest nitre.

THE NETHERWORLD [Hades]

*"I'd rather slave on earth for another man -
some dirt-poor tenantfarmer who scrapes to
keep alive - than rule down here over all the
breathless dead."*

— Achilles, from Homer's *Odyssey*

Most of the dead are condemned to the Netherworld for eternity. The sunless world of the dead is a gloomy place, bereft of mirth and color. It is always cold, dim and dusty. Every sur-

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face *is* covered in mold and it is furnished with rotten materials. Its inhabitants, the shades [*manes*] of the dead possess only a shadowy reflection of their former life. As if in a cyclical nightmare, they repeat unpleasant tasks, forgetting whatever once gave them pleasure while alive. The dead resent being disturbed from this monotony because it reminds them of their condition.

Even this dreary existence is not forever. When a persona dies, his bones and ashes remain in the earth. However, his shade resides in Hades only as long as it is remembered by the living. A *manes* forgotten by the living fades into oblivion never to be heard from again. This shade is more than a spirit; it is a two-dimensional image of the deceased persona that can interact with the living. It is a Roman custom for families to feed their dead relatives a mixture of olive oil, honey and water. The liquid is poured into the actual grave, sometimes through a specially built tube. Prescribed rituals and religious festivals to honor the dead ensure that the departed survive in the Netherworld. Roman families often will display the wax masks of their ancestors in the atriums of their *domi*. The Parentalia festival honors the dead with fasting and public ceremonies.

The unburied, nameless dead cannot enter the Netherworld, instead they haunt the living as ghosts [*lemures*]. They are hungry, mad and dangerous, especially the spirits of those who have been murdered, killed in war or died tragically in

an accident. Magi use these restless spirits as tools of destruction and ruthless violence. At midnight on the days of the festival of Lemuria, Romans offer uncooked black beans to propitiate the ghosts' anger. Pots of seeds and vegetables are laid out for the wandering souls of the dead on the third day for the Greek festival of Anthestria.

Tartarus, the deepest and blackest region of Hades, is where the most impious mortals are punished. The wicked are kept in by an iron gate, triple walls of bronze and sleepless Tisiphone, the

Fury of Blood. Here Tantalus, king of Sipylus, suffers unending hunger and thirst while juicy grapes hover above his head and refreshing water lapping at his chest. If he tries to drink, the water drains away and as soon as he attempts to reach for fruit, the vine is wrenched away by unseen hands. For killing his father and for attempting to rape Ixion revolves, crucified, on a fiery wheel for eternity. Sisyphus, founder of Corinth, pushes a boulder up a hill every day only to watch it roll down to the bottom.

For an exceptional few, the afterlife is paradise.

Great heroes and leaders inhabit the Elysian Fields [*Elysium*], a pleasant land at the ends of the earth. Food and pleasure abound—mild breezes bring the sweet smells of myrrh, ambrosia and honey as the perpetual feast carries on. Similarly, The Islands of the Blessed [*Fortunatae Insulae*] are a paradise where the gardens of the Hesperides and its golden apples can be found. Here in the

THE RIVERS OF HADES

Acheron

The River of Despair; its waters cause withering and death; from its banks, the dead can be consulted

Cocytus

The River of Lamentation; its waters cause weeping and sadness

Lethe

The River of Oblivion; its waters sap memory and desire

Pyrphlegethon

The River of Fire; its waters are afire and burn with an intense heat

Styx

The River of Hate; Charon ferries souls across it into the Netherworld; its entrance is said to be in Arcadia in the province of Achaea; its harmful waters cause sickness and pain

land without winter, the happy dead enjoy the sparkling waters and gentle sun.

The Senate usually elevates a well-respected Emperor and certain members of his family to godhood and establishes a cult to service the new god [*divus*]. The opposite of deification is the *damnatio memoriae* or "damnation from memory", whereby the Senate decrees that the deceased Emperor is an enemy of the Imperium. His inscriptions, images and records are erased; even his unpopular decrees are overturned. The Senate may also force his descendants to change their family name. By making the Emperor an unperson, the Senate hopes that the Emperor's *manes* fades and becomes insubstantial.

The following is a short list of infernal beings and powers [*di inferni*]. Many magi call upon the gods and demons [*daimones*] of the Netherworld to aid them in casting spells.

Dis

God of Death and Ruler of the Netherworld. It is wise to turn one's face while sacrificing black rams to him lest he find too much favor in the act. His wolf's cap confers invisibility to its wearer. He is also known as Orcus, Aidoneus, Eita, Hades or Pluton.

Proserpina

Goddess of Spring Bloom and Queen of the Netherworld. She is the consort of Dis.

Nemesis

Goddess of Vengeance. She is merciless, commanding the three Furies [*Erinyes*] (Tisiphone, Allecto and Megaera) to seek retribution against mortals who have committed unforgivable deeds.

Hecate

The Triple Goddess representing the three possible paths of the crossroads. She is the patron goddess of witches [*veneficae*] and cemeteries. On new moons, she gathers the restless dead [*lemures*] to join her on a hunt with packs of spectral hounds.

Parcae

The Three Fates. Nona or "Premature Birth", Decima or "Normal Birth" and Morta "Stillbirth". They are also known as the Moirai: Clothos or "She Who Spins", Lachesis or "She Who Measures", and Atropos or "She Who Cuts".

Charon

The Ferryman. He transports shades across the river Styx into the Netherworld. The dead are buried with coins covering their eyes or under their tongues to pay his required fare.

Cerberus

Guardian of Hades. He prevents mortals and shades from leaving the Netherworld. The watchful three-headed hound is chained to the Gate of Hades, bound to his duty.

Mercurius

The God of Travel and Thieves also leads souls to the Netherworld.

MAGIC

Magic is the art of controlling events in the world by arcane knowledge and secret rituals. What constitutes magic depends on an individual's point of view. To a religious priest, a prayer to a god asking for a desired outcome is not magic. Only those who attempt to force gods or spiritual powers to perform tasks are magi. To philosophers who believe in logic and reason, prayers and spells are the interchangeable tools of fakes and frauds. In *FVLMINATA*, magic exists and it does work some of the time.

Magic is subtle and unreliable. It is definitely an art not a science. Its irrational principles are based on secret mysteries handed down from the Egyptians, Etruscans and Persians. In Rome, superstition was traditionally an affront to Pietas. A citizen who abandoned his mind to exaggerated rituals and charlatans had forgotten

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his Roman sense of dignity. As a general rule, Romans consider Foreigners as superstitious barbarians who attribute every event to divine wrath. Romans maintain this bias despite the fact that Roman religious behavior is highly magical in nature with its rituals and taboos. The Senate enacts legislation outlawing the practice of harmful magic not out of disbelief but rather through fear of its misuse. Magi were often deported from the city when suspected of interfering in the affairs of law-abiding citizens.

Although initially disapproved of, magic use in Rome has gained official acceptance through the efforts of the two rival colleges who control the fulminata: the Mithraic college and the Etruscan college. Not content with the irrational foundation of magic, these magi continue to codify and ritualize magic as a tool. It is this rational control of the irrational that frustrates Roman magi since there are always events that defy explanation.

MAGIC POINTS

In order to wield arcane forces, a persona must expend magic points. For game play, only magi possess magic points. In *FVLMINATA*, a magus is a persona who has at least a 3 point rating in the Magic skill. Magic points are initially equal to the magus' Pietas rating (except for *veneficae* who receive magic points based on Vis) divided by two, rounding down. These magic points are your pool for the duration of a single gaming session.

Example: *Valens, an inexperienced magus and Corax grade initiate of the Mithraic College, has a Pietas rating of 13. Thus, his initial pool of magic points is 6 (13/2, rounded down). Folia, on the other hand is a venefica, has a Vis rating of 14. She is awarded 7 magic points (14/2) that can be spent during eachfabula or game session.*

To quantify a greater facility to control magic, additional magic points may be purchased with skill points provided during persona creation or

awarded at the end of a fabula (see CHAPTER X: FABULAE, p. 216-217). Each additional magic point costs two skill points. Formal magical colleges sometimes require a minimum magic point total to proceed to higher grades.

SPELLS [Carmina]

"Finally sing 'AOIAO EOEY', pronouncing the 'A' with an open mouth, undulating like a wave; the 'O' succinctly, as a breathed threat; the 'IAO' to earth, to air and to heaven; the '£' like a baboon; the 'O' as stated before; the '£' with enjoyment, aspirating it; the 'Y' like a shepherd with a drawl."

-Spell Ritual

Spells, or *carmina*, are ritual formulas requiring prescribed incantations and actions to achieve a desired magical effect. A list of sample spells can be found on pp. 190-191. For game play, *FVLMINATA* spells have the following characteristics:

Spell Name

This is the name of the spell. Some spells have an original language name in italicized brackets. If the spell name is followed by a "#", it indicates that the spell has a prerequisite. This means that your persona must possess the listed prerequisite spell(s) at a minimum spell rating of zero before learning this advanced spell.

Origin: Indicates the cultural/geographical source of the spell.

Type: In *FVLMINATA*, all spells fall into one of five types:

Summon spells allow a magus to conjure physical objects, including living creatures. Summon spells call forth beings to do the magus' bidding.

Divine spells allow a magus to know facts and truths outside normal sensory perception. Divine spells glimpse into the future and the past.

Fate spells allow a magus to control destiny. Fate spells affect tali rolls and guide the course of events.

Transform spells allow a magus to control reality by affecting physical objects. Transform spells extinguish fires and break bonds.

Bind spells allow a magus to control thoughts or emotions. Bind spells paralyze and seduce.

Power: Indicates the number of magic points required to cast the spell. Regardless of the spell's success or failure, the magus expends magic points indicated by the Power of the spell. Also indicates the number of skill points required to initially purchase the spell.

Spell Rating: Indicates how well your persona knows a particular spell. All newly learned spells have a spell rating of -1. Unlike skill ratings, spell ratings may only progress to 0 or the maximum of +1. The spell rating is applied as a modifier to an action roll. To increase a spell rating, a persona must spend additional skill points equivalent to the spell's Power. A persona may only possess three spells at a -1 rating at any one time; this limit adjusts up or down based on the modifier associated with a persona's *Intelligentia* attribute rating. Thus, a persona with an *Intelligentia* rating of 5 (-3 modifier to limit of 3) could not learn spells at all and a persona with an *Intelligentia* of 15 (+2 modifier) could have five spells rated at -1.

Complexity: Indicates the number of game turns required to cast the spell. A Complexity rating of "+" indicates that the spell takes longer than twenty game turns, rendering it impractical to cast under combat conditions.

Format: Indicates whether a spell can be cast directly using the Magic skill (M), fashioned as a physical item using the Amulet skill (A) and/or mixed as a potion using the Philter skill (P). See Using Magic for detailed game mechanics.

Ritual: Describes the words and actions that activate the spell. The description of the ritual assumes that the spell will be used as per the first listed Format. If an alternate Format is used, the ritual should be adapted accordingly. Magi should be encouraged to experiment outside of these guidelines to achieve variations on the expected results. For example, the *venefica* Folia

uses pieces of shipwrecks to focus her necromantic spells on the shades of the drowned.

Effect: Describes the effect of the spell in quantifiable game terms.

USING MAGIC

Magic, like any other action in *FVLMINATA*, uses the basic Three-Step game mechanic where the action roll is comprised of rolling under an Attribute + Skill combination. However, a magus will expend magic points when he attempts to use a specific spell by uttering an incantation (Magic skill), creating an amulet (Amulet skill) or preparing a philter (Philter skill). In these cases, the action roll is modified by the spell rating.

Example: *Valens, a Mithraic priest, faces an angry dog in a back alley of the Subura. He decides to cast the Beast spell in order to calm the hound. His target number is a 17 (Pietas 13 + Magic 5 + Beast -1). He rolls a 14 on the tali; the dog settles down and allows Valens to pass. Since the spell is Power 1, Valens has 5 magic points remaining.*

Note that magic points are not required for general uses of the Magic, Amulet or Philter skills. A magus will only expend magic points when attempting to produce a spell effect.

Example: *Valens notices peculiar graffiti scrawled on a vegetable seller's cart. The GM asks the player to make an action roll of Intelligentia 13 + Magic 5. He rolls a 12 and succeeds, realizing that the graffiti contains several magical words. Valens loses no magic points for this use of the Magic skill.*

When a persona has or is reduced to 0 magic points, he is unable to properly understand or summon the mystical energy needed to use magic. The only exception is using Amulets (see Fashioning Charms—Amulet Skill pp. 169-170 for details). Like humor points, a magus' magic points are restored to full strength at the end of each game session.

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CASTING SPELLS— MAGIC SKILL

To cast a spell, a magus adds his Pietas (or Vis for a *venefica*) rating, his Magic rating and his spell rating to determine a target number for the action roll. The action roll should be made after the appropriate number of game turns have passed, governed by the Complexity of the spell. If a magus performs another action during a game turn or decides to speed up the delivery of the spell with multiple actions, then the normal negative modifiers apply (see p. 58 in CHAPTER III: TALÍ).

Example: *Folia wishes to listen to the spirit of an executed criminal by casting Pity's Spell on his*

corpse. She needs to spend 2 magic points (Power 2 spell) and succeed on an action roll by rolling less than or equal to 16 (Vis 13 + Magic 4 + Pity's Spell -1). If the spell succeeds, the corpse will mumble for five game turns.

FASHIONING ITEMS— AMULET SKILL

Whether it is an amulet, ring, curse tablet or a Pictish tattoo, the Amulet skill is used for objects that confer magical effects when called upon.

To create an amulet, a persona must succeed against an (A + Amulet + Spell Rating) action roll, which costs magic points equal to the Power

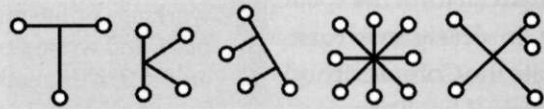
MAGICAL WORDS [*Vocae Magicae*]

Knowing an entity's true name gives one dominion over it and allows a magus to direct mystic forces against a specific target. If the person's true name is unknown, the target of magical influence is often identified by his or her mother's name. Paternal names do not carry as much supernatural weight because the identity of the person's real father is not always a sure bet.

Everyday speech is ineffective in magic. In order to call upon supernatural powers, a magus must communicate with them on their level of understanding. Spells are often sung, but spells may also direct the magus to utter the inarticulate cries of madmen, the inhuman sounds of nature or the *voces magicae*, magic words that can only be understood by the gods and the denizens of the Netherworld. Spells typically employ intricate wordplay, such as palindromes, ciphers, tongue twisters and difficult vowel combinations. Six magic words known by most magi in the Imperium are called the Ephesian letters [*Ephesia grammata*]: ASKION, KATASKION, TETRAX, DAMNAMENEUS, AISION and LIX.

Voces magicae can be written in Latin or Greek letters to assist a human magus in proper pronunciation. But as befitting their unworldly origin, magical words are more accurately

recorded using the cosmic alphabet of gods and *daimones*:



These seemingly incomprehensible symbols are called the *charakteres*. *Charakteres* appear on amulets, magic gemstones and curse tablets. Learned magi in the Imperium work hard to perfect this script in order to commune with the spirit world.

When writing magical formulas, ordinary script will also not suffice. Incantations are arranged in geometric shapes, such as spirals, triangles and squares, and accompanied by representations of the unearthly forces that will empower the spell. A simple example of arcane geometry is a magic square:

R	O	T	A	S
O	P	E	R	A
T	E	N	E	T
A	R	E	P	O
S	A	T	O	R

of the spell. Despite the listed Complexity of the spell, the Complexity of creating an amulet is always +. Thus, amulets can only be created outside of combat. *Important:* The results of this action roll should be known only by the GM. If successful, the persona creates an amulet with two ratings: *Quality* and *Power*. The Quality rating is equal to the magus' Amulet skill rating plus the spell rating. The Power rating is the same as the spell's Power rating. A failure will result in a non-magical item, indistinguishable from a working one until the user attempts to call upon its power.

To use the amulet, a persona can call forth the spell effect in one game turn (despite the Complexity of the original spell) by succeeding against a (P, or V for *veneficae*, + Quality) action roll. The magus must spend magic points equivalent to the Power of the amulet. A magus with no magic points remaining or a non-magus who wishes to use an amulet may spend humor points in place of magic points in order to activate the amulet. If no humor points are available, a persona may sacrifice two wound points for every magic point needed to use an amulet.

Example: *Folia wishes to create a ring with the ability to give the Evil Eye. She must first spend a*

magic point (Power 1 spell) and succeed by rolling equal to or less than her target number of 11 (Agilitas 10 + Amulet 2 + Evil Eye -1). Assuming

she rolls a 10, Folia has created a ring imbued with magical power (Evil Eye, Quality 1, Power 1). As payment for some illicit materials, Folia gives the ring to a corrupt Equestrian merchant. If the merchant wishes to use the ring, he may do so by spending a humor point (Power 1) and rolling equal to or less than a target number of 13 (Pietas 12 + Quality 1) on an action roll. If successful, the merchant casts the Evil Eye spell at his intended target.

MAGICAL IMPLEMENTS

[Instrumenta]

In addition to the power of names, another principle of magic is that "like" things have a mutual affinity [*similia similibus*]. Dolls and drawn figures represent actual personae. Ingredients such as iron, precious stones, herbs and animal parts are important in casting because of their innate properties. For example, the hairs of goats are useful in fertility incantations. More importantly, the magus performs actions on a small scale that he expects to be magnified and realized in the real world. A witch binds a doll's hands so that the actual person will be restrained. A magus peels an onion slowly hoping that his victim's memories disappear in a like manner.

Over the centuries magi have perfected devices that symbolically mimic the secret workings of the universe. *Lapilli* are small black and white stones that represent good and evil in divination. The spin of a magical wheel [WHAT] can reveal the future or bind a lover. The cold, gray, lusterless surface of a lead curse tablet [*lamella*] resembles the deathly pallor of a corpse. Magi also employ *instrumenta* to aid in focusing or deflecting hidden energies. Bullroarers, gongs, rattles [*sistra*] and flutes summon spirits by sound. Amulets and gems protect against harmful magics.

MIXING POTIONS - PHILTER SKILL

Whether it is a potion, ointment or unguent, the Philter skill is used for concoctions that confer magical effects when imbibed or applied.

To prepare a philter, a persona must succeed against an (I + Philter + Spell Rating) action roll, which costs magic points equal to the Power of the spell. Despite the listed Complexity of the spell, the Complexity of creating a philter is always +. Thus, philters can only be created outside of combat. *Important:* The results of this action roll should be known only by the GM. If suc-

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cessful, the persona creates a philter with a *Quality* rating. The *Quality* rating is equal to the magus' Philter skill rating plus the spell rating. A failure will result in a non-magical brew, indistinguishable from a potent one until the user attempts to imbibe it.

To use the philter, a persona can call forth the spell effect in one game turn (despite the Complexity of the original spell) by succeeding against a (P + *Quality*) action roll. No magic points are required to activate the spell. Note that a philter can only be used once.

Example: *Folia is jealous of a rival and is experimenting with preparing a vile potion using the spell Barren with the intent to cause a miscarriage. Folia spends two magic points (Power 2 spell) and makes a roll against a target number of 16 (Intelligentia 13 + Philter 4 + Barren -1). If successful, Folia mixes a magic philter (Barren, Quality 3) that serves as contraception or in this case, a premature termination of a pregnancy. If drunk by her rival, the spell effect will occur if the imbiber succeeds by rolling equal to or less than a target number of 13 (Pietas 10 + Quality 3). No magic points or humor points are needed to activate the spell.*

Note: As there are no official game mechanics to prevent mass production of amulets and philters, the GameMaster should control the fabula in any way she sees fit. Materials for mystical amulets and ingredients for potions are bound to be expensive. Consider requiring a magus to use an unused skill point to create an amulet or philter. With each use, an Amulet could lose a *Quality* point, gradually becoming inert. Perhaps philters lose *Quality* as well, at the rate of a point per day.

THE MAGUS

Ridiculed by some and feared by others, the magus falls outside of Roman cultural norms. These outsiders, obsessed and often mad, seek to

understand and control the universe by attuning themselves with supernatural forces. Only through hard work and study outside the confines of civilization will the secrets of the gods reveal themselves to the magus. Mithraic priests [*mithraces*] push the limits of reality in underground grottos seeking further revelation from their mysterious god. Etruscan diviners [*haruspices*] enjoy their elite status as the keepers of an ancient knowledge from a vanished civilization. Marsian magicians [*magi Marsici*] possess potent healing and water spells using snakes and their venom. Witches [*veneficae*] retreat from society to seek infernal aid and to avoid persecution by the ignorant masses.

THE MITHRAIC PRIEST [*Mithrax*]

*"Mithras, God of Fighters, the Terror of those
who Bear False Witness, Armed with the
Thunderbolt, Feared by Ahriman "*

-The Tenth Hymn [*Yasht*] of Mithras

The roots of Roman magic originate with the *magoi*, a caste of priests in ancient Persia whose exotic rites fascinated the learned men of Imperium. In 818 AUC (AD 66), the Armenian king Tiridates, accompanied by Persian *magoi*, journeyed to Rome to pay homage to Emperor Nero. A magus himself, Tiridates initiated Nero into their secret mysteries. The term magus is derived from the name of these Persian magicians. One of the gods that the *magoi* worship is Mithras, the god of solemn contracts, armies and justice. Mithras is also associated with the sun and rulership.

According to Mithraic lore, the infamous pirates of Cilicia were the first non-Persians to celebrate the religious mysteries of Mithras. Offi-

cers of the king of Pontus, Mithridates VI (or "Given by Mithras"), commanded the Cilician pirates and converted them to Mithras. Scourges of the Mediterranean, this nation of pirates numbered in the tens of thousands and plundered sailing vessels and coastal cities. Pompey the Great finally crushed them, resettling many of them in Italia, where they introduced the cult to the Imperium. Bloodthirsty ex-pirates, accustomed to exclusively male group dynamics, thus spread Mithraism the mystery religion among like-minded soldiers and merchants. Women were absolutely excluded from the cult, a practice continued by the Mithraic priesthood to this day. The first Roman legions to have a substantial Mithraic following were the XV Legion Apollinaris, the IV Legion Macedonia and the II Legion Adiutrix.

Unlike other mystery religions from the east, Mithraism did not have public ceremonies for its worshippers. Mysteries of the Persian god were conducted as small private affairs. The cult initially served as a fraternity for Roman soldiers and civil servants that offered consistency and familiarity as the needs of the Imperium required them to transfer from province to province. The death of Caelus changed the Mithraic cult forever. A lawyer who worshipped Mithras administering his will absconded with crucial notes on the fabrication of fulminata. Over the next few years, the Mithraic cult purged itself of its marginal members and regrouped as a cabal of magi armed with the secret of fulminata. Under Antoninus Pius, the cult was officially formed as a college under the control of the *augures*. Many would argue that the Mithraic college is the most influential and potent institution in the Imperium.

The typical Mithraic priest [*mithrax*] is bright, arrogant and amoral, traits that would provoke disapproval from Roman society if not for the general sense of fear and wonder that surrounds a priest of Mithras. When recruiting, priests look for signs of initiative, cunning and unorthodox

insight. They also seek out and attempt to recover talent from the fringes of society, such as unwanted orphans, misunderstood criminals and madmen. Understanding the true nature of the universe is not a task for the slow or inflexible of mind. Forbidden to wear distinctive clothing in public, *mithraces* are trained to identify one another through figures of speech and private hand signals. Intense initiation rites form strong bonds that even extend to priests who happen to be complete strangers. Opponents decry that this fraternal tie is stronger than their loyalty to Rome itself.

THE BULLSLAYER

*"Or would you rather bear the name of him,
who beneath the rocks of the Persian Cavern,
twists the horns of the stubborn bull:
Mithras!"*

—Statius, from the *Thebaid*

Mithras slaying the bull is the central myth and dominant image of the Mithraism. It is the climax of a longer story that begins with the god Mithras being born from a rock. Mithras initially stole the bull and twisted its horns to force it into a cavern for the sacrifice. In the darkness of the grotto, Mithras ritually stabbed the bull in the shoulder. From its wounds sprang a shaft of wheat providing sustenance to humanity. The bull was cooked and served at a formal dinner with Helios the Sun God.

In relief sculptures and paintings, Mithras is surrounded by astrological figures such as the seven planets (Sun, Moon, Mercurius, Venus, Mars, Iuppiter, Saturnus) and animorphic representations of the constellations. Two torchbearers [*dadophori*] named Cautes and Cautopates often flank Mithras and symbolize the rising and setting of the sun and the spring and autumnal equinoxes. They dress in the Persian style wearing baggy trousers and soft Phrygian caps.

THE INVINCIBLE SUN [*Sol Invictus*]

Through Mithras, one can know the cosmos and comprehend its secrets. The purpose of these Persian trappings and Eastern symbols is to disguise the true nature of Mithras from the uninitiated. Mithras is merely a code name for a secret god who is more powerful than all the other gods. The city of Tarsus is not only the home of the fabled Cilician pirates but is well known for its vibrant intellectual community. Stoic philosophers espouse the belief that the cosmos itself is a divine entity composed of soul-fire, the stuff that infuses all beings with life. Around 687 AUC (67 BC), these philosophers stumbled upon a cosmic revelation while studying ancient astrological records of the Babylonians and Egyptians. They noticed that the records indicated that the sun would rise in the constellation of Taurus during the spring equinox. However, it was clear from current observations that the sun rose in the constellation of Aries. They turned to the writings of Hipparchus the great astronomer from Rhodes for answers. Puzzlement turned to shock as the philosophers realized that the entire universe was slowly turning on a cosmic axis, an observable feat performed by a god who had the power to move the heavens including the sun, moon and stars. The Stoics believed that this enlightenment was important but could only be revealed to people privately and in small doses. After all, Stoics prize

emotional distance as a virtue and the truth had upset and panicked even their best.

A mystery cult seemed a natural mechanism for communicating secrets in an orderly and controlled manner. The Stoics decided to focus their new "religion" on the constellation of Taurus the bull. They would convey the power of their god through allegory: a figure slaying a cosmic bull to symbolize the death of the Age of Taurus leading

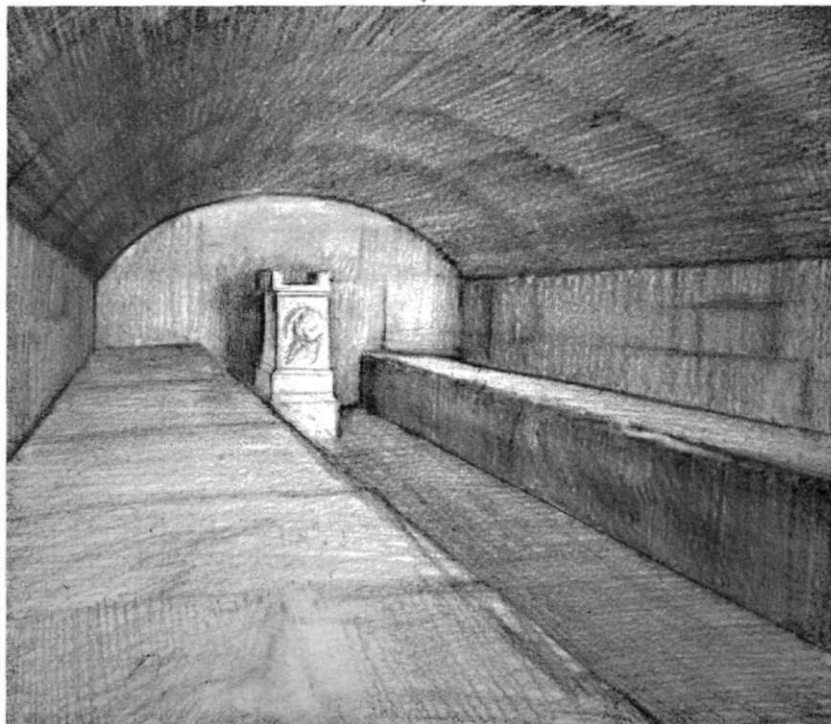
into the Age of Aries. Two images were familiar to them because they were often used on Tarsian coins: Hercules Sandan, the sacrificer of bulls and Perseus, slayer of the Gorgon, Medusa. They also noted that the constellation of Perseus is situated on top of Taurus in the night sky. Thus, the iconography of Mithraism consists of a heroic figure (Perseus) stabbing a bull (Taurus) in the shoulder (the Pleiades). The figure in Mithraic art looks away from the bull because that is how Perseus was able to kill Medusa without turning to stone. Wrapped in

THE CRYFII

The *Cryfii* or "Hidden Ones" are a secret grade of Mithraic priests composed of elder Paters and extremely gifted magi. They converge annually in Rome at a clandestine location to discuss strategy and hatch plots against their enemies. To remain anonymous, even to their fellow *Cryfii*, they don masks during these private assemblies. They maintain diplomatic relations with key leaders in the Etruscan college to ensure the continuation of the fulminata monopoly. They are also the final arbiters for internal crimes and transgressions. *Cryfii* choose their own successors upon retirement. In the rare instances where one of the *Cryfii* dies or is removed from the college, the others draw up a list of nominees and vote for a replacement.

the simple image of the bull-slayer is the essence of the Stoic's astounding revelation.

Mithras was chosen as the alias of this new god for three reasons. First, "Perseus" is similar to the Latin word for Persian—*Perses*. Second, Perseus was equipped with Persian gear (Phrygian cap and hooked sword [*harpe*]) when he set out to kill Medusa. Third, the Stoics wanted to honor Mithridates VI because the Cilician pirates were the first converts to the new mystery religion. Mithras is also called the Invincible Sun [*Sol Invictus*], a reference to his supreme celestial power. Only the *Cryfii* know the true name of Mithras.



THE CAVERN [*Spelaeum*]

Mithraic priests congregate to worship their god in underground crypts built to resemble the cavern where Mithras killed the bull. The cavern is part of the deception to fool the uninitiated that the Mithraic priests revere a Persian god. Zoroaster, the legendary Persian magus, was said to have consecrated the first Mithraic crypt in the Arakadri mountains next to a flower-filled spring. The subterranean caverns used by *mithraces* have arched vaults with artificial plaster and concrete treatments molded to look like natural rocky outcroppings. The ceilings are occasionally embedded with glass and gemstones to represent the constellations in the night sky. Some ceilings even have a tiny aperture, decorated as the sun or moon, that admits dramatic beams of light during key ceremonies.

The archetypal Mithraic cavern is a long dining hall flanked by parallel stone benches leading to an altar with a sculpture or painting of Mithras slaying the bull. Again, at first glance, the emphasis on dining is meant to recall the magic rituals of the magoi and the mythological feast that

Mithras shared with Helios. The simple fact is that *mithraces* enjoy eating and meeting in private without fear of reproach or reprisal. Nothing said in the crypt is repeated above ground. The dining hall is entered through an entrance room [*pronaos*] featuring bathing pools and wardrobes so that the priests can purify themselves and change into their sacred garb.

The main reason for holding meetings in a crypt is secrecy. The *mithraces* prefer to conduct worship and study away from prying eyes. It provides a secure and dark setting to evoke fear and anxiety for the Mithraic initiation rites. Damp cellar walls are also ideal places to grow and harvest nitre, one of the key ingredients of *fulminata*. Most major cities in the Imperium have a *spelaeum* where local or visiting Mithraic priests may meet, dine or study. Rome itself has over fifty such places.

MITHRAIC SPELLS [*Carmina Mithraca*]

The Roman brand of magic practiced by a *mithrax* is a syncretic system derived from Greek, Aegypt-

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ian and Persian sources. Assembling and documenting mystic practices is an obsession with the priests. The goal is to verify and record known causes and effects in order to gain ultimate control over all of reality. What frustrates their effort is the unexplainable, fickle nature of fate. Unknown forces violate established rules of the cosmos from time to time. Coincidences and random events further confuse this rational approach.

Lest a *mithrax* be overheard or understood, Mithraic spell-casting technique relies heavily on whispered singing and patterned finger movements. Mithraic priests practice spell casting as one might practice a musical instrument. The Mithraic version of "scales" are repetitive sequences of finger positions, each new pattern flowing into the other. More experienced *mithraces* encourage their students to practice in abnormal conditions (total darkness, underwater) or positions (inverted, standing on one leg). As a consequence, virtuoso priests can cast spells in the midst of dense crowds without garnering undue attention.

The following are examples of basic finger positions that Mithraic priests employ:

Anvil

Make a fist with your thumb rucked in so that it touches your ring finger.

Blunted Gladius

Make a fist with your thumb pinning your middle finger. Extend and curl your index finger.

Closing Flower

Spread and straighten all fingers. Slowly close them to touching at their tips without bending any finger joints.

Ibis

Extend all fingers except for the index finger. Pin the index finger with thumb so that no light can pass through.

Missing Roof Tile

Interlace fingers off-center so that left index and middle finger are free to move.

Paw

Make a fist but retract fingers so that the second knuckles of all fingers are perpendicular to the palm. The thumb should be flush against the side of the hand.

Salute

Extend all fingers and place palm out.

Trident

Extend index finger, middle finger and pinky. Pin ring finger against palm with thumb.

Waterfall

Fold fingers so that fingertips are touching the palm forming a diagonal. The index finger should be the highest and the pinky the lowest. Lay your thumb flat against the side of your index finger.

Withered Branch

Extend all fingers in a gnarled way, bending every joint at a different angle.

Zephyr

Extend index, middle and ring finger, making sure they touch. Pin pinky with thumb.

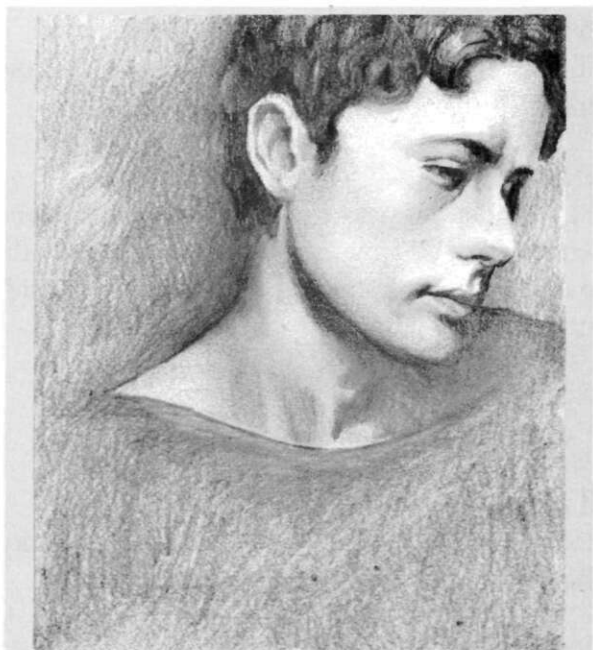
The following are examples of more advanced finger positions:

Deer

From the "paw" position, extend middle and ring fingers so that they touch.

Fibula

From the "waterfall" position, extend index and middle finger. The nail of the index finger should touch the back of the middle finger. Bow the two fingers to create an elliptical space.



VALENS

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Weapons Officer [*Fulminatus*]

Attributes: I13, A 9, P13, V 7

Humors: F 2 (Weak)

MP: 6, **WP:** 7/14, **HP:** 3

Patron: Quirinus

Skills: *Language (Greek) 3, *Language (Latin) 3, *Magic 5, City 3, Code 3, Customs (Patrician) 3, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Forage 3, Fulminata 4, Gladius 3, Metals 3, Move (Jump) 2, Move (March) 2, Pharmakon 2, Pilum 4

Spells: Beast 0, Dignity -1, Magpie -1

Background: At Sextus Galerius Valens' birth, the high priest of Quirinus recorded a disturbing omen — an entire litter of red dogs bred for sacrifice was born *monstra*; half were stillborn and half had numerous deformities. Shunned by the local populace, Valens sought acceptance among boys from wealthy Roman families, making friends with a Senator's son, Gaius Macrinus Albus. Valens and Albus decided to join the legions; Valens as a foot soldier in the VII Gemina, Albus as a legionary tribune on the Parthian frontier. Scarcely a month into his tour of duty, Albus was killed on patrol. Three years later, Valens still mourns for his friend. Recognizing his mental acuity, a Mithraic priest [*mithrax*] recruited Valens into the college. Valens is a promising young magus; he has recently been assigned as the *fithiinat* of the Pistrix detachment.

Loose Teeth

From the "paw" position, separate fingers so that they are not touching.

Scorpion

Form a reverse "waterfall", that is with the pinky being the highest and the index finger the lowest. Extend the thumb out and curl it like a stinger.

THE MITHRAIC COLLEGE

The Mithraic College is organized into seven grades of initiation to mirror the seven planetary powers. Each grade has its own distinctive initiation rite and ongoing responsibilities within the college and its ceremonies. For example, Raven-grade priests wear fantastic raven masks and serve food to the higher grades during communal meals. Additional magic points are required to advance in the Mithraic college to show that the priest is capable of a deeper understanding of the cosmos.

Grades of the Mithraic College		
Name	Planet	Minimum MP Total
Raven [<i>Corax</i>]	Mercurius	5
Veiled One [<i>Nymphus</i>]	Venus	6
Soldier [<i>Miles</i>]	Mars	7
Lion [<i>Leo</i>]	Iuppiter	8
Persian [<i>Perses</i>]	Luna	9
Charioteer of the Sun [<i>Heliodromus</i>]	Sol	10
Father [<i>Pater</i>]	Saturnus	12

The Mithraic college is ostensibly under the authority of the college of augurs, but in reality conducts its affairs free of restrictions. *Mithraces* address each other as "brother" [*frater*] since membership continues to be exclusively male. In contrast with this prejudice, the Mithraic college is very cosmopolitan, open to any rank or nationality in the Imperium. Status in Mithraic circles is solely based on grade; a Soldier-grade Senator would be expected to defer to a Pater-grade Plebeian in matters that concern the Mithraic college.

THE ETRUSCAN DIVINER

[*Haruspex*]

"The Etruscans are a nation more than any other devoted to religious rites, all the more as it excelled in the art of practicing them"

—Livy

The last Etruscan king, Tarquinius Superbus, was expelled from Rome in 245 AUC (509 BC) to be replaced by the infant Republic. By the beginnings of the Imperium, the Etruscan civilization had ceased to exist, its people (Etruscan, *Rasna*; Latin, *Etrusci*; Greek *Tyrrhenoi*) assimilated into Roman culture. Its legacy survives in civil engineering (rectangular city planning and sewers) and symbols of power (the triumph, the purple-bordered toga [*toga praetexta*] and the bundled axe [*fascis*]). The Etruscans were an intensely religious people and one tradition that continues in the Imperium is the Etruscan Art [*Etrusca Disciplina*], methods and rituals that monitor the boundaries between gods and men.

A college of priests established by the Emperor Claudius, the *haruspices*, preserves this knowledge and is part of the official state religion under the authority of the *pontifices*. A Senate decree mandates that the college enroll and train a certain number of Roman children descended from Etruscan nobility each year. The Emperor and Senate consult Etruscan diviners when strange events occur that defy interpretation.

The *haruspices* rise to power is a direct consequence of controlling the production and distribution of fulminata. According to diviners, the exalted position of the Etruscan college was predestined, not a result of Mulciber's serendipitous discovery. After all, the secrets of the Etruscan Art had always centered on lightning and engineering. Fulminata is more than a magical compound, it is

THE ETRUSCAN LANGUAGE

*"That's how to look into the nature of lightning,
Fire-bringer, and see by just what force it acts,
Not to unscroll Etruscan spells in vain,
Snooping for hints of the hidden will of the gods"*
- Lucretius, On the Nature of Things

The uninitiated complain that reading Etruscan is like breaking a code. In a way, they are absolutely correct. While many Etruscan words seem to share a common etymology with Latin and Greek words, the origins of some defy rational explanation. The majority of ancient Etruscans were illiterate; only the priests and ruling aristocracy had a need to write down anything apart from basic mercantile records. The priest-kings copied down the knowledge of Tages, including rituals, spells and tomb markings in a secret language to frustrate any enemy's attempt to unravel the true meaning.

Written "Etruscan" is full of wordplay, especially jumbles and reversals. For example, the Etruscan word for city, *spur*, becomes the Latin *urbs* with a little phonetic juggling. The Etruscan word for age is *svalce*; with a little manipulation it becomes *clavus*, the Latin term for the ceremonial nail that marks each year's passing (see p. 180). Other Etruscan words are simply "headless" forms of Latin words. The Etruscan word for god is *ais*, which is a version of the Latin word *deus* without the first letter. The *haruspices* use similar methodology to encode sensitive information on fulminata.

The truth is that Etruscan would be relatively easy to learn for a Latin native provided he were being taught Etruscan as the common people once spoke it. It is a more difficult task to master a language that has been manipulated over generations to be intentionally indecipherable.

a sacred substance bestowed upon mankind by the god Velchans (the Etruscan name for Volcanus).

Fellow Etruscan diviners call each other *netsvis*, the Etruscan name for a *haruspex*. While they tolerate the use of Latin titles in public, it is an unforgivable insult to refer to a *netsvis* as a "village diviner" or *vicanus haruspex*. Officials within the college are given esoteric Etruscan titles, such as *zixu*, *zilath*, *maru* and *purthne*. The head of the Etruscan college is called the Priest-King [*Luxume*] or in Latin, the *primarius*.

In addition to being priests, many *haruspices* serve in the army as weapons officers [*fulminati*] or engineers [*praefectifabrum*]. They wear Roman dress in public, but for private functions and even formal public occasions, a *haruspex* dons ceremonial vestments including a traditional Etruscan embroidered tunic and peaked cap.

TAGES

The Etruscan Art was the gift of the short-lived godling Tages, grandson of Tin (the Etruscan name for Iuppiter). Tarchon, an Etruscan farmer, was working in his field one summer day when a small child unexpectedly emerged from a freshly plowed furrow and began to recite the mysteries of the universe. The farmer summoned twelve priests [*lucomones*] who dutifully recorded the divine revelations of the wise being in the guise of a young boy [*puer senex*]. Once finished, Tages died and his body returned to the earth.

The Books of Tages [*Libri Tagetici*] instruct mortals how to interpret the will of the gods by observing natural events. The Books of Tages are broken out into three tomes: the Book of Lightning [*Libri Fulgurales*], the Book of Entrails [*Libri Haruspici*] and the Book of Ritual [*Libri Rituales*]. Rumors exist of fourth and fifth tomes: the Book of Acheron [*Libri Acheruntici*] that explains the nature of death and the Netherworld and the Book of Signs and Portents [*Libri Ostentaria*] that deals with the interpretation of omens, such as earthquakes.

THE BOOK OF LIGHTNING [*Libri Fulgurales*]

According to the revelations of Tages, the sky is divided into four quarters, with each quarter further separated into three regions. Three Etruscan gods of the Heavens (Guardians of the Outer Path) and three gods of the Netherworld (Guardians of the Inner Path) rule each quarter. In general, the Outer Path holds power in the East (the Friendly Part or *Pars Familiaris*) and Inner Path in the West (the Enemy Part or *Pars Hostilis*). The gods of the sky and heavens live in the North; the gods of earth and nature in the South.

Nine of these gods (marked by an asterisk * in the table on the next page) can hurl thunderbolts as messages or warnings to mortals. Thus, a lightning bolt seen in the Most Blessed Regions must be from Uni (the Etruscan name for Iuno). There are three different kinds of thunderbolts [*manubiae*]: those that warn [*Ipraesagum*], those that cause fear [*ostentatorium*] and those that destroy [*peremptorium*]. So by noting the details of the lightning strike—e.g., its location in the sky, whether it forks left or right, its brightness, the time of day the event occurred—a trained *haruspex* will be able to intuit the corresponding god's message. A *fulgurator* (in Etruscan, *frantac*) is a specialist attuned to the nature of lightning.

The Book of Lightning also details a complicated spell that summons lightning. The second king of Rome, Numa Pompilius, employed this knowledge during times of crisis. But ever since the *Luxume* Tullus Hostilius was struck by lightning attempting this rite, the Book of Lightning is primarily consulted to interpret natural phenomena.

THE BOOK OF ENTRAILS [*Libri Haruspici*]

Haruspication is divination by examining the entrails [*rota*], especially the liver, of a freshly sacrificed ox or sheep. A trained diviner can foresee

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upcoming events in these internal organs. In particular, the liver corresponds to a map of the sky. To help inexperienced diviners, the college fashions bronze models of livers marked with the twelve sections of the sky and the god who rules over each of them. By observing the size, color and shape of a liver, a *haruspex* can tell which gods are displeased, neutral or happy. In addition, the convex upper portion of the liver is called the *caput extortum*. Blemishes or discolorations in this area are unfavorable omens. If the sacrificial victim was missing this lobe, it is disastrous. A double lobe is a sign of luck.

THE BOOK OF RITUAL [*Libri Rituales*]

The Book of Ritual contains instructions for managing private and public life, conducting sacred rites, casting spells, building cities, consecrating sacred spaces and measuring time.

ETRUSCAN SPELLS [*Carmina Tyrrhena*]

The Etruscans loved music and dance. Banquets, religious ceremonies, sporting events, military drills, hunting trips and funerals all featured musicians. Wind chimes were hung inside the tomb

of the *Luxume* Lars Porsenna to ward off evil spirits. As result, *haruspices* learn to chant spells in ancient melodies that also serve as mnemonic devices. Some even employ bells [*tintinnabula*], the lyre or the Etruscan double-flute [*auleta*] to accompany their spells. The ancient Etruscans were so skilled in the *auleta* that they could coax wild boars from dense thicket by playing the proper melodies.

URBAN PLANNING

City planning is governed by the sacred rules. Any new city must align with the universe using this divine geometry, existing in harmony with the order established by the gods. According to the Etruscan Art, the blueprint for city construction is based on the layout of the cosmos, such as the movement of the sun. A healthy town is in a foursquare pattern and orients itself to the cardinal directions. Main roads are placed on the east-west [*decumanus*] and the north-south axis [*cardo*] of the compass.

The Book of Ritual is a comprehensive source on the science of hydraulics. The Etruscans were experts at draining marshes to reclaim arable land and building canals to halt flooding. The great sewers of Rome are based on Etruscan design, including the Great Sewer Drain [*Cloaca*

<i>Etruscan Quarters of the Sky</i>			
Quarter Name	Direction	Guardians of the Outer Path	Guardians of the Inner Path
The Blessed Regions [<i>Felicitas</i>]	South East	SELVANS NETHUNS* VOLTUMNE	TVATH* ARITIMI TURAN
The Fearful Regions [<i>Regiones Dirae</i>]	South West	TURMS TLUSCVA VELCHANS*	LETHAM* TUCHULCHA CULSU
The Most Blessed Regions [<i>Summa Felicitas</i>]	North East	TECUM MENRVA UNI*	TUL LUSA ANE
The Most Fearful Regions [<i>Regiones Maxima Dirae</i>]	North West	METHLUM THUFLTHA* TIN*	MARIS* CILENS VETIS*

Maxima] that keeps most of Rome perpetually dry. Despite the best efforts of earthquakes, fires and calamities that have damaged many parts of Rome, the extensive network of Rome's sewers built by Tarquinius Priscus is still intact and taken for granted. The Etruscans also knew how to install working underground water pipes, a feat of technology that even the best of Roman engineers has yet to reproduce. Even *haruspices* well versed in the Etruscan Art are baffled and have trouble following the relevant passages in the Book of Rituals.

THE NAIL OF FATE [*Clavus Anni*]

During a year-end ceremony, Etruscan diviners drive another nail into a wall in the Temple of Fortuna at Volsinii. It is an ancient tradition that once hoped to ward off plague from the city, but now reminds the *haruspices* that time is inexorable. The nail also stands for the memory of the Etruscan people: the ancient Etruscans believed that the gods had only apportioned them ten spans [*saecula*] as a people. These spans ranged from 150 to 50 years; each one's beginning and end determined by the Etruscan Art. The eruption of Vesuvius was the end of the tenth and final *saeculum*.

Individuals also have an allotted time on earth, measured in seven-year cycles. Reaching seventy, that is ten cycles, is a fine achievement. Postponement of death for another two cycles is possible if a person is pious and performs the

correct rites for the gods. However, living past age 84 (twelve cycles) is dangerous since a man begins to lose his connection to his soul [*pietas*] and the ability to interpret the will of the gods.

THE ETRUSCAN COLLEGE

Submission and fear are the primary elements of Etruscan religious thought. The Etruscan gods [*aisar*] are incredibly powerful; to understand and conform to their divine will, a *haruspex* must be educated in the full range of the Etruscan Art.

The college not only teaches its members divining skills and magic, but engineering and music as well. *Haruspices* follow one of two paths in service of the gods: the Inner Path devoted to the gods of the Netherworld or the Outer Path,

the provenance of the gods of the Heavens. A simple test administered by a senior diviner determines a novice's path.

Within the college *haruspices* rank themselves in a hierarchy, with each grade corresponding to an Etruscan number from one [*thu*] to twelve [*thealzalm*]. Additional magic points are required to follow the Inner or Outer Path, quantifying a diviner's increasing facility to control magic.

Twelve is the most important number to the Etruscan college and the reason why there are twelve grades of *haruspices*. It is the product of three, the number of the Netherworld, and four, the number of the Heavens. It is the sacred number of Voltumne, the protector of the Etruscan nation. There were twelve city-states of the once powerful Etruscan League:

THE END OF THE NINTH SAECULUM

The assassination of Iulius Caesar in 710 AUC (44 BC) signaled the close of the ninth *saeculum* of the Etruscan nation and the beginning of the tenth and last one. Spurrina, an Etruscan diviner, warned Caesar about the inauspicious date, to no avail. Another *haruspex*, Volcatius, announced at Caesar's funeral that the comet seen in the sky was the sign that the ninth *saeculum* had ended. The gods struck down Volcatius soon afterwards because he disclosed this knowledge to outsiders.

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Arretium, Caere, Clusium, Cortona, Persusia, Rusellae, Tarquinii, Veil, Vetulonia, Volaterrae, Volci, Volsinii. The sky is divided into twelve regions and there are twelve months in a year.

THE INNER PATH

Life in the Netherworld can be unbearable for those who have dishonored the gods in life. To avoid such a fate, some *haruspices* study how to pay tribute the divinities of the Netherworld and to preserve the memory of the dead. Typical tasks for a *haruspex* on the Inner Path include building a necropolis according to precepts of divine geometry or satisfying the needs of unburied souls. Followers of the Inner Path spend most of their studies learning how to propitiate and communicate with the powers of the Netherworld (or *Eita* in Etruscan):

Tul

Guardian of boundaries between this world and the Netherworld. His will determines what land is used for the burial of the dead. His Roman aspect is the god Terminus.

Lusa

Guardian of fields and forests embodying the difference of nature. She is the predator with no

mercy for weak prey such as the young, old and sick. Hunters sacrifice the blood and organs of a fresh kill to her.

Ane

Guardian of beginnings and endings. She is the facilitator of birth and death. Her Roman aspect is the god Ianus.

Tvath

Guardian of love for the dead. She watches over a family's devotion to their departed ancestors. She may grant resurrection or oblivion.

Aritimi

Guardian of the moon and female fertility. She oversees the health of women, including menstruation, pregnancy and menopause. Her Roman aspect is the goddess Diana.

Turan

Guardian of impure love. She incites consuming lust, jealousy, incest and depravity. Her Roman aspect is the goddess Venus.

Letham

Guardian of tormented souls in the Netherworld. He is the jailer that ensures that the wicked are punished according to divine will.

Grades of the Etruscan College

Name	Inner Path Guardian	Outer Path Guardian	Minimum MP Total
Thu(1)	TUL	SELVANS	5
Zal (2)	LUSA	NETHUNS	5
Ci(3)	ANE	VOLTUMNE	6
Sha (4)	TVATH	TURMS	6
Max (5)	ARITIMI	TLUSCVA	7
Huth (6)	TURAN	VELCHANS	7
Cezp (7)	LETHAM	METHLUM	8
Semph (8)	TUCHULCHA	THUFTHLA	8
Nurph (9)	CULSU	TIN	9
Thealx(10)	MARIS	TECUM	9
ThealxThum(11)	CILENS	MENRVA	10
ThealxZalm(12)	VETIS	UNI	12

Tuchulcha

Guardian of death. He is a demon with dirty long claws, a vulture's beak and writhing snakes for hair. He drags the terrified dead into the Netherworld.

Culsu

Guardian of entrances and exits. She is a demon the color of ash with a featureless face. She tends the gateways between the world of the living and the dead.

Maris

Guardian of war and crops. He is a bloody god who fertilizes the earth with the bodies of his enemies. He is vengeance, anger and conflict. His Roman aspect is the god Mars.

Cilens

Guardian of chance and gambling. She brings victory or disaster. Her Roman aspect is the goddess Fortuna.

Vetis

Guardian of destruction and entropy. He is the lord of ruin, tragedy and decay. His Roman aspect is Dis.

There are countless other Netherworld powers that *haruspices* call upon for aid. For example, Kharun, a dread demon, observes a dying person's final moments, intoxicated by the odor of the last breath. The goddess Thanr is the whisperer of rumors and lies. Vanth is a winged demon who spreads disease and pestilence with her foul touch. The mysterious Veiled Great Gods [*Dei Superiores et Involuti*] are the guardians of destiny who determine the flow of time and the course of fate.

THE OUTER PATH

The Outer Path follows the philosophy of the gods of life and the heavens. A *haruspex* firmly on this path will be able to place city gates in precisely the right location to ensure happiness and prosperity for its inhabitants. He knows that the gods send messages through thunderbolts to benefit mankind, even when a lightning strike happens to ignite a blaze or take an innocent life. Followers of the Outer Path are devoted to a better understanding the beneficial powers in the universe:

Selvans

Guardian of nature and forests. He is the lord of the trees and god of the animals. His Roman aspect is Silvanus.

Nethuns

Guardian of the waters and the mind. He is the ruler of the sea. All human thought are known to him; his restless dreams cause madness and storms. His Roman aspect is Neptunus.

Voltumne

Guardian of the Etruscan people and god of agriculture. His sacred number is twelve. His Roman aspect is Vertumnus.

Turms

Guardian of commerce and travel. He knows all languages and has a crafty tongue. He is the lord of survival and improvisation. His Roman aspect is Mercurius.

Thuscva

Guardians of fertility. Tellumo and Tellus nurture all growing things on Mother Earth [*Ati Cel*]. Their Roman aspect is Gaia.

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Velchans

Guardian of fire and forge. He is the oldest of the gods and lives in volcanoes. His Roman aspect is Volcanus.

Methlum

God of farming and herding. He is lord of the harvest, not of the crops. He taught man how to plant and reap.

Thufthla

Guardian of justice and daughter of Tin. She metes out punishment with her father's approval. Her Roman aspects are the Furies.

Tin

Guardian of weather and light. He is the lord of the clouds and hurler of thunderbolts. His Roman aspect is Iuppiter.

Tecum

Guardian of the aristocracy. He protects the ruler class from harm and illness.

Menrva

Guardian of intelligence and wisdom. She is the goddess of strategy and prudent thought. Her Roman aspect is Minerva.

Uni

Guardian of marriage and leadership. She is the sister and wife of Tin who protects husbands and wives. She is the personal goddess of the priest-king [*luxume*]. Her Roman aspect is Iuno.

Haruspices on the Outer Path often invoke other powers. Aplu is the god of prophecy and civilization; his Roman aspect is Apollo. Sethlans is the god of Art and Artisans. Fufluns' Roman aspect is Bacchus; he is the god of wine and the laughter of life. The Etruscan pantheon also includes Catha, daughter of the Sun; Alpan, goddess of Harmony and Consent; and Mean, goddess of Endeavors.



VEIENTO

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Importer [*Negotiator*]

Attributes: I12, A10, P11, V 9

Humors: S 2 (Cheerful), F 1 (Fearful)

MP: 8, **WP:** 9/18, **HP:** 3

Patron: Volcanus

Skills: *Machines 3, *Metals 4, Tormentum 4, Administrate 2, City 3, Code 3, Coin 3, Customs (Patrician) 3, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Divine (The Etruscan Art) 4, Food 1, Fulminata 7, Gladius 3, Horse 2, Language (Etruscan) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Magic 5, Pilum 3, Trade 2, Trick 4, Wine 2

Spells: Invisibility (-1), Kharun's Hammer (+1), Maggot (-1), Servant of Tuchulcha (0), Unmentionable Basket (-1)

Background: Although, Lucius Fabricius Veiento is now the chief representative [*negotiator*] of the Shippers of Adulis [*Naviculari Adulini*], the guild that controls the pepper trade in Ostia, he was once a weapons officer [*fulminatus*] of the II Legion Augusta in Africa, where he served with distinction in the Aethiopian campaigns. Veiento is trained in the Etruscan arts and knows the secret of the fulminata. Veiento is a Cezp (7) grade Etruscan diviner [*lwruspex*] who has traveled on the Inner Path devoted to the powers of the Netherworld. *This persona was built using WO skill points to reflect his experience.*

THE MARSIAN MAGICIAN

[*Magus Marsicus*]

*"You are about to shed many tears, and you
will hurry back to me, drawn by extraordinary
drugs and even the recitation of Marsian spells
will not help you recover your sanity"*

— Canidia the venefica, from Horace

D Before the rise of Rome, the Marsians [*Marsii*] inhabited strategic mountain passes in central Italia. The Marsians were allies of Rome during the Samnite and Punic Wars and were granted Roman citizenship after staging a minor uprising in the Marsic War. Although the separate nation of Marsi has disappeared, the Marsii retain many of their local traditions, including snake magic. Marsian magicians possess potent healing and water spells using snakes and their venom. While most Marsians remain near their ancestral homeland, some magi travel throughout the Imperium as itinerant healers, soothsayers and mystics.

SNAKE MAGIC

Legend maintains that the Marsians are descended from Telegonus, the son of Circe and Ulysses, which accounts for their magical powers. The Marsii, however, attribute their abilities as a gift from Angitia, the goddess of snakes and healing. The Marsian magician learns how to charm snakes into a docile slumber. Through their venom, snakes have the power to harm or heal. In the *Aeneid*, Virgil relates how Umbro, a Marsian warrior-priest from Marruvia, has the "gift of soothing vipers and vile-breathing watersnakes by a sung rune or stroking into sleep: he calmed their rabidness and by his skill relieved men bitten by them."

Marsian magicians perform the Rite of Snakes [*Serpentalia*] in honor of Angitia, Mistress of Ser-

VENOMOUS SNAKES

Aegyptian Cobra [*Aspis*]

A resident of hot dry climates, such as Aegyptus and the North African provinces. When threatened, it raises itself into the air and spreads its dull black, unmarked hood. Its venom will stop a man's heart.

Blood Viper [*Haemorrhoids*]

An enormous snake whose venom immobilizes and causes uncontrolled bleeding from all parts of the body. It is said that the creature likes to drink the blood from its victims.

Dust Devil [*Prester*]

An aggressive desert snake not afraid to use its fangs. Its bite causes the skin to turn a bright red, as if the blood were boiling. The body then swells into a bloated mass, producing a horrific death.

Horned Viper [*Cerastes*]

This poisonous snake has jagged markings on its back and hornlike projections above each eye. Relatives include the sand viper [*hamodytes*] and the hawk snake [*cenchris*], which possesses a sported underbelly that resembles polished marble. The *cenchris* always slithers in a straight path.

Rot Snake [*Seps*]

Deceptively tiny, the seps could be the most dangerous snake in the Imperium. Its venom putrefies flesh and bone; as the corruption spreads, the body withers into a sticky black puddle.

Thirsty Snake [*Dipsas*]

While its bite causes little initial pain, the venom of the dipsas quickly invades the victim and dries up the body's moisture. The poison burns deep inside, creating an unquenchable thirst with fatal results.

Turtle Snakes

[*Chersydros* and *Chelydrus*]

Amphibious serpents native to North Africa. Often mistaken for submerged turtles, these snakes can be recognized by a telltale trail of bubbles they leave in their wake. Kin to turtle snakes is the river adder [*natrix*] or "polluter of water" which strikes underwater without warning.

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pents, on May 1. The magi solemnly walk through Marsian villages carrying writhing handfuls of poisonous snakes to the shore of Lake Fucinus. At the water's edge, the Marsian magicians proceed to cover a cult statue of Angitia with the living snakes. In return, the goddess renews her sacred pact with the Marsian people to grant them the spiritual gift of healing.

LAKE FUCINUS [*Fucinus Lacus*]

A grove sacred to Angitia called *Lucus Angitae* is near the Lake Fucinus, a mystical freshwater lake lacking a visible outlet. The lake was known for its sudden and sharp rises and falls in water level (often exceeding 40 feet), resulting in flooding and displacement of local populations. However, resettlement would occur after each flood since the soil is so fertile. Numerous large-scale engineering projects to drain the lake using artificial outlets [*emissaria*] have failed. The drains have managed to stabilize the lake's water level.

The emperor Claudius was fascinated by the peculiar lake and often staged 50-ship *naumachia* with over 19,000 combatants on its waters, despite the protests of the Marsii. A silver Triton remains in the center of the lake. The Triton holds a seashell to its mouth; the shell is connected to underground pneumatic pipes and machinery so that it can signal blasts during the naval games.

THE WITCH [*Venefica*]

Attested by folklore and literature, the witch, or *venefica*, is a sinister reality in the world of *FVLMINATA*. The roots of Roman witchcraft

[*veneficium*] originate in Thessaly, a fertile plain in the province of Macedonia bounded on all sides by mountains. Over the centuries, *veneficae* have mastered the four traditions of Thessalian witchcraft: the evil eye [*invidiosus oculus* or *fascinatio*], necromancy [*carmina mala*], erotic binding [*defixiones amatoriae*] and the preparation of poisons [*venena*]. Thessalian witches also claim to possess the power to "draw down" heavenly objects, such as the moon and the constellations. The results of such an incantation have never been documented.

This baleful knowledge has been passed to new generations of women who carry on the Thessalian traditions. Such women abandon the conventions of society and tend to shy away from civilization. However, during the Republic, several Roman *matronae* accused of plotting to kill their husbands through *veneficium* opted to drink their own poison rather than appear in court to offer a motive. The possibility of witches hiding among upper class Roman women still remains.

Unless she is deliberately attempting to blend in, a *venefica* is easily recognized. Witches flout societal conventions, especially pertaining to proper dress. A typical *venefica* will tuck in their *stolae* to bare their knees, or wear multi-colored clothing in contrast to the reserved, plain dress of Roman women. Her face is pale and her hair will be wild and unkempt, resembling boar bristles or the spikes of a sea urchin. Since snakes are important animals to the gods of the earth and Netherworld, a witch will wear crowns made of live snakes or even braid small vipers in her hair. The very presence of a powerful *venefica* fouls the air to such a degree to wither plants and panic animals.

A male witch, or *veneficus*, is a rarity. In Horace's *Amphitruo*, the eponymous hero charges Juppiter with being a Thessalian warlock [*veneficus Thessalus*] whose spells have corrupted the minds of his slaves.

THE EVIL EYE [*Invidiosus Oculus*]

"May you not meet with the Evil Eye."

—Ancient Aegyptian greeting

The evil eye is a bewitching gaze that has the ability to do harm. It is possessed by the envious and malicious in temperament. The unseen power of the evil eye is capable of injuring livestock, blighting crops, causing illness or bringing about misfortune. The use of the evil eye is one of the most ancient of Thessalian traditions harking back to the beginning of civilization. A thousand years before Rome was founded, Aegyptian sorcerers issued strong warnings to their people about foreign wizards who possessed the evil eye.

In the early Imperium, educated Romans mocked those who believed in the evil eye as gullible rustics. Whether they did so out of true disdain or embarrassment in their own superstitious beliefs, now most Romans are less hasty to dismiss the evil eye as mere folklore. Official recognition of the Mithraic priests [*mithraces*] and Etruscan diviners *haruspices*] has made it easier for citizens to accept magic in their reality. In the world of *FVL MINATA*, most of these doubters have disappeared.

Even divine beings can be felled by the evil eye's malevolent power. Medea defeated the giant bronze automaton Talos with the evil eye; her gaze made him stumble and cut the only vulnerable part of his anatomy—a blood vessel in his ankle. The most powerful *veneficae* have what is called the *pupula duplex*, or double pupil. One eye, usually the left, has two pupils in the same iris. This allows the witch to cause death with a single glance.

A good defense against the evil eye is serious business. A short prayer to the Greek goddess Nemesis is one proof against the eye. Amulets, rings and phylacteries inscribed with potent names and spells also confer immunity (or at least resistance) to the effects of the evil eye. A *fascinum* is an amulet in the shape of a phallus. Often the inscriptions bear images of animals and divine creatures attacking the evil eye itself.

NECROMANCY [*Carmina Mala*]

"There are ways, yes, there are ways, in which
the dead, even though they are gone, can re-
turn your favors."

—Leonidas of Tarentum

Veneficae have corrupted ancestor worship into a means by which to obtain information or predict the future. Through the black magic of Thessalian songs, a *venefica* can summon and communicate with the dead. One approach is to call forth the actual shades from the Netherworld. In the *Odyssey*, Circe instructs Ulysses how to perform this task. Another approach is to reunite the ghosts [*lemures*] of the unburied with their corpses. Erictho, in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, brings back the spirit of a young warrior into his mangled body to answer questions. It is rumored that some *veneficae* are able to use these Thessalian songs to journey to the Netherworld and return unscathed.

In most instances, a *venefica* will conduct a necromantic ritual at night in a graveyard or near the place where the persona died. The ritual is carried out in three stages: preparation, sacrifice and song. The witch must first make ready the trench or pit that serves to contain the sacrifice. Next, the *venefica* pours libations of olive oil, milk, honey, wine and water into the pit. The pit is sprinkled with black beans or barley. If creating summoning a *lemur*, the witch must also prepare the corpse by filling it with boiled blood and potions concocted from foul and exotic ingredients such as lynx intestines, a wolf's beard, a remora, a snakeskin and foam from a rabid dog. Since shades are attracted to fresh blood, the witch then sacrifices black sheep. The most evil *veneficae* sacrifice children. The witch does not allow the shades to drink the blood until her questions are answered. Lastly, the *venefica* must sing her Thessalian incantations and call upon female goddesses and chthonic deities such as Hecate, Diana, Persephone, Kharun and Dis. In addition to maledictions, curses and appeals to

infernal powers, these songs are punctuated with the cries of animals and the roar of nature. It is horrifying to hear a witch imitate the howls of wolves and crashes of thunder.

EROTIC BINDING [*Defixiones Amatoriae*]

Venefica are also known for their ability to influence human sexuality, by either inflaming or extinguishing desire. It can create an attraction between two strangers or create enmity between faithful lovers. Thessalian erotic magic is able to make fantasy a reality; it serves all types of sexual attractions, including homosexuality. As to be expected with the black magic, this process is not a peaceful one. Indeed, the mixing of love potions and weaving of binding spells is a violent affair.

Creating a love potion [*philtrum*] might seem like a harmless activity. However, the gruesome components required for these potions are gained through vicious means. Some recipes call for two lizards caught copulating who are then boiled alive. In Horace, Canidia and her sister witches kidnap a Roman boy in order to keep him until his liver grows large enough to brew a potent *philtrum*. The *hippomanes*, a round black growth, roughly the size of a fig, on a newborn foal's forehead is another effective ingredient. Witches have to overpower protective mares and stallions for this rare opportunity.

Despite the effectiveness of potions, *veneficae* rely mainly on binding spells to manipulate lust. A witch will prepare a special wax or clay doll for each subject of the binding ceremony. She will also make ready thirteen metal needles that are ritually inserted into the doll. The placement of these needles varies by the gender of the doll and the intent of the spell (to sharpen or deaden desire). The symbolism of the needles is evident—this method of erotic magic depends greatly on the principle of *similia similibus*.



FOLIA

Rank: Senator

Occupation: Witch [*Venefica*]

Attributes: I12, A10, P 6, V14

Humors: S3 (Lecherous)

MP: 7, **WP:** 13/26, **HP:** 3

Patron: Venus

Skills: *Groom 3, *Philter 5, "Seduce 6, Train 3, Amulet 2, Customs (Patrician) 3, Dagger 2, Forage 3, Language (Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 3, Magic 4, Metals 3, Pharmakon 4, Scribe 3

Spells: Barren (-1), Evil Eye (-1), Pitys' Spell (-1)

Background: Folia, the youngest daughter of a retired Senator, is from Ariminum, a city on the Italian coast. A Thessalian woman taught her the basics of black magic; she later acquired a liking for raiding tombs for fresh cadavers and kidnapping children for nefarious rituals. To avoid exposure as a *venefica*, she has moved to Rome, posing as a normal young lady of high society. In addition to her weakness for necromancy, Folia has insatiable sexual appetites. She is quite vain, using expensive clothes and jewelry to lure men to her bed, earning her the nickname "Peahen" [*Pava*]. Her workshop is well stocked with body parts, poisonous herbs and magical devices. She also collects the remains of shipwrecks to draw upon the shades of the drowned.

During the ceremony, a *venefica* will shriek a fierce *carmen* that aims to torment the subject with passionate thoughts. Forcing the loss of memory is important since no thought of others must remain. The spell may command infernal powers to drag the victim to the subject by the hair and genitals. In addition to dolls and pins, *veneficae* occasionally use a *iunx* to bind their victims. The *iunx* is a spoked wheel with two central holes; when a cord is passed through these holes, and alternately stretched and released, the disk spins back and forth in a hypnotic pattern.

POISONS [Venena]

A witch's knowledge of *offpharmaka* is not limited to concocting love potions. The fourth Thessalian tradition is the one that gives the *venefica* (literally, "maker of poison") her name: the art of poisons. Numerous unexpected deaths among the prominent citizens of the Imperium are thought to be the malicious work of witches. The death of Germanicus in 769 AUC (AD 17), adopted son of the emperor Tiberius, is a notable example.

Many of the foul ingredients for a strong poison come from Thessaly itself. During moonlight, witches use bronze sickles to harvest special herbs found near the Black Sea [*Pontus Euxinus*] and on the peaks of Mt. Pindus, Mt. Pangeaum and Mt. Athos. Particularly poisonous plants are said to grow in lolchus and Hiberia, two sites on the Thessalian plain noted for their ancient pit graves from the days of the Trojan War. In Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Erichtho uses a very potent formula, called lunar venom [*virus lunare*]. Other poisons can be extracted from marine animals—the spider fish [*araneus*], the stingray [*pastinaca*] and a large slug called the sea hare [*lepos marinus*].

OTHER MAGI IN THE IMPERIUM

Within and outside the borders of the Imperium, other kinds of magi exist. Wild magicians [*goes*] and miracle-workers [*thaumaturgi*] travel from town to town, performing an eclectic mix of divination, healing and folk magic. Theurgists [*theurgi*] blend Chaldaean astrology and Greek philosophy into a school of learned magic that attempts to understand the nature of the divine soul. Dressed in leopard skins, Aegyptian sorcerers [*hekau*] of the House of Life study the ancient texts to divine the secrets of immortality and the nature of the afterlife, Iudaean priests [*grammatici*], noble members of the twenty-four Courses, guard the sacred covenant between their god, Iotape, and their people. Hibernian *druidae* perform esoteric sacrifices in spirit-haunted rings of stone. In the heart of Parthia, the *magoi* keep the flames of Ahura-mazda burning to aid in his eternal battle against Ahriman the dark god. And in far India, levitating *brahmin* embroider magical letters on scarlet cloaks to capture mountain snakes whose gem-like eyes confer invisibility.

The following is a partial list of legendary magi from the past:

Moses

Iudaean lawgiver and magus schooled in the Aegyptian arts; brought down the seven plagues upon the Aegyptian people; parted the Mare Erythraeum

Solomon

King of ancient Iudaea; considered the greatest magus of the past; possessed extensive knowledge of astrology, divination, magic and demonology

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Zoroaster

Persian *magos* and prophet; first teacher of the hidden lore of Persian magic

Dardanus

Phoenician magus; known for the ultimate love spell, Sword of Dardanus; his tomb is rumored to contain hidden knowledge

Orpheus

Thracian poet, healer and magus; could charm wild beasts, animate trees and make stones weep with his singing and lyre playing; descended into the Netherworld and returned; after being torn apart by Bacchic maenads, his severed head continues to prophesy

Pythagoras

Greek sage and mathematician; founded mystery cult based on the belief of transmigrated souls; possessed a golden thigh; could be present in two places at the same time

Empedocles

Sicilian *philosophus* who possessed many of the abilities of a *veneficus*; could heal with potions, influence the weather and summon the dead

Nectanebus

Aegyptian pharaoh and *hekau*; claimed to be the true father of Alexander the Great; seduced Alexander's mother, Olympias, through erotic binding magic

Osthanes

Persian *magos* who accompanied Xerxes on his ill-fated expedition to conquer Greece; introduced magic to the Greeks; expert in divinatory methods, from gazing into flickering lamp flames to speaking with the dead

Nigidius Figulus

Roman scholar and amateur magus; enigmatic figure who dabbled in the occult and studied Etruscan religion

Apollonius of Tyana

Cappadocian magus and *thaumaturgus*; extremely long-lived; witnessed the reign of a dozen Roman emperors; created food from thin air; made bronze statues leave their pedestals to perform the labors of servants; raised the dead; traveled from Smyrna to Ephesus in an instant

Jesus of Nazareth

Iudaean *thaumaturgus* and founder of the Christian mystery cult; noted for performing miracles and magical acts out of compassion; claimed that his power was divine and did not require rituals or spells

Simon Magus

Iudaean magus turned *thaumaturgus*; participated in magical contest in Rome against the Christians; managed to rise into the air, but the counter-prayers of the Christians caused him to fall

SPELL LIST

The following are 70 spells for *FVLMINATA*. It is by no means a complete list; GMs and players are encouraged to devise their own spells, keeping in mind game balance and playability. Remember that a "#" following the spell name indicates that the spell needs another spell as a prerequisite. This also means that your persona must possess the prerequisite spell(s) at a minimum spell rating of zero before learning the advanced spell.



Spell List

Spell	Origin	Format	Power	Prereq(s)
Achilles' Heel	Roman	M, A	2	
Arouse	Thessalian	M, A, P	1	
Barren	Thessalian	M, A, P	2	
Bear Charm	Roman	A	2	
Beast	Iudaeian	M, A	1	
Bind#	Greek	M, A	3	Twitch
Blank Tablet	Roman	M	1	
Charm of Agathokles#	Greek	A	3	Nightmare
Charm of Gadara	Syrian	M	1	
Charm of Hercules	Greek	M	2	
Charm of Pibechis	Aegyptian	M	4	
Children of Erebus#	Thessalian	M	3	Pity's Spell
Chrysalis#	Roman	P	5	Magpie, Mask
Cornucopia	Iudaeian	M	1	
Dew of Angitia	Marsian	P	3	
Dignity	Roman	M, A, P	1	
Dolphin	Greek	M, A	2	
Dream Oracle of Besas#	Aegyptian	P	3	Nightmare
Enemy	Roman	M, A	1	
Evil Eye	Thessalian	M, A	1	
Favor of the Blood Drinking Gecko	Thessalian	A	3	
Fertility	Thessalian	M, A, P	3	
Forethought	Greek	M, A	1	
Fucinus' Mirrors	Marsian	M	2	
Gaze of Venus#	Roman	M, P	2	Arouse
Harvest	Roman	M	2	
Headless Spear	Roman	M, A, P	2	
Hermes' Ring#	Greek	A	5	Bind
Infant's Cry	Roman	M	2	
Invisibility	Aegyptian	M, A, P	3	
Kharun's Hammer	Etruscan	M	4	
Lightbringer	Persian	M, A	1	
Little Beggar	Greek	M, A	2	
Love Spell of Astrapsoukos#	Persian	A	4	Arouse, Bind
Lunar Spell of Selene	Thessalian	A	3	
Maggot	Roman	M	2	
Magpie	Roman	M, A	1	
Mask	Roman	M	2	
Millions of Falcons	Aegyptian	A	4	
Mule of Marius	Roman	M, A	2	
Nightmare	Roman	M	2	
Phobos and Deimos	Greek	M, A, P	2	
Pity's Spell	Thessalian	M, A	2	
Puppet of Philinna#	Thessalian	A	5	Bind, Thought
Red Cloth of Nephthys	Aegyptian	M, A, P	1	

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Spell List (continued)

Spell	Origin	Format	Power	Prereq(s)
Scout	Roman	M, A	1	
Seal of Isis#	Aegyptian	A	2	Pity's' Spell
Servant of Tuchulcha	Etruscan	M	5	
Servant of Tyana	Cilician	M	4	
Seven Pole Lords of Heaven#	Roman	M, A	5	Bear Charm
Shade*	Thessalian	M, A	3	Pity's' Spell
Shadow of the Sun	Persian	M	4	
Silence	Roman	M, A	2	
Snake Charm	Marsian	M, A	1	
Solomon's Collapse	Iudaeian	M	4	
Songs of the Humors	Roman	M, A, P	1	
Sphere of Democritus	Greek	M	4	
Stele of Aphrodite	Greek	A	2	
Strength of the Dead	Etruscan	M	1	
Sword of Dardanus*	Phoenician	A	4	Gaze of Venus
Thought*	Roman	M, A, P	2	Truth
Tongues*	Roman	M, A, P	2	Magpie
Truth	Roman	M, A, P	1	
Twitch	Greek	M	1	
Unmentionable Basket	Etruscan	M	3	
Unquenchable Lamp*	Persian	M	2	Lightbringer
Vanish	Iudaeian	M	3	
Victory Charm of Consus	Roman	A	2	
Victory Charm of Helios	Greek	M, A	1	
Wounded Eye of Horus	Aegyptian	M, A, P	4	

POWER 1 SPELLS

Arouse

Format: M, A, P

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Scatter blood-soaked sand from the arena or earth spattered with a similar violent death at the feet of your subject. Cry out, "By the Erinyes who rouse the souls of the dead with fire, burn this one's soul."

Effect: Increases a persona's Sanguinicus humor rating by 3 points for ten game turns. If a person has an excess of Melancholicus, the three points work against canceling that rating first. Note that this artificial balance or imbalance does not remove or confer the extra humor point bonus.

Type: Bind

Origin: Thessalian

Beast [*Fera*]

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 1

Ritual: Attach a tassel to your garment and say LOMA ZATH AION ACHTHASE MA ZAL BALAMAON EIEOY.

Effect: Can calm, agitate or give one set of simple commands to an animal.

Type: Bind

Origin: ludaeen

Blank Tablet [*Tabula Rasa*]

Format: M

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Holding right hand in "paw" position, gently rock your hand back and forth while chanting "POTHEXAS MORPHYS"

Effect: Erases script from wax tablets, scrolls or papyrus. To erase inscriptions on metal or stone, the magus must roll an effect roll. On a Venus or Vulturnus, he succeeds.

Type: Transform

Origin: Roman

Charm of Gadara

Format: M

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Place hands over the injured part and recite, "The highest mountain was set aflame and fire consumed seven springs. But seven dark-eyed maidens with seven dark urns becalmed the restless fire."

Effect: Cures wound points as a Heal skill with one base healing point (B1/E1/P1). Effect roll determines actual healing.

Type: Transform

Origin: Syrian

Cornucopia

Format: M

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Quickly say NEBOUTO SOUALETH. Reach into the folds of your clothing as if you were searching for a lost item. You will find a bundle of food, but not where you expected it to be.

Effect: Creates a meal large enough to feed one person.

Type: Summon

Origin: ludaeen

Dignity [*Gravitas*]

Format: M, A, P

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Place hands inside of your garment, tying a knot in some loose thread. Pass right hand over your face in the "loose teeth" position while whispering ACHEBYKROM four times.

Effect: The subject of the spell becomes inscrutable, masking all emotions. All humors are temporarily balanced for one hour. This artificial balance does not confer the extra humor point bonus.

Type: Bind

Origin: Roman

Enemy [*Inimicus*]

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 1

Ritual: Point to the subject with your left hand in the "deer" position. Whisper RNISSAR PSYCHISSAR and you will learn if the subject is your enemy.

Effect: Allows the magus to determine if another persona is friend or foe.

Type: Divine

Origin: Roman

Evil Eye

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 1

Ritual: Stare at the intended target.

Effect: Curses the target persona by forcing a negative modifier to the next action roll. Modifier based on effect roll table, using the special effect modifier.

Type: Fate

Origin: Thessalian

Forethought

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 1

Ritual: State ARMIOYTH in a clear voice. Close your eyes and you will envision what your subject will do next.

Effect: Magus knows what another persona's next intended action will be.

Type: Divine

Origin: Greek

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Lightbringer

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 1

Ritual: Point to the object to set afire and state, "I conjure you, fiery light. BOUELPROSZAPYRIBELIA."

Effect: Creates a small flame by igniting a combustible object.

Type: Summon

Origin: Persian

Magpie [Pica]

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 4

Ritual: Listen to the subject's voice and mouth his words. Say AA OO UU EE BRINTATE NOPHRI BRISKLYMA EE UU OO AA and by the end of the spell your speech will be identical to that of the target.

Effect: The magus can imitate a subject's voice for 12 game turns.

Type: Summon

Origin: Roman

Red Cloth of Nephthys

Format: M, A, P

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Lay a cloth rubbed with red ochre over the scalp of the uneasy. Speak the following prayer "Pre arose and sent forth the Morning Boat also called the Boat of Heaven. The water under the bark of the sun has dried up." Nephthys, Mistress of the House, will give comfort to the newly born or soon dead.

Effect: Removes pain from those suffering from the pangs of childbirth or imminent death. Erases the difficulty modifier associated with wound point loss only if the persona is within five wound points of unconsciousness.

Type: Transform

Origin: Aegyptian

Scout [Explorator]

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Place your right hand on your left shoulder and your left hand on your temple. Whisper SIXIOPHI and the way will be revealed to you.

Effect: Gives the caster an intuitive nudge when attempting to decide between two courses of action. Helps to determine the safest path or where the odds are best.

Type: Divine

Origin: Roman

Snake Charm

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Stare at the serpent until you are mimicking its movements. Softly sing the wedding hymn of Angitia. For larger or enraged snakes, stroke the creature's scaly head or belly.

Type: Bind

Origin: Marsian

Effect: Calms a snake, rendering it harmless. The snake may be handled without fear until the magus releases his hold on the serpent.

Songs of the Humors [Carmina Unions]

Format: M, A, P

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Place left fingers in the "ibis" position and strike into right palm five times while softly singing LAKI LAKIO LAKIMOU MOUKILA KILAMOU.

Effect: Raises or lowers any humor of a persona by one point for six game turns

Type: Bind

Origin: Roman

Strength of the Dead

Format: M

Power: 1

Complexity: +

Ritual: Place your palms over the face of a persona who has died within the hour. Softly sing the hymn of Leinth the Faceless Goddess and you will steal the corpse's strength.

Effect: The magus gains the Vis rating of the deceased for five game turns.

Type: Transform

Origin: Etruscan

Truth [Veritas]

Format: M, A, P

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Point at subject with left fingers in the "trident" position. Say REMPHTHO. If you actually say REMPHTH, the subject is lying.

Effect: Allows the caster to tell if the persona is telling the truth.

Type: Divine

Origin: Roman

Twitch

Format: M

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Clap your hands together while saying DARYGKOIAUIAU, drawing in air as you do so.

Effect: Creates uneasiness or a physical spasm that distracts the target persona from their current action for one game turn.

Type: Bind

Origin: Greek

Victory Charm of Helios

Format: M, A

Power: 1

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Rub your palms with oak charcoal while singing GELEO AMARA MATOR MORMARA-SEIO NEOUTHON ALAO AGELAO and Helios will come to your aid for victory.

Effect: Adds +1 to all action rolls for friends of the magus for 12 game turns.

Type: Fate

Origin: Greek

POWER 2 SPELLS

Achilles' Heel

Format: M, A

Power: 2

Complexity: 3

Type: Transform

Origin: Roman

Ritual: With the left hand in the "salute" position and the right hand in the "withered branch" position, whisper the following charm from the Iliad, "Achilles is far too strong for any man on earth".

Effect: Confers virtual invulnerability to all damage for five game turns. Unless the effect roll is the Vultures or Venus, the recipient of this charm loses no wound points from damage. However, a Vultures or Venus will score full damage.

Barren

Format: M, A, P

Power: 2

Complexity: 3

Type: Transform

Origin: Thessalian

Ritual: Wrap mule hairs around a magnetic stone and place it on the stomach of the subject. Whisper, "Would to the fates you'd never been born and died unwed."

Effect: Serves as effective contraception. Causes a miscarriage or premature birth if subject is pregnant.

Bear Charm

Format: A

Power: 2

Complexity: 2

Type: Fate

Origin: Roman

Ritual: While wearing a wolf's knucklebone and placing both hands in the "fibula" position, whisper the following prayer: "Bear, you who stand at the pole and turn with a strong hand, I appeal to you, imploring you to do this thing, THOZOPITHE NIKAROPLEX."

Effect: Invokes the aid of the constellation of the Bear. Allows the magus to determine the results of a single talus, such as changing a 6 to a 1 on a friendly action roll to ensure success or by changing a 6 to a 1 on an enemy effect roll to change a Venus into a Pair of 1's.

Charm of Hercules

Format: M

Power: 2

Complexity: 1

Type: Transform

Origin: Greek

Ritual: Snap a loose thread and say, "Let the bonds loosen, great Hercules, let there be a way of escape just as you freed Prometheus from his iron fetters."

Effect: Breaks bonds or locks as if the magus had a

temporary Vis of 15. This augmented Vis lasts for five game turns and cannot be used for any other purpose.

Dolphin [*Delphinus*]

Format: M, A

Power: 2

Complexity: 4

Type: Transform

Origin: Greek

Ritual: Drink seawater from your palms and say SAPH PHAIOR BAELKOTA.

Effect: Allows the magus to swim as if he had a temporary Swim skill rating of 10. This augmented skill lasts for fifteen game turns.

Fucinus' Mirrors

Format: M

Power: 2

Complexity: 4

Type: Transform

Origin: Marsian

Ritual: Stare at your reflection in water cupped in your hands. Let the water trickle slowly from your fingers while imagining the cool, quiet waters of Lake Fucinus.

Effect: Allows the magus to calm others as if he had a temporary Harmony skill rating of 10. This augmented skill lasts for fifteen game turns.

Gaze of Venus#

Format: M, P

Power: 2

Complexity: 3

Type: Bind

Origin: Roman

#Arouse

Ritual: While staring at your intended subject, recite to yourself seven times one of the secret names of Venus, NEPHERIERI.

Effect: Allows the magus to attract another persona as if he had a temporary Seduce skill rating of 10. This augmented skill lasts for ten game turns.

Harvest [*Messis*]

Format: M

Power: 2

Complexity: 4

Type: Summon

Origin: Roman

Ritual: Place left hand in the "ibis" position and the right hand in the "anvil" position. Cross arms on your chest and breathe deeply seven times, whispering AXIAOTHAZAR between each breath.

Effect: Infuses magus with fresh magic points gathered from the environment equivalent to an effect roll. If a magical or supernatural presence is near, use the special effect modifier. Note that this could easily end in a net loss or no gain since the spell drains two magic points.

CHAPTER IX ARCANA

Headless Spear [*Hasta Pura*]

Format: M, A, P Type: Bind
Power: 2 Origin: Roman
Complexity: 3

Ritual: With the left hand in the "closing flower" position and the right hand in the "salute" position, whisper the following charm from the Iliad, "You dare raise your mighty spear against Zeus?"

Effect: Restrains a persona's anger by increasing a persona's Flematicus humor rating by 3 points for 10 game turns. If a person has an excess of Cholericus, the 3 points work against canceling that rating first. Note that this artificial balance or imbalance does not remove or confer the extra humor point bonus.

Infant's Cry [*Vagitus*]

Format: M Type: Bind
Power: 2 Origin: Roman
Complexity: 3

Ritual: Intertwine fingers in the "missing roof tile" position. Move the free fingers rapidly while whispering ABLANATHANALBA.

Effect: Forces a persona to talk in nonsense for 6 game turns.

Little Beggar

Format: M, A Type: Transform
Power: 2 Origin: Greek
Complexity: 3

Ritual: Wrap beeswax in ivy and swallow. Say the following: CHAOICHENOUT! BILMEMNOUOTH ATRAUICH.

Effect: Allows the magus to conduct business as if he had a temporary Trade skill rating of 10. This augmented skill lasts for five game turns.

Maggot [*Vermicula*]

Format: M Type: Summon
Power: 2 Origin: Roman
Complexity: 2

Ritual: Place left fingers in the "zephyr" position and right fingers in the "blunted gladius". Wave your left hand over your right three times while whispering AIE OE IOYA NYON THENAR METHOR and the smell of death will come.

Effect: Creates the stench of rotting meat to permeate the area for six game turns. All personae in the area not taking the proper precautions (such as covering one's nose and mouth) suffer a -2 penalty to all actions (modified by Vis).

Mask [*Persona*]

Format: M Type: Transform
Power: 2 Origin: Aegyptian
Complexity: 4

Ritual: While chanting USEKHREELBOSATOK, place one hand on your face and one hand on the subject's face.

Effect: The magus has the facial features of the subject for 12 game turns.

Mule of Marius [*Mulus Mara*]

Format: M, A Type: Transform
Power: 2 Origin: Roman
Complexity: 2

Ritual: Place both hands in the "zephyr" position. Circle the left counterclockwise around the right while whispering BARPHERANGES.

Effect: Allows the magus to move in a trained manner as if he had a temporary Move skill rating of 10. This augmented skill can be applied to the specialties of (Climb), (Jump) or (March) and lasts for five game turns.

Nightmare [*Incubus*]

Format: M Type: Divine
Power: 2 Origin: Roman
Complexity: 3

Ritual: Take any oil lamp, point it to the intended target and say into the lamp CHEIAMOPSEIERPE-BOTH.

Effect: The caster sends a dark vision to the subject, reaching into the persona's subconscious to find something unsettling. All actions performed for (15—Pietas attribute rating) game turns are at -2 in addition to any other modifiers.

Phobos and Deirnos

Format: M, A, P Type: Bind
Power: 2 Origin: Greek
Complexity: 2

Ritual: Break a ceramic pot on the ground and kick the potsherds in the direction of the subject while saying, "And round her strode the shapes of Rout and Fear."

Effect: Incites panic and anger by increasing a persona's Cholericus humor rating by 3 points for ten game turns. If a person has an excess of Flematicus, the 3 points work against canceling that rating first. Note that this artificial balance or imbalance does not remove or confer the extra humor point bonus.

Pity's' Spell

Format: M, A

Power: 2

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Write AZEL BALEMACHO on a leaf. Wrap it tightly and place in the mouth of the corpse.

Effect: Allows magus to listen to the ramblings of the unburied dead. Temporarily forces the restless spirit into the corpse just long enough for it to mumble for five game turns.

Type: Divine

Origin: Thessalian

Seal of Isis#

Format: A

Power: 2

Complexity: +

#Pity's' Spell

Ritual: Seal the mouth of the deceased's skull with grave dirt. Crown the skull with an iron slave fetter and smash the skull four times with your left foot while uttering IADOR INBA NICHAIOPLEX BRITH.

Effect: Restrains the skull's shade from answering necromantic questions.

Type: Bind

Origin: Aegyptian

Silence

Format: M, A

Power: 2

Complexity: 4

Ritual: Whisper ANGERONA PHOR PHORBA and raise your left hand in the "fibula" position to your lips.

Effect: Creates a zone of silence in the surrounding area for five game turns. Verbal communication, including spells that rely on words, is impossible.

Type: Transform

Origin: Roman

Stele of Aphrodite

Format: A

Power: 2

Complexity: +

Ritual: Using a bronze stylus, engrave the following on a strip of tin: DAMNAMENUES AKRAMMA CHAMERAI.

Effect: Prevents a designated persona from taking hostile action against the magus for five game turns. Note that this does not restrain the person's ability to command others to do harm.

Type: Bind

Origin: Greek

Thought*

Format: M, A, P

Power: 2

Complexity: 3

#Truth

Ritual: Point at subject with left fingers in the "trident" position. Rub right temple with right hand in

Type: Divine

Origin: Roman

the "anvil" position. Recite SOITHER CALBAN five times.

Effect: Allows the caster to hear the conscious thoughts of a persona for two game turns.

Tongues [Linguae]#

Format: M, A, P

Power: 2

Complexity: 5

#Magpie

Ritual: With your fingers in the "blunted gladius" position, place your left hand in your mouth. Remove it slowly while whispering SOUMARTA MARBA.

Effect: Allows the caster to speak and understand overheard or written languages as if he had a temporary Language skill of 10. This augmented skill lasts for 12 game turns.

Type: Transform

Origin: Roman

Unquenchable Lamp#

Format: M

Power: 2

Complexity: 4

#Lightbringer

Ritual: Slowly wave hands over flames and recite, "Remain with us, sovereign flame. AKRAMMA CHAMARI."

Effect: Makes a flame burn without a fuel source for 12 game turns. The fire can only be extinguished prematurely by fresh blood.

Type: Transform

Origin: Persian

Victory Charm of Census

Format: A

Power: 2

Complexity: +

Ritual: Using a bronze stylus, inscribe the following on the wide part of a horse's hoof: "Give me success, charm, reputation, glory in the circus."

Effect: Increases a horse's Agilitas rating by the result of a tali roll (1,3,4 or 6) for six game turns, thus raising the chariot team's Racing attribute.

Type: Transform

Origin: Roman

POWER 3 SPELLS

Bind#

Format: M, A

Power: 3

Complexity: 3

#Twitch

Ritual: Call upon your faithful sacred powers and bid them to "Tie up and bind the mouth, the feet, the muscles, the arms, the knees, the courage, the thoughts" of your subject.

Type: Bind

Origin: Greek

CHAPTER IX ARCANA

Effect: Paralyzes a subject persona for a number of game turns based on effect roll. They cannot perform any actions without stammering or fumbling.

Charm of Agathokles#

Format: A **Type:** Bind
Power: 3 **Origin:** Greek
Complexity: +
#Nightmare

Ritual: Prepare a miniature wax tablet or scroll with the name of the target individual and place in the mouth of a black cat that has died violently. Recite the following until you fall asleep, "Reveal me to (the name of the individual), NANNASENNANA."

Effect: Allows magus to enter the dreams of a sleeping subject to convey messages. On a successful Trick or Theater roll, magus can convince the dreamer that he is someone else.

Children of Erebos#

Format: M **Type:** Divine
Power: 3 **Origin:** Thessalian
Complexity: +
#Pitys Spell

Ritual: Lay a recently murdered child into a grave and sprinkle black beans over the corpse. Speak "I call upon you, inhabitants of Chaos and Erebos, guardians of secrets, leaders of those beneath the earth, servants in the chasm, rulers of cliffs, grievors of the heart, iron-hearted ones BITH-OURARA ASOUEMARA."

Effect: The dark shades of slain infants will appear to escort the child into the Netherworld. One of them will notice you and whisper a terrible secret into your ear. The GM should reveal something previously unknown to the persona.

Dew of Angitia

Format: P
Type: Transform
Power: 3
Origin: Marsian
Complexity: 3

Ritual: Mix the venom of a water snake with a secret blend of mild Marsian herbs. Soak a clean cloth in the solution. Mutter the sleepy charm of the Mother of Serpents while

squeezing the cloth into the mouth of the poisoned one.

Effect: Creates a potent anti-venom effective against snakebites, stings and deliberate poisonings.

Dream Oracle of Besas#

Format: P **Type:** Divine
Power: 3 **Origin:** Aegyptian
Complexity: +
#Nightmare

Ritual: Prepare and drink a mixture of rainwater mixed with the blood of a white dove and a black crow. While falling asleep, recite, "I conjure you, *daimon*, by your two names ANOUTH ANOUTH. You are the headless god, the one who has the heads of animals for feet. Reveal these truths to me, quickly, quickly"

Effect: A vision of the Besas, the Headless God, will come to the magus in his dream to impart the answer to any question. Like any prophecy, the answer may be enigmatic or allegorical.

Favor of the Blood Drinking Gecko

Format: A **Type:** Fate
Power: 3 **Origin:** Thessalian
Complexity: 2

Ritual: Cut off the foot from a tomb-dwelling gecko and allow the lizard to escape. Fasten its severed foot to your garment.

Effect: All action rolls intended to harm the magus suffer a -2 penalty for 10 game turns.

Fertility*

Format: M, A, P
Type: Transform
Power: 3
Origin: Thessalian
Complexity: 3
#Barren

Ritual: Wrap goat hairs around a stone worn smooth by water and place it on the stomach of the subject. Whisper YTHANI AR-LAMYSI twice.

Effect: Promotes fertility in the subject ensuring impregnation during the next sexual encounter. Also helps a difficult childbirth.



Invisibility

Format: M, A, P

Power: 3

Complexity: 4

Ritual: Smear your face with the following concoction: oil of lily, a rose and the eye of an ape (or of a man who died a violent death). Say IO ERBETHIO PHOBETHIO PAKERBETHIO APOMPS and you will become invisible.

Effect: The subject of the spell becomes invisible for 12 game turns. All melee attacks against the target are at -3; ranged attacks are at -5.

Type: Transform

Origin: Aegyptian

Lunar Spell of Selene#

Format: A

Power: 3

Complexity: +

#Bind

Ritual: On a full moon, prepare two clay dolls in the likeness of the intended targets. Smear lunar ointment over both dolls. Pierce the first doll with seven needles, one for the mouth, two for the eyes, two for the ears, one for the heart and one for the loins. Recite, "I call upon you Mistress to divide these two. This one shall not give nor receive love. (He or she) will not even feel its loss." Pierce the second with six needles, with the same locations as before, save the heart. Recite, "I call upon you Mistress to divide these two. This one shall not give nor receive love. But (his or her) heart will feel its loss."

Effect: Creates enmity between two friends or lovers. The effect lasts until the next full moon.

Type: Bind

Origin: Thessalian

Shade [Manes]#

Format: M, A

Power: 3

Complexity: +

#Pitys' Spell

Ritual: Dig a pit for libations of oil, milk, honey and the blood of a freshly sacrificed black sheep. Invoke the shade with prayers and songs to the infernal powers of the Netherworld. The shade will come to drink of the blood; do not allow the shade to drink before responding to your questions or it will slake its thirst and depart.

Effect: Calls forth a specific shade from the Netherworld to answer three questions truthfully. Make separate effect rolls using the Learn skill use for the specificity of each answer.

Type: Divine

Origin: Thessalian

Unmentionable Basket

Format: M

Power: 3

Complexity: 4

Ritual: To have a subject glimpse into the Unmentionable Basket of Kasmilos, the messenger of the

Type: Transform

Origin: Etruscan

Unmentionable Gods [*Nefandi*], point at the target and sing ASKA NESNA SAN. Your target will witness the truth of his faults and past actions carried in the basket.

Effect: Reduces the subject's Pietas rating by four points for 12 game turns.

Vanish

Format: M

Power: 3

Complexity: 3

Ritual: Place hand or piece of cloth over the object. Say PHENPHENSOIGRAA three times and the object will be gone when you whisk your hand away.

Effect: The magus makes a small object disappear into thin air never to be seen again.

Type: Transform

Origin: Iudaeen

POWER 4 SPELLS

Charm of Pibechis

Format: M

Power: 4

Complexity: 3

Ritual: Anoint an otherworldly creature with the oil of unripe olives and fruit pulp of the lotus while repeating, SARTHIOMI PHTHA TANNETIS PHER-SOTHI.

Effect: Disperses the target back to Hades. Pibechis, "The Falcon", was a renowned magus from Aegyptus.

Type: Bind

Origin: Aegyptian

Kharun's Hammer

Format: M

Power: 4

Complexity: 2

Ritual: Sing loudly KHARUN HINTHU ZILCI three times quickly. Hold right elbow, make a fist with right hand and swing down at sighted target.

Effect: Successful casting acts as a crushing blow from an unseen hammer (Dmg B2). Caster uses special effect modifier on effect table.

Type: Summon

Origin: Etruscan

Love Spell of Astrapsoukos#

Format: A

Power: 4

Complexity: +

#Arouse, #Bind

Ritual: Prepare a clay doll in the likeness of the intended target with hands bound behind its back. Pierce the doll with thirteen needles, three for the mouth, two for the eyes, two for the bound hands, three for the heart and three for the loins. Recite, "Give me favor, elegance and beauty of face. PHARNATHARBARACHELCHTHA."

Type: Bind

Origin: Persian

CHAPTER IX ARCANA

Effect: Incites passion and love in the subject persona for the magus. The effect lasts until the needles are removed.

Millions of Falcons [*Heh Ba*]

Format: A **Type:** Bind
Power: 4 **Origin:** Aegyptian
Complexity: +

Ritual: Create a wax model of the ship you wish to upset and place it in a bowl of water. Wave an ebony wand while calling forth the falcon spirits who accompany Horus on his Night Boat also called the Boat of Millions. The *ba* spirits will attempt to sink the vessel.

Effect: If the magus rolls a Venus or Vultures on his effect roll, the ship goes under the waves. Otherwise, all sailors on the affected ship receive -3 to Sail and Trireme skills for ten game turns. The Aegyptian pharaoh and *hekau* sorcerer Nectanebus developed this spell to repel invaders.

Servant of Tyana

Format: M **Type:** Summon
Power: 4 **Origin:** Cilician
Complexity: 8

Ritual: Write SABERRA in dog's blood on the skull of an ass and place it under your left foot. Sing GARGERGIO TTTHEMYME MERAP SECHDR AORIL and an old woman will appear to perform any task.

Effect: The Servant of Tyana has remarkable abilities for an old woman (110, A 13, P 6, V 13) but little sense of right or wrong. She has no skill ratings but will follow any and all commands to the best of her ability for ten game turns. The legendary Apollonius of Tyana developed this spell.

Shadow of the Sun

Format: M **Type:** Summon
Power: 4 **Origin:** Persian
Complexity: +

Ritual: Crowned with the severed tail of a cat, walk towards the sun repeating ERBAIGO RYTH ARPH THEIR. You will see a shadow on the sun. Close your eyes, turn away and open them. The shadow will be standing in front of you.

Effect: Summons a powerful shadow creature (112, A12, P12, V12), a sunspot minion of Ahuramazda. It will perform any one task with a skill rating of 10.

Solomon's Collapse

Format: M **Type:** Bind
Power: 4 **Origin:** Iudaeae
Complexity: 5
#Twitch

Ritual: Facing the subject, place your palms on

your buttocks, feet together and recite the following: ABRIATH KICHOPOTEMPITH.

Effect: Forces a persona into epileptic fits for a number of game turns based on special effect modifier. They cannot perform any other actions.

Sphere of Democritus

Format: M **Type:** Fate
Power: 4 **Origin:** Greek
Complexity: 1

Ritual: Touch the recently deceased and throw a single round stone onto the ground while uttering ZEUS.

Effect: If the deceased persona has lost all wound points within ten game turns, roll one talus. If an even roll (4 or 6), the persona miraculously survives. If odd, the persona is still dead.

Sword of Dardanus#

Format: A **Type:** Bind
Power: 4 **Origin:** Phoenician
Complexity: 3
#Gaze of Venus

Ritual: Place a flat magnetic stone that has been engraved with VENUS on one side under your tongue. Without stammering or stuttering, speak the following BERIAMBO MERMERGOU AROUER LAILAM.

Effect: The ultimate love spell. Causes a persona to fall hopelessly in love with another.

Wounded Eye of Horus

Format: M, A, P **Type:** Transform
Power: 4 **Origin:** Aegyptian
Complexity: 2

Ritual: Point to the subject and recite, "The Sun is the Sound Eye. The Moon is the Wounded Eye."

Effect: Blinds the target for (15—Vis) game turns. All actions involving sight are at -5.

POWER 5 SPELLS

Chrysalis#

Format: P **Type:** Transform
Power: 5 **Origin:** Roman
Complexity: +
#Mask, #Magpie

Ritual: Obtain the distilled essence of snow locusts. Mix it with the hair, fingernails, skin, blood and phlegm of the subject. Quaff the cold mixture and wrap yourself in the diaphanous flame-colored veils [*flammea*] of virgin brides. When you emerge in seven days, you will resemble the subject.

Effect: Metamorphoses magus into the duplicate of another persona for three days.

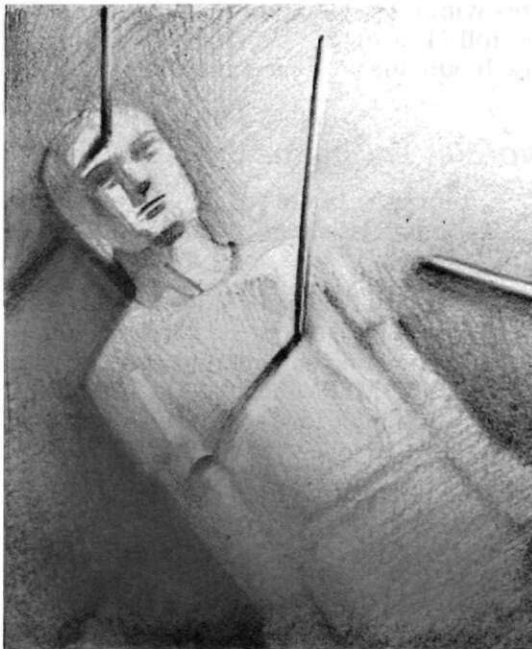
Hermes' Ring#

Format: A
 Power: 5
 Complexity: +
 #Bind

Type: Bind
 Origin: Greek

Ritual: Perform a binding spell and bury an iron ring that you have been wearing for at least seven days.

Effect: Functions as the Bind spell, but lasts as long as the ring remains buried or the magus continues to expend magic points to power the ring.



Puppet of Philinna#

Format: A
 Power: 5
 Complexity: 5
 #Bind, #Thought

Type: Bind
 Origin: Thessalian

Ritual: After binding your subject and fashioning a clay doll of him or her, pierce the doll with three silver needles, one for the forehead, one for the heart

and one for the lower spine. Recite the following nine times: BOULOMENTOREB XONOPHOENAX.

Effect: The magus can control the actions of another persona for a minimum of three game turns. On the fourth game turn and thereafter, the caster and the subject roll contested actions on *Pietas*. Philinna, a Thessalian witch, originally devised this spell.

Servant of Tuchulcha

Format: M
 Power: 5
 Complexity: +

Type: Summon
 Origin: Etruscan

Ritual: Mix fresh mare's milk with honey. Soak two fingernails and three hairs from your head in the mixture. Pour the mixture into dirt that has not seen the sun for one year. Walk backwards twelve steps while singing TUCHULCHA HINTHU SHUTHI FAVI THAURAFLE and Tuchulcha will send forth a servant to aid you.

Effect: The caster summons a squat blue *daimon* in the service of Tuchulcha. The demon (113, A 14, P 1, V 14) attacks with three vicious attacks: one Bite 5 (Dmg E5) and two Claws 5 (Dmg E3). It is immune to iron and steel weapons, but bronze and lead damage it.

Seven Pole Lords of Heaven#

Format: M, A
 Power: 5
 Complexity: 3

Type: Fate
 Origin: Roman

#Bear Charm

Ritual: Whisper the following prayer: "Hail O Guardians of the Pivot. Hail to the first, Aieronthi, to the second, Mercheimeros, and to the third, Achrichiuor. Hail to the fourth, Mesargilto, to the fifth, Chichroalitho and to the sixth, Er-michthathops. Hail to the seventh, Eorasiche." Make a bellowing sound like a bull until you stimulate all of your senses and kiss the skin of a sacrificed black sheep.

Effect: Invokes the aid of the Seven Lords who rule the North Pole. Allows the magus to determine the results of any one tali roll, such as forcing a four 6 failure on an enemy action roll or ensuring a Venus result on a friendly effect roll.



CHAPTER X

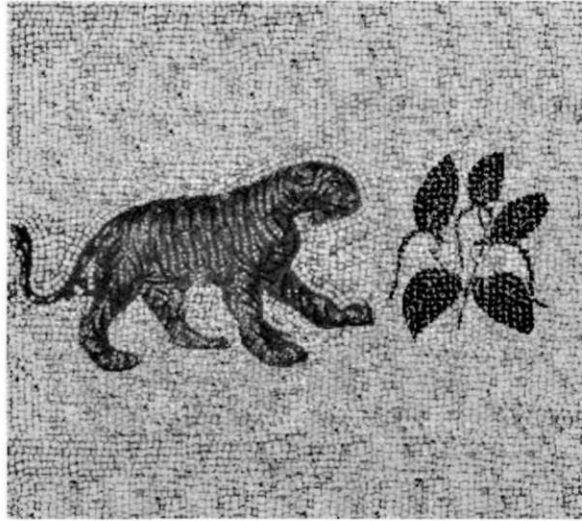
FABULAE

ADVENTURES IN THE IMPERIUM

"Give me a bronze as and I'll tell you a golden story."

—A professional storyteller's standard sales pitch according to Pliny the Younger

The game of *FVLMINATA* will be broken down into individual fabulae, or stories. This chapter presents a sample fabula for your use. Afterwards, we discuss general guidelines for writing your own fabulae.



THE PEPPER MERCHANT *[Mercator Piperis]*

The following is a sample fabula in four scenes suitable for beginning personae. It is meant as a tutorial to introduce new players to *FVLMI-NATA*. During the course of the fabula, the personae will be exposed to various aspects of Imperial law, rank, formal dining and Mediterranean trade. The Pepper Merchant begins as a mystery, but soon develops into conflict. The personae will find themselves facing challenges beyond the scope of their normal duties.

This fabula was inspired by the Marcus Didius Falco novels of Lindsey Davis, particularly *Venus in Copper*. The dinner party menu and some of the persona names are from her writings and are intended as an homage to her enjoyable and popular series of mystery novels set in ancient Rome.

OSTIA

The Pepper Merchant takes place in the city of Ostia, the second busiest port in the Imperium (Alexandria being the most active). After Rome's naval victories in 416 AUC (338 BC) over the

Volscians and Etruscans, Ostia was founded as a military colony to control and defend the mouth of the Tiber. Parts of the original fort [*castra*] are extant in Ostia, including the Decumanus Maximus running through the center of town.

As an important suburb of Rome with a population of 100,000, Ostia is not a typical harbor town, which is reflected in its social and economic prosperity. It possesses many shops [*tabernae*] and baths [*thermae*]. The city's main forum is on a magnificent scale, its original foundations put down by Augustus and its buildings improved by subsequent emperors, such as Hadrian who constructed its Capitolium, an impressive temple dedicated to Iuppiter, Iuno and Minerva.

Ostia has always competed with its main rival Puteoli and the port cities on the Campanian coast. Since the creation of the large harbor to the north, known as Portus, Ostia has outstripped the competition in commercial traffic. Portus is a fully functional harbor with modern facilities, including a stone lighthouse and an inner hexagonal landlocked basin that protects ships from storms.

Despite the transfer of heavy shipping duties to Portus, Ostia still flourishes as a river mouth wharf. The most important item of trade is wheat, the staple of Roman diet; each Imperial grain carrier can bring in 1,200 tons of grain from

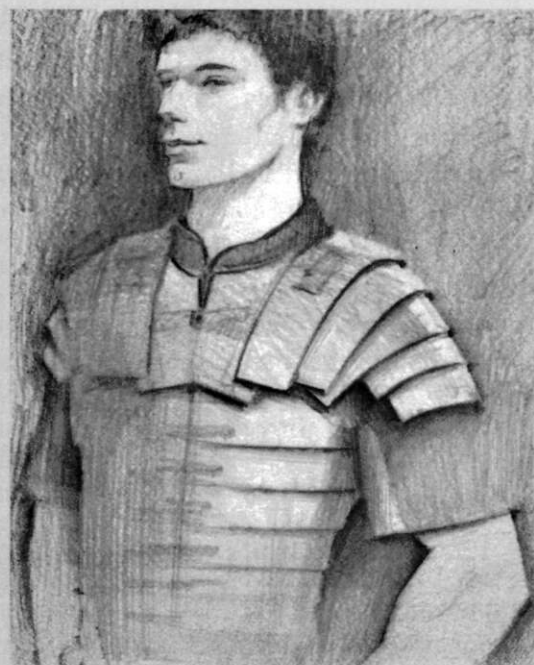
CHAPTER X FABULAE

Alexandria. Transports dock here to unload marble from Greece, olive oil from Hispania and lead ingots from Britannia. The lead is used for making water pipes and bullets [*glandes plumbi*] for the legions' guns. The wealthy Roman market also brings in the inflow of luxury wares from India and Serica (China). During the day, the city is packed with hurrying slaves and citizens, avoiding the jostling of carriages and carts, while businessmen ply their trades under the porticoes that line the streets. This will be an odd sight for residents of Rome accustomed to the ban on wheeled vehicles during daylight hours. Small boats, the *naves codicariae*, take goods up the Tiber to Rome. These barges are built with a rounded hull and a mast set forward to take a towline so that they can be kept clear of the riverbank.

Although elaborate villas and private homes [*domi*] are found in Ostia, most of its citizens live in huge apartment blocks [*insulae*]. Rising four stories to a height of 60 feet, these apartment buildings of red or yellow brick and concrete have large windows, balconies and as many as seven rooms.

The patron god of Ostia is Volcanus Mulciber, the god of engineers and the forge. A bronze statue of Aufidius Caelus Mulciber, dedicated by the Mithraic College, can be found just outside the main temple to Volcanus. However, due to its unique place as a way station into Rome, there is a diversity of religious activity. There is a Jewish synagogue, temples to Isis, Cybele and Artis, and over a dozen Mithraic caverns [*mithraea*] within the city limits. A haunting series of tombs line the road leading out of the town towards Portus, an area known as the Isola Sacra. Large *mausolea* contain expensive marble *sarcophagi* decorated with reliefs of mythological scenes and ornate garland designs.

Ostia is home to three peacekeeping forces. One thousand city watchmen [*vigiles*] are commanded by a local chief [*primipilaris*] who reports to the Prefect of the Night Watchmen \[*praefectus*



FERAX

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Deputy Centurion [*Optio*]

Attributes: I8, A12, P9, V13

Humors: X1 (Unfocused), S1 (Amorous)

MP: 0, **WP:** 13/26, **HP:** 3, **Patron:** Mars

Skills: *Box 3, *Dagger 3, *Gladius 6, *Guard 3, *Pilum 6, Chariot 2, Command 3, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Farm 3, Harvest (Olives) 2, Horse 3, Language (Greek) 2, Language (Latin) 3, Machines 2, Move (Jump) 2, Move (March) 2, Strategy 2, Tormentum 2

Background: The son of an olive oil manufacturer, Quintus Rabirius Ferax joined the legions to avoid a life of commerce and patronage. Fortunately, his father was successful at producing quality oil and was able to eventually sever the official patron-client relationship with M. Camillus Macrinus. His father and the Senator are now friends and avid racing fans (of the Blues)—Macrinus, while in Hispania, relies on the elder Rabirius to inform him of events at the Circus Maximus. From an early age, Ferax has been devoted to Macrinus' only daughter, Camilla. Ferax is well skilled in martial matters, but rather blunt in social ones. However, legionaries under his command love him; last year, the men of the Pistrix presented him with a signet ring decorated with a shark [*pistrix*]. However, the special gladius given to him by Camilla, is still his most prized possession.

vigilum] in Rome. Their barracks are near the Forum of Ceres [*Forum Cereale*] and just north of the Baths of Neptunus. They are responsible for spotting fires and discouraging would-be muggers. Another thousand city guardsmen [*cohortes urbanae*], the XVII Cohort, enforce order among the sailor rabble and protect the warehouses full of newly arrived grain. In addition, a detachment of ten triremes from the Imperial Fleet at Misenum guards the grain shipments and defends the coastline.

THE PLAYERS

[*Dramatis Personae*]

This fabula assumes that the party is comprised of a legionary tribune, his wife and three to five members of the special Pistrix detachment [*decuria peregrina*] from the VII Legion Gemina. As a GameMaster, feel free to use your own personae.

Persona	Occupation	Page
Pertinax	Legionary Tribune	38
Camilla	Lady of Rank	38
Ferax	Deputy Centurion	203
Rufus	Chief Engineer	145
Valens	Weapons Officer	176
Epizelus	Field Surgeon	121
Ulpia	Intelligence Officer	39

Other personae important to the story are Macrinus, the military governor of Hispania Tarraconensis (see p. 77 in CHAPTER IV: IMPERIUM), Veiento the merchant (see p. 183 in CHAPTER IX: ARCANA), his bodyguard Peisandros (see sidebar on p. 208) and his son Iulianus (see sidebar on p. 210). The GameMaster should play these personae.

PROLOGUE

The following passage should be read aloud to the personae:

It is January 15, 1000 AUC (AD 248) and you are in Gabii, a town outside of Rome. Your party, a legionary tribune, his wife and members of the special Pistrix detachment [*vexillatio*] from the VII Legion Gemina are assembled at the villa of M. Camillus Macrinus, military governor [*legatus*] of Hispania Tarraconensis. For some of you, seeing these familiar gardens, statues and paintings is a reminder of past days. For the rest of you it is a great honor to be entertained by an Imperial governor. Soon, a slave announces Macrinus. Sending away the household slaves and pouring himself some chilled fruit wine, he addresses you:

"In this millennial year, the number of applications to higher social ranks has overwhelmed the censor's offices. As a Senator of the Imperium, I have been asked by the Emperor himself to assist in the review process. You may ask yourself: why is he telling this to us? The governor of an imperial province must have numerous functionaries to process these applications. True enough. But for one incident, this would have been a task for administrators. Early one morning, as slaves were delivering application scrolls for the censor in Ostia, a dove flew to the bronze statue of Aufidius Caelus, scrabbled fitfully at his frozen curls and fell stone dead. The clerk immediately noted the application that was delivered at that moment. Needless to say, this must have been an omen. The augurs agree that this application is linked to the future of the Imperium. Now you see why I must entrust it to you, Pertinax. As my son-in-law, I can rely on you and my daughter Camilla to treat this matter seriously.

CHAPTER X FABULAE

The man you will be interviewing is Lucius Fabricius Veiento. According to his application, he is a merchant. From his cognomen, I gather his family is of Etruscan heritage. All of the mundane administrative work has been completed and verified; this Plebeian qualifies for the rank of Equestrian. What I need from you is a qualitative assessment of the man. Is he a good Roman? What has he done for Rome? Is he pious? Does he have reverence for the gods? How does he plan to continue to serve Rome? Will he erect public monuments? Will he sponsor games? How can Veiento affect Rome's destiny? The augurs have spoken; his application warrants scrutiny.

Veiento has invited the official Imperial delegation (namely you) to a formal dinner party. You will need to leave soon to make it to Ostia for dinner. Remember to dress in your best togas. And don't be rude; he is not a barbarian prisoner to be tortured; he is a free citizen of the Imperium and as such has legal rights. While you are in Ostia, I have arranged for you to stay with an old client of mine, Marcus Fabius Parcens Viridorix, the local wheat supply official [*quaestor annonae*]. Veiento's application and financial records will arrive from Rome at the domus of Viridorix early tomorrow morning.

Pertinax, you have been granted temporary *imperium* to deal with the situation; you may authorize military action against the enemies of Rome and arrest Roman citizens who break the Imperium's laws. Be wise and judicious in this. No more needs to be said to a young man who aspires to greater public office.

Now I must ask you to leave; pressing concerns force my departure from Rome at once. We will

continue this gathering when you and I both return to Hispania where you will be entertained in a more luxurious manner. I would hate to acquire a reputation for being a bad host. Ferax, send my regards to your father when you see him. Business here at Rome will prevents a proper visit. It is a pleasure to see you smile again, Sextus. I will pray to the gods of our household for your continued happiness. Be well, Pertinax. Goodbye, daughter."

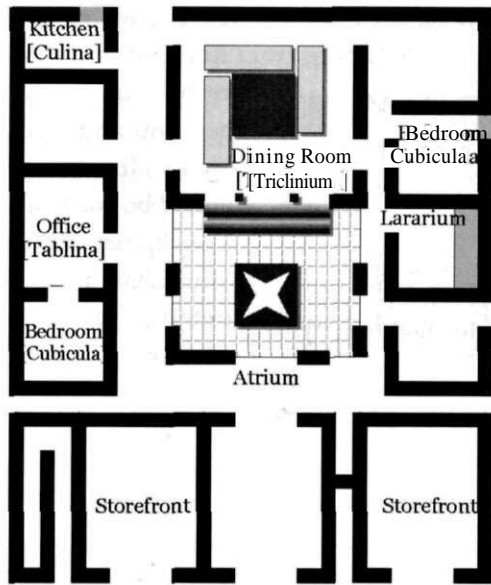
ADDING SPICE

To enrich the fabulae, consider adding a love triangle. Ferax, the legionary *optio*, is the son of one of the clients of Camilla's father. The two have known each other since childhood. Although Camilla has married Pertinax to satisfy her father's, and her own, political ambitions, her heart still belongs to Ferax. The two lovers have not consummated their feelings, because of their extreme sense of duty [*officium*] and harmony [*concordia*]. Pertinax does not know of this relationship, so the tension of the three of them in close proximity should ignite enough sparks to make the legionaries mindful of their fulminata.

SCENE ONE— THE DINNER PARTY [*Convivium*]

After listening to the prologue, the personae will begin the fabula arriving at the *domus* of L. Fabricius Veiento. Veiento and his son will receive them in the black-marbled atrium. After a brief stroll through the *domus*, past the courtyard, fountain and ornamental gardens, the personae will be led into the dining room [*triclinium*] to their assigned couches.

Veiento's *domus* is situated in the center of town, among public buildings, the old Basilica to the north, the Temple of Rome and Augustus to the east and the Temple of Volcanus to the west. The *domus* is entered from a road to the south. The entrance to the atrium is accentuated by two marble pilasters, and unlike many of the less fashionable *domi*, is not stuccoed. The atrium it-



[—]=5 feet

self is decorated with the wax masks of Veiento's ancestors, a very traditional Roman custom. The atrium continues as a courtyard surrounded by a black and white geometric mosaic floor. In the center of the courtyard is a marble fountain with four niches filled with bronze statues of four-armed, lion-headed Axumite deities which were acquired by Veiento when he was a legionary in the Aethiopian campaigns. The *lararium* is a room used for the worship of Veiento's household gods.

Since this is a formal dinner [*cena*], three couches have been arranged in the traditional manner around a square table, one side being left free for service. Each couch seats three people. For the party, this is the seating chart:

Persona	Position
Pertinax	Medius III
Camilla	Medius II
Iulianus	Medius I
Veiento	Imus I
Ferax	Imus II
Rufus	Imus III
Ulpia	Summus I
Valens	Summus II
Epizelus	Summus III

If playing the fabula with fewer than seven personae, fill the spaces with other personae such as Lysimachus (see p. 158 in CHAPTER VIII: BELLUM) or Silvanus (see p. 131 in CHAPTER VII: LUDI).

Dinner consists of three courses. Each dish should be described in appearance, smell and taste. Be as outlandish as you wish. An asterisk (*) in the table below signifies the use of a rare spice.

Course	Dishes
Appetizers [<i>Gustatio</i>]	Peacock's eggs White peppered* sausage in a ring Baian oysters "Veiento" (flavored with white wine, laurel leaves and juniper berries) Artichoke hearts and olives <i>Mulsum</i> , a warm honey wine (spiced with <i>malabathron</i> *)
Main Courses [<i>Primae Mensae</i>]	Hare in rich wine sauce Lobster in saffron* Roast pork with green peppercorns* Wild crane with peas and mushrooms Halibut pancakes with fish sauce [<i>garum</i>] Stewed fennel, leeks and onions Velletrian wine (from the Memmius Estate in the Alban Hills)
Desserts [<i>Secundae Mensae</i>]	White cheeses "Hesperides Fruit Tree" (a gold-leaved branch adorned with fresh fruit) Honey and date pastries Falernian <i>setinum</i> spiced with myrrh* and cassia*

Between mouthfuls of food, unsophisticated puns and boring stories of ancestral exploits, the personae should engage Veiento, his son (and his other guests, if applicable) in conversation, with subtle inquiries into Veiento's commercial enterprises. Veiento will attempt to steer the conversation away from the pepper trade in favor of lauding his adopted son's numerous qualities.

CHAPTER X FABULAE

Those with a Wine skill rating of at least 3 will be able to tell which wines have been served. Any wine connoisseurs will impress Veiento; he will challenge one of them to identify the wine served with the main course. The player must succeed on a (I + Wine) Action roll to identify the wine. Consult the following special Effect table to determine a result:

Tali Roll	Result
Senio or One Pair	Persona knows it is a very good Velletrian wine
Two Pair or Three of a Kind	Persona knows it is from the Alban Hills
Venus or Vultures	Persona knows it is from the Memmius Estate in the Alban Hills

Also, during the dinner party, have any persona with the Magic skill to roll against (I + Magic). If successful, read the following passage to the player in private:

A strange ring on Veiento's finger catches your attention. At first you think it is an heirloom from his ancestors. Suddenly, you realize that the ring is the ring of a *haruspex*, or Etruscan diviner. You then begin to notice magical graffiti carved on some of the floors and the walls. In fact, the entire home seems to be arranged to control contain arcane forces. Perhaps you are being paranoid, but something is very odd....

If the players probe Veiento, he will reveal the following background information:

The Pepper Trade

Veiento will display a considerable lack of knowledge about the spice trade. He will be unable to identify the rare spices in many of the special dishes offered to the guests. He will rely on Iulianus to supply information about spices, his trade routes and business partners. He will mention his main spice warehouse near the banks of the Tiber. He will invite the personae to visit him at any time at his offices in the Forum of Ceres.

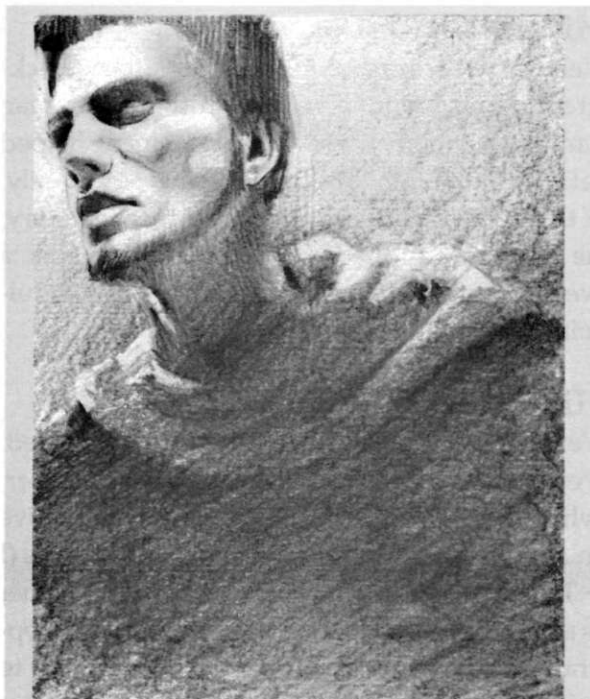
His Military Career

Veiento will brag about his legionary background and his involvement in the Aethiopian campaign, notably how his detachment helped take the city of Axumis almost single-handedly. If the personae are willing to hear this war story, he will reveal the fact that he served as a weapons officer [*fulminatus*] and jury-rigged fulminata cartridges to create an explosive.

His Family

Veiento will reveal that his son is adopted. Veiento still employs Iulianus' birth father, whom he first met in Africa, as his representative in Adulis. A successful roll against a persona's (I + Trade) skill roll will recall that Iulianus' father is a member of an unsavory Greek mercantile operation, but do not volunteer the opportunity to roll. If no persona succeeds, then convey this information via dream (see Scene Two). Veiento will also let slip that his father was an Etruscan diviner [*haruspex*].

Between the main courses and desserts, Veiento's chief bodyguard, the Greek Peisandros, will interrupt the festivities by positioning himself close to Veiento's ear and whispering, "Everything is set. The ship will be loaded and set sail by dawn." Personae sitting in positions Medius III or Imus II who wish to eavesdrop on the conversation should make a (I + Stealth) roll. Veiento will nod to Iulianus, who will exit with the Greek. Personae who wish to follow must make a successful (A + Customs (Patrician)) roll or (A + Stealth) roll to escape the party. Iulianus and Peisandros will be discussing security measures for an upcoming export of spice. Let the personae who overhear this discussion come to their own conclusions as to what this means. It should seem strange that a spice importer should be making arrangements to ship spice out of Ostia by sea vessel. After dinner, Veiento will see the personae out and make sure that they have a slave escort back to the *domus* of Viridorix.



PEISANDROS

Rank: Foreigner

Occupation: Bodyguard [*Comitatus*]

Attributes: I8, A13, P7, V14

Humors: X3 (Wrathful)

MP:0, WP: 14/28, **HP:** 3

Patron: Mars

Skills: *Box 3, *Gladius 6, *Guard 6, *Pankration 5, *Pilum 5, City 3, Command 4, Language (Greek) 2, Language (Latin) 2, Move (Climb) 2, Move (Jump) 2, Move (March) 2, Spear 3, Stealth 3, Trick 2, Wrestle 3

Background: Peisandros, along with five other Greek auxiliaries fighting in Aethiopia, deserted a scant three years into their 30-year service to Rome. One of his first commissions as a mercenary was to defend three merchant vessels owned by Iulianus' father from an angry mob. Soaked in blood from head to toe, standing on the docks slippery with gore, he made quite an impression on the young Iulianus (age 10) and a legionary named Veiento. For many years, Peisandros worked for Veiento by guarding his facilities in Adulis. Now that the memory of the Aethiopian campaigns are fading from Roman memory, Veiento has recalled Peisandros to provide security for his operations in Ostia. Peisandros is a disciplined warrior and expects the guards under his command to behave as soldiers. He does not tolerate fools or cowards. Believing that women should be seen and not heard, he despises the *Cohors Amazona*.

SCENE Two— THE WAREHOUSES [*Horrea*]

To store grain, wine, oil and other goods, Ostia has warehouses [*horrea*] constructed of stone or wood with tile roofs. Timber floors are raised to keep out vermin and to circulate air for humidity and temperature control. While most warehouses are Imperial property, especially those that contain grain, some are privately owned. During the reign of Domitian, special warehouses, *horrea piperatoria*, for storing pepper from the Malabar coast were erected in Ostia along the banks of the Tiber. While many warehouses are simple structures, Veiento's consists of a central courtyard with showrooms on the ground floor and offices above. Burlap sacks of pepper are stored here. In the offices above, Veiento is storing sacks of fulminata labeled as Naviculari Adulini pepper.

Peisandros and his renegade auxiliaries guard Veiento's wares; they are stationed around all entrances to the warehouses and patrol the wharves. After the dinner party, the personae may try the following tactics to discover the true nature of Veiento's trading enterprise:

Actions	Rolls
Creating a Diversion to Muscle into Warehouse	V + Strategy
Flashing Official Papers and Walking In	P + Command
Breaking into the Warehouse	V + Stealth
Eavesdropping on Guards	A + Stealth
Seducing a Guard	V + Seduce
Questioning a Guard	V + Interrogate
Examining the Dock for Evidence	1 + Trade
Befriending a Sailor at a Local Wine Bar	P + Customs (Plebeian)
Pretending to be an Envoy from Veiento	P + Theater or 1 + Trick
Simulating Veiento's Voice	P + Magic + Magpie

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It should become evident that the pepper trade, although profitable, is a front for Veiento's more lucrative fulminata smuggling. Veiento is not content to build wealth for his future generations; he wants the Senator rank within his lifetime. The elevation to Equestrian rank is the first step. Although he believes that the Imperium's monopoly on fulminata is doomed anyway, Veiento does differentiate between making a profit from its sale and selling the secret to Serica (China). He only trades in the finished product; his loyalty to the Imperium prevents him from divulging the formula. He continues the official charade by insisting to his Serican buyers that the fulminata is mined from volcanoes. Regardless, there is a ban on the sale or export of fulminata to civilians, especially non-citizens. For that, Veiento is guilty of dealing in contraband.

If Iulianus's family background did not surface during the dinner party, Epizelus will awake from a bad dream. Read the following passage to the persona:

You awake, drenched in cold sweat. You have been dreaming of your childhood, and the stories your father told you. In particular, you remember the tale of how your family lost its life savings after investing it in a mercantile venture with a consortium of Greek merchants. You now remember where you have heard of Iulianus' name; he is part of that disreputable group that fleeced you of your birthright.

The next morning, a panting messenger with a bundle of scrolls for Pertinax will arrive at the home of Viridorix. These are the official documents promised by Macrinus in the prologue. Anyone with both a Scribe and Administrate skill rating of 2 will realize that Veiento is worth more than 400,000 sesterces, the minimum required to be elevated to the Equestrian rank. His bank accounts and land holdings seem to add up to over three million sesterces, enough to be a

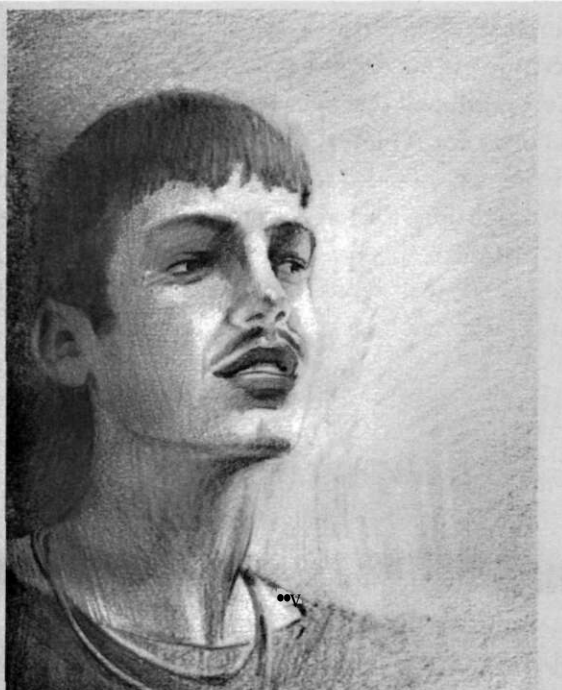
Senator three times over. A more intense scrutiny, a successful (I + Administrate) or (I + Coin) roll, will discover that most of the financial records for Veiento's operation seem normal. However, beside some of the more lucrative transactions, there is a small dot; all of these records are to one "Roman" buyer—LVXAN, definitely foreign and most definitely not a familiar Roman name.

SCENE THREE— THE FORUM OF CERES *[Forum Cereale]*

Behind the Theater of Agrippa in Ostia is the magnificent Forum of Ceres *[Forum Cereale]*, an open plaza surrounded by colonnades and over sixty offices *[stationes]* of various local and overseas merchants, the majority involved with the grain trade. The *stationes* are elaborately decorated with mosaic floors depicting the names and symbols of the guilds *[collegia]* that operate in the Forum. Besides grain merchants, the Forum is also home to tanners, rope makers, ship builders, timber merchants and wild animal importers.

In the center of the square is the Temple of Ceres, a small but elegant building dedicated to the goddess of the harvest, a fitting centerpiece to a Forum that concerns itself with the all important grain trade. The main cargo coming into Rome through Ostia is wheat from Africa. The wheat supply official *[quaestor annonae]* oversees the free distribution of grain rations to poorer Roman citizens in order to prevent social unrest.

As the chief representative in Ostia of the guild that controls the pepper trade in the Mediterranean, Veiento can be found at *statio* 13 between the Naviculari Hippone Diarryto and the Naviculari Sabratini, both traders of wild animals and ivory. The black and white mosaic on the floor of



IULIANUS

Rank: Plebeian

Occupation: Merchant [*Mercator*]

Attributes: I11, A11, P7, VII

Humors: X1 (Confident)

MP: 0, WP: 11/22, HP: 3

Patron: Mercurius

Skills: *Coin 5, Thief 4, Trade 5, Trick 5, Customs (Patrician) 2, Customs (Plebeian) 3, Dice 3, Gladius 3, Language (Greek) 3, Language (Latin) 2, Machines 2, Pilum 2, Sail 3, Sea 3, Stealth 3, Tormentum 2

Background: Lucius Fabricius Veiento Iulianus is the natural son of an unscrupulous Greek merchant who took advantage of wartime scarcities to build a fortune. Veiento met Iulianus' father when he was stationed in Axumis during the Aethiopian campaigns. At first, Iulianus' father and Veiento pursued a legitimate business enterprise: the importation of pepper from the Malabar coast in India. The business venture prospered and it was clear that Iulianus' future was a Roman one. Veiento arranged to adopt Iulianus as his heir. The idea to sell fulminata to the Sericans was Iulianus', but both his real and adopted father were attracted to the prospect immediately. Hiding behind the pepper guild was easy—enormous profits can be readily explained due to the appetites of wealthy Romans. Iulianus was preparing to convey a large shipment to the Serican agent, Lu Xan, just as Veiento received news that an imperial delegation was coming to personally interview him.

a pepper vine and Indian tiger both promotes the merchandise for sale and its exotic origins. Here Veiento conducts all of his public business in spices; he prefers to carry out his clandestine trades in the baths [*thermae*] or his private home. Veiento is a cautious man; his Greek bodyguards always accompany him.

The personae should encounter Veiento at the height of the market day. Even though it is the winter, the traders are busier than ever, preparing for the millennial festivities. The Forum will be packed with agents, merchants and local buyers. Because of the overflow of goods in the warehouses, some of the wares will be on display or carried about by porters or sailors, items such as sacks of wheat, wheat measures [*modii*] and little shovels [*rutella*], cords of rope, ivory tusks or planks of cedar. There will also be some wild animals (lions, crocodiles, elephants) in cages or tethered (See p. 128 in CHAPTER VII: LUDI for statistics on wild animals).

Having uncovered Veiento's smuggling operation, the personae will (or should be persuaded to) attempt to find Veiento to arrest him for high treason. If the personae did not learn where his offices were in the course of the dinner party, then they will need to make other inquiries by attempting a (P + Customs) roll on passing citizens.

Warned by his spies, Veiento has prepared for the personae. He will have sent word to Iulianus to ready his ship as quickly as possible. Veiento will be waiting in his office with a loaded pilum and a small shadowy figure crouching beside him. This is a Servant of Tuchulcha, a summoned demon to protect him. If the personae give him time to talk, he will begin secretly casting the Maggot spell to incapacitate the personae. Else, he will order the Servant to attack Pertinax and fire his pilum at the closest legionary. This combined with the crowds of busy porters, disgruntled Greek auxiliaries loyal to Veiento, and half-starved wild animals should be a volatile enough combination to rival fulminata.

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SCENE FOUR— THE TIBER [*Tiberis*]

Hopefully, the personae will emerge victorious from the Forum Cereale and interpret from Veiento's dying words that Iulianus is preparing the ship for departure by unfurling sails, jettisoning unnecessary weight and pulling up the anchors. Peisandros and any Greek auxiliaries who were incapacitated instead of killed during **Scene Two** will be on board nursing wounds and grudges.

A complicating factor is that Iulianus is carrying enough sacks of fulminata in the hold to make the ship a powder keg. If an errant shot pierces the hull, the fulminata has a good chance of igniting and exploding, killing all aboard. If hand-to-hand struggle ensues on the deck of the ship, oil lamps and torches will fall to the deck and set fire to the ship. The flames will reach the hold in 15 game turns, setting off the fulminata with disastrous results.

EPILOGUE

The personae should be congratulated for uncovering a nefarious plot to undermine Rome's monopoly on fulminata. Veiento's assets are now the property of the Imperial government, but the Emperor might be inclined to be a little generous to the brave legionaries. Each persona should receive 1 free skill point and 1 point in either Trade, Food, Customs (Patrician), Law or Trick.

WRITING YOUR OWN FABULAE

"Many poets tie the knot well, but unravel it ill.

Both arts, however, should always be mastered."

—Aristotle, *Poetics* XVIII

The following section will help you write your own FVLMINATA fabulae. We are assuming that you are already comfortable with the demands of GMing a role-playing game. This section deals with constructing fabulae that are uniquely suited to the world of FVLMINATA.

Although your personae will, no doubt, have their successes and failures, FVLMINATA is not about winning and losing. The game was written with several goals in mind, but playing it ought to have but one objective: to have fun. Exploring the details and possibilities of an alternate history should only be tools to achieving an enjoyable time with friends.

The game of FVLMINATA will usually consist of one or more fabulae, constructed by the GM, revolving around a set of personae, portrayed by the players. To build high-quality fabulae, FVLMINATA, like the Romans themselves, looks to one of the most groundbreaking works on the subject: Aristotle's *Poetics*. You'll see how to build solid fabulae that are of an organic whole.

One thing to keep in mind is that FVLMINATA is different from other role-playing games you may have played in more ways than simply its setting. It works best with different types of fab-

ulae than many role-playing games. The game is not about crawling through ancient ruins and battling fantastic creatures. The Imperium is a living, thriving civilization with plenty of human-driven conflict to resolve. This is not to say that *FVLMINATA* lacks danger or excitement. Tales of action and adventure have a place near to the game's heart. Additionally, the Imperium provides an ideal setting for fabulae of intrigue and political maneuvering. Political alliances, military campaigns, provincial corruption, oppressed peoples, secret societies, avaricious merchants and power-hungry Senators make the Imperium a hotbed of deals and double-crosses secured in the swirling mist of a public bath or amidst the screaming crowds of the Circus Maximus. The reality of magic and its communion with inhuman spirits opens the doorway to stories of horror, as well. The scheming of the *veneficae* and the machinations of the sorcerous colleges provide the grist for tales of terror. If *FVLMINATA* provides less combat in catacombs, it more than makes up for it in depth, diversity and detail.

THEMES

When you begin writing a fabula of your own, think about some parts of life in the Imperium that you would like to explore. The Pepper Merchant touches on Imperial law, matters of rank, the intricacies of formal dining, an overview of trade in the Mediterranean and the city of Ostia. *FVLMINATA* refers to these elements as **themes**. Themes serve to expand the players' perceptions of the Imperium, making the world seem larger and more real. If the section on theater in CHAPTER VII: LUDI appeals to you, set one of the scenes of your fabula at a pantomime show. Each fabula should incorporate two or more different themes.

PLOT

"But most important of all is the structure of the incidents."

—Aristotle, *Poetics* VI

Themes notwithstanding, the plot of the fabula is its most important aspect. However, like the chicken and the egg, neither plot nor theme is necessarily the starting point when developing a fabula. If you have a collection of themes you wish to explore, you can interpolate a plot that connects them all. Starting with a plot, you can think about what themes it will wind its way through.

For beginning GMs, a good method of writing a fabula is borrowing the plot of another story and simply changing the setting and themes to their Roman counterparts. Not only does Roman history and Roman historical fiction provide inspiration for this, but virtually any story can be adapted to a *FVLMINATA* fabula. Particularly well-suited are tales of empires and conflict, such as *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Braveheart*, *The Man Who Would Be King* and *Zulu*.

STRUCTURE

"Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is complete . . . A whole is that which has a beginning, a middle, and an end."

—Aristotle, *Poetics* VII

As Aristotle points out, each fabula must have a beginning, a middle and an ending. Each of these three parts has its own purpose. The purpose of a beginning is to introduce the personae as well as the goal they need to achieve. The Pepper Merchant handles this with the initial monologue spoken by Macrinus. It reminds the players who their personae are (a special group of le-

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gionaries) and provides them their main goal (to determine whether or not Veiento is worthy to become an Equestrian). The purpose of the ending is to show the personae achieving—or irreparably failing to achieve—their goal. It brings a sense of finality to the major threads of the story. In the Pepper Merchant, the confrontations at the forum of Ceres and on the banks of the Tiber will, unless he escapes, bring an end to the threat Veiento poses to the Imperium. The middle's purpose is to move the action from the introduction to the finale. The goal at the beginning of the Pepper Merchant is simply to evaluate Veiento. Uncovering his fulminata smuggling operation shows that he is certainly not worthy of Equestrian rank, but immediately poses a greater goal: stop his treason at all costs.

Aristotle calls this sort of discovery, when some formerly unknown fact is discovered, "revelation." Although fabulae can be straightforward and uncomplicated, the very best have one or more revelations. Revelations are tied to both the beginning and the ending and form the meat of a very important part of the story: the midpoint. Although the middle portion of the fabula will be the longest and include a number of scenes, the crux of the entire section will be the midpoint. The midpoint usually takes the form of a revelation, as in the Pepper Merchant, but its purpose is always to do one thing: at the midpoint, the personae stop being acted upon and begin acting. In the Pepper Merchant, the midpoint comes just after the raid on Veiento's warehouse and their discovery of his smuggling oper-

ation. Up until this point, they have been wined, dined and manipulated by the old *haruspex*. Now that they see he is not all that he appears, they formulate a plan of action and resolve to put an end to his traitorous ways.

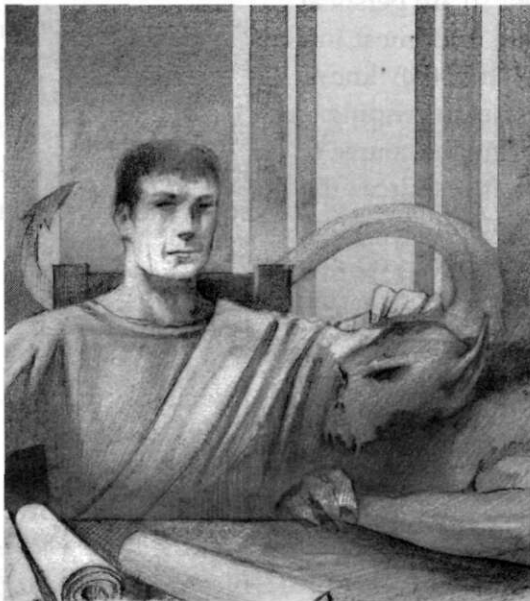
"It is therefore evident that the unravelling of the plot, no less than the complication, must arise out of the plot itself, it must not be brought about by the 'Deus ex Machina' "

-Aristotle, *Poetics* XV

Endings are a tricky business. They must be challenging and must leave the players with a sense of finality and personal responsibility. The

players must feel that they were the ones to earn this victory—or defeat. Many Greek plays ended with the *deus ex machina*, or "god from the machine," where an actor portraying a deity would be lowered onto the stage. With a wave of his divine hand, the newly arrived god would magically banish all the complications the plot had woven, ending the play quickly and unexpectedly. *Deus ex machina* endings come in a variety of packages, but

must be avoided at all cost. Common conclusions to steer clear of are: more powerful personae achieve the goal of the fabula for the players, the villain (or main obstacle) brings about his own downfall, the personae learn that the only way they could have achieved their goal was by acting on information they couldn't possibly have known. These endings leave players feeling disillusioned with the sentiment, "why did we struggle so hard through this entire fabula? It didn't get us anything."



"An end,... is that which itself naturally follows some other thing, either by necessity, or as a rule, but has nothing following it... A well constructed plot, therefore, must neither begin nor end at haphazard."

-Aristotle, *Poetics* VII

Because endings must achieve a sense of closure, the seeds of the ending must be planted throughout the fabula. To accomplish this, it is helpful to think about what resources your personae have at their disposal. A resource, simply put, is anything that the player can use to affect the game world, or to move the story along. A persona's skills are a type of resource, but so are personal contacts, money and equipment and, most importantly, pieces of information that they know. When designing a fabula, envision the ending—even though it may change during the course of play—and then determine what resources the personae will need to bring that climax about. With a list of the resources needed, you can shape the beginning and middle sections of the fabula to provide those resources to the personae.

Using the Pepper Merchant as an example, the confrontations in the forum of Ceres and at the banks of the Tiber require the personae to have the following resources: knowledge of the location of Veiento's office, that one of his shipments is leaving in the morning, that Veiento is smuggling fulminata, the legal authority to act on these crimes and the physical capacity to enforce their decision. The first two pieces of information can be learned at the dinner scene. Also in the dinner scene are a number of discrepancies that spark the players' curiosity, leading them to investigate the warehouse, where they discover Veiento's fulminata smuggling. The legal authority is given to Pertinax during the prologue in the form of temporary *imperium*. Finally, the combat skills of the personae give them the physicality necessary to bring about the climax.

CONFLICT

"If an enemy kills an enemy, there is nothing to excite pity either in the act or the intention, ... So again with indifferent persons. But when the tragic incident occurs between those who are near or dear to one another—if, for example, a brother kills, or intends to kill, a brother, a son his father, a mother her son, a son his mother, or any other deed of the kind is done—these are the situations to be looked for by the poet."

-Aristotle, *Poetics* XTV

Fabulae are all about conflict. Conflict occurs when two personae want things that are incompatible. There are two types of conflict to employ: internal and external. Internal conflict deals with conflicts either within a persona's own personality or within their close circle of associates. As such, they are often of a more personal nature. External conflicts originate outside the personae's personal group. In general, external conflicts will drive the plot while internal conflicts will add spice and depth to them. In the Pepper Merchant the external conflict is between Veiento's desire to continue his smuggling and the personae's desire to put a stop to it. The internal conflict involves Pertinax, Camilla and Ferax and their love triangle. Both types of conflict are important. Internal conflict without external becomes the stuff of soap operas. External conflict without internal to provide meaning becomes a dry exercise in tactics and tali rolling.

Internal conflict springs from the personae's strongest desires. These are called motivation. Each persona should have his own motivation, or goal he strives toward. Working the fabula around the motivations of the personae gives it emotional depth. The story becomes more than "just another assignment" and becomes personal. Try to tie different parts of the fabula to the motivations of different personae. In the Pepper Merchant, the prologue that lays out the main

CHAPTER X FABULAE

plot uses Pertinax's and Camilla's political motivations and desire to please Macrinus as hooks to draw them deeper into the story. Later on, Rufus or Epizelus recalls that relatives of Veiento's adopted son swindled his family. His desire for justice pulls him closer to the plot. In the final confrontations, Camilla will probably be in danger. Ferax's devotion to her makes these scenes more than simple battles; they are vitally important. Using motivations wisely is vital in making your players feel that they are actively affecting the outcome of the adventure and not merely an audience watching your fabula unfold.

MANAGING RANK

One of the particular challenges of *FVLMINATA* originates in the social structure of the Imperium. The atmosphere around the gaming table can turn from fun to awkward to angry very quickly in a setting where some players' personae can own other players' personae. The easiest way to handle this is, of course, to limit all the personae to be of the same rank, or within one rank of each other. However, depending on the dynamics of your own group of players, much can be gained by using personae of different ranks. If one of your players is either a natural leader or good-naturedly unobtrusive, your game could cast that player as a wealthy citizen who owns the other personae. If no one around the table minds this arrangement, it could set up a deeply involved series of fabulae. All the personae would be dedicated to the prosperity of their household, and there are many places where Slaves can travel unnoticed that a Senator cannot.

massive Colosseum in Rome, the bizarre, ancient pyramids in Aegyptus, or the pillars of Hercules at the mouth of the Mediterranean. Choosing the right setting for the right scene depends greatly on the **mood** you want to achieve in the scene. In the Pepper Merchant, the first scene takes place at a formal dinner to evoke a mood of luxury, but, like the awkward legionaries in their fresh togas, something hides behind Veiento's respectable facade. The climax at the forum of Ceres is built for a mood of confusion and chaos. The busy porters and wild animals create the numerous distractions necessary to evoke the chaotic mood.

DESCRIPTION

It is the job of the GM to be the five senses of the personae when describing the scene. The easiest way to achieve this when setting a new scene is cite the most obvious thing to each sense. For example, upon entering the forum of Ceres and approaching Veiento's stall, you might describe:

You head toward the brightly colored mosaic of the tiger and the pepper vine, dodging porters as you go. The din of bustling slaves, shouted orders and the occasional roar of a tethered lion is amplified by the hard stonework. You catch the strong, but not overpowering, reek of animal dung as you pass the stall next to Veiento's. The taste of exotic spices, reminiscent of last night's feast, hangs on the breeze as Veiento's bodyguards motion you to stop. The air is cool but damp, like your cold, clammy palms as you stare into the dim confines of Veiento's stall.

SETTING

The Imperium provides countless settings to host the scenes of your fabulae. Some, like the steamy, secretive baths, the bustling forums and the raucous circuses, can be found throughout the Imperium. Others are unique, such as the

GAMEMASTER PERSONAE

While each player will generally be portraying but one persona, it falls to the GM to manage the population of the rest of the Imperium. With so many potential roles to enact, you must prioritize which ones are most important to the fabula. Key

personae, such as the major antagonists, should be just as detailed in their game statistics, background and motivation as the players' personae. Thus, in the Pepper Merchant, Veiento, Iulianus and Peisandros are fully detailed. Personae that are met in passing, or tangential to the plot can be simply given an occupation and assumed to have attributes of 10 a few skills at 3 or 4. Veiento's other bodyguards, as well as passing porters and the like fall into this category. Other personae will need to have well-detailed backgrounds without complete game statistics. Although the complete persona description of Macrinus can be found on p. 77, for purposes of the Pepper Merchant, you need only know that he is a very powerful Senator and the father of Camilla.

POST-GAME WRAP UP

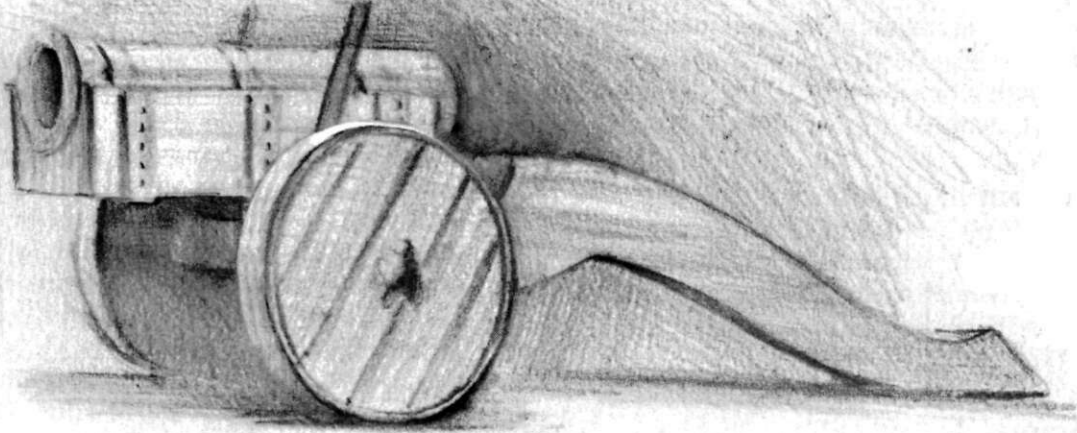
If possible, try to end each session of play a few minutes before everyone has to leave. Talk about the game with your players. Ask them what they really think and what their personae plan to do next. This sort of feedback is vital to tailoring your fabulae to the interests of your group. If none of your players like the gladiatorial pits, change the setting. However, be certain not to punish the players for sharing their ideas with you. If you do, your feedback will quickly dry up.

SKILL POINTS

At the end of each fabula, the GM should award each persona with 1 free skill point. If the fabula was particularly intriguing, difficult or instructive, the GM may raise this award to 2 free skill points. The personae add the new skill point to the "Unused Skill Points" section of their persona sheet, and may spend it just as they did during persona creation: to decrease an unbalanced

humor by 1 or to raise a skill or spell rating. Remember that if your persona has had a successful unskilled use of a skill, at least one unused skill point must be spent on this skill, provided that the persona has met all of the skill's prerequisites at a skill level of 3. If not, you must spend the skill point in either acquiring or raising one of the prerequisite skills. Additionally, the GM should award each persona with 1 skill point that must be spent on a skill related to one of the themes of the fabula. The GM has the final decision on what skill qualify as related to the themes of the fabula. For instance, the skills related to the themes of the Pepper Merchant are Trade, Food, Customs (Patrician), Law and Trick.

The GM may opt to reward the personae with prizes other than skill points. An increase in rank, a favorable marriage contract, a book of arcane lore, a profitable trading contract, or a new plantation can all be seen as rewards to the personae for their hard work. Such rewards can, at the GM's discretion, take the place the skill points generally awarded at the end of the fabula. However, keep in mind that such rewards should represent a significant improvement in the persona's situation over and above what it was before the fabula began. For example, if the GM spins a fabula about a Freedman who is unjustly accused, the persona may be reduced to Slave during the fabula. The thrust of the fabula would be for the persona to clear his name and regain his Freedman rank. In such a case, the GM should award skill points. Regaining something that the persona had (the Freedman rank) is not its own reward. However, if the same persona played through a fabula in which he saved the life of a wealthy Senator, and the Senator, in gratitude, sponsored him for Plebeian rank, the GM might consider the new rank sufficient award for the fabula.



TRAINING

Normally, skill points are spent at the end of a fabula, representing lessons learned or formal instruction. However, unused skill points need not be spent immediately. Personae with the Train skill are capable of imparting knowledge of a skill to a willing learner with unused skill points in the middle of a fabula. On a successful action roll using the Train skill, the trainer can teach an audience the basics of any skill the trainer possesses, up to the rating of that skill, provided that the audience members possess an unused skill point. Under combat situations, learners may only raise skill rating by 1 point. Spells may also be taught in this manner, but instead of one turn for the emergency lesson, the trainer must spend the amount of time indicated in the Complexity of the spell. Note that many spells, even at an initial rating of—1, will cost more than 1 skill point.

Example: During a siege, fulminata explosives have been set to undermine the city walls. The defenders mount a successful counterattack, pushing the legionary demolitions team back before they

could ignite the fuse. Valens, a young fulminatus, volunteers to return to light the powder. Vettius, a senior fulminatus who has been injured in the fighting smiles at Valens, acknowledges his bravery and offers to teach Valens the spell *Lightbringer* so that the fuse can be lit from a safe distance. Luckily, Valens has a free skill point. Vettius must make an action roll ($1 + \text{Train}$) in order to teach Valens the spell. If Vettius succeeds, Valens will spend his unused skill point to acquire the spell *Lightbringer* at a rating of-1.

FUN AND FLEXIBILITY

In short, the watchword for GMing a game of *FVLMINATA* should be FUN. If any rule or guideline gets in the way of fun, ignore it. If your players want to cast Rome as an evil empire oppressing innocent indigenous peoples, go with it. A game book cannot change to suit the character of your own gaming group. The GM has to be flexible, to know when to bend and when to stand firm to enhance the enjoyment of everyone.

APPEDIX A: ROMAN NAMES

The following are sample names for male personae. Remember that most *nomina* or *cognomina* may be feminized to form a female name by replacing the suffix -us with -a:

Praenomen (Abbreviation):

Appius (Ap.), Aulus (A.), Decimus (D.), Gaius (C), Gnaeus (Cn.), Lucius (L.), Manius (Man.), Marcus (M.), Numerius (N.), Publius (P.), Quintus (Q.), Servius (Ser.), Sextus (Sex.), Spurius (S.), Tiberius (TL), Titus (T.), Vibius (V.)

Nomen

Acilius, Aebutius, Aedinius, Albanus, Allectus, Amatus, Antius, Antonius, Arminius, Arrius, Artorius, Ateius, Atius, Atilius, Atrius, Attius, Aufidius, Augustus, Aulus, Aurelius, Ausonius, Atronus, Avidius, Barrius, Billennius, Blandius, Aruccius, Bruttius, Calatorius, Calidius, Calpurnius, Calventius, Calvinus, Camillus, Caprenius, Carius, Caristanus, Cassianus, Celatus, Cippius, Claudius, Clodius, Clovius, Cluntius, Cominius, Cordius, Cornelius, Cosconius, Crispus, Curius, Curtius, Decumius, Desticius, Dexius, Didius, Dillius, Domitius, Dossenius, Drusus, Duccius, Duronius, Egnatius, Epidius, Equitius, Fabius, Fabricius, Fadius, Falerius, Faventinus, Favonius, Fenius, Festinius, Flaccus, Flavius, Flavinius, Flavonius, Floridius, Florius, Floronius, Francus, Fulcinus, Fulvius, Fundanus, Gabinius, Galenus, Galerius, Gallus, Gavius, Gellius, Granius, Gratus, Gratidius, Helvetius, Helvius, Herennius, Herius, Herminius, Horatius, Hortensius, Hosidius, Hostilius, Iulius, Iunius, Iustus, Iuventius, Laetorius, Lafrenius, Lampronius, Liburnius, Licinius, Ligustinus, Livius, Lollius, Longinus, Loreius, Lucius, Lucilius, Lusius, Macrinus, Maecilius, Maelius, Mallius, Mamilius, Manlius, Manilius, Marcius, Marius, Matius, Maximus, Memmius, Messienus, Metilius, Milonius, Minucius, Modius, Mucius, Munatius, Munius, Murrius, Naevius, Nasennius, Nemotorius, Nepius, Nigidius, Nigilius, Nipius, Norbanus, Novius, Numerius, Olcinus, Oppius, Opsius, Oranius, Otacilius, Papellius, Papinius, Papirius, Pa-

pianus, Peltrius, Pescennius, Petellius, Petilius, Petillius, Petronius, Pinarus, Piscius, Pistentius, Placidus, Plautius, Plinius, Plotius, Pollius, Pomponius, Pomptinus, Pontidius, Pontius, Popidius, Portius, Postumius, Paesentius, Publicus, Pupius, Quintilius, Quintus, Quirinius, Rabirius, Rufius, Rufinus, Rufrius, Rufus, Rusonius, Rutilius, Sabucius, Sacerdos, Sallustius, Salonus, Salvius, Scribonius, Secundinius, Secundius, Seius, Sempronius, Sennius, Sentius, Septimius, Sepunius, Sepurcius, Sergius, Servilius, Sestius, Sextilius, Sextius, Sidonius, Silius, Sittius, Socellius, Sornatius, Spurius, Statius, Statilius, Stertinus, Suedius, Sulpicius, Tadius, Talmudius, Tanicius, Tertinius, Tetius, Titius, Titinius, Trebatius, Trebellius, Tremellius, Tuccius, Tullius, Ulpianus, Ulpus, Umbrenius, Urgulanius, Uulius, Vagionius, Vagnius, Valerius, Valgus, Varius, Vassinus, Vatinius, Veditius, Velius, Velvius, Veranius, Verecundius, Vergilius, Verus, Vesnius, Vesuvius, Vibenius, Vibidius, Victricius, Viducius, Vinicius, Vipsanius, Viridius, Virius, Vitruvius, Volcatius, Volumnius, Volusenus

Cognomen

Abercius, Abito, Acacius, Acaunus, Acilianus, Adauctus, Adepphius, Adiutor, Adranos, Adventus, Aeacus, Aebutus, Afer, Africanus, Agaptus, Agatopus, Agelastus, Agorix, Agricola, Agrippa, Agustalis, Ahala, Albinus, Albinus, Albucius, Alethius, Allobrogicus, Aloysius, Aluredes, Alympius, Amandus, Amantius, Ambrosius, Amor, Amphion, Anatolius, Ancus, Andronicus, Angelus, Antius, Anullinus, Apelles, Apellinus, Aper, Apollonarius, Aponius, Aquila, Aquilius, Aquillius, Aratus, Arcadius, Arcavus, Archarius, Arius, Armiger, Arpagius, Arrianus, Arruntius, Aruns, Arvina, Asellio, Asiaticus, Asina, Asprenas, Asprenus, Assanius, Articus, Audaios, Audens, Augendus, Augurnus, Augurius, Augustalis, Augustanus, Augustus, Auila, Aurelianus, Aurelius, Ausonius, Auspex, Auxentius, Auxientius, Auxilius, Avienus, Avitus, Balbillus, Balbus, Balduinus, Balearicus, Bambalio, Bamballio, Banquerius, Barbatus, Baro, Bassus, Bato, Belenus, Belisarius, Bella-

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tor, Belletor, Bellicus, Bellus, Bestia, Betto, Bibaculus, Bibulus, Bitucus, Blandus, Bodenius, Bolanus, Bonifatius, Bonosus, Bonus, Bradua, Briganticus, Britannicus, Brocchus, Bromidus, Bruccius, Bruceus, Bruscus, Brutus, Bubo, Buccio, Bulla, Burcanus, Burrus, Buteo, Caecilianus, Caecina, Caecus, Caelistis, Caelestius, Caelianus, Caelinus, Caelus, Caepio, Caerellius, Caesar, Calacicus, Calatinus, Caldus, Calenus, Calerus, Caletus, Callisunus, Calogerus, Calpornius, Calpurnianus, Calpurnius, Calvinus, Calvus, Camerius, Camillus, Carnpanus, Candidianus, Candidus, Candidius, Canio, Canisius, Cantaber, Capita, Capiton, Caprarius, Caracurus, Carantus, Carbo, Carinus, Carisius, Carius, Carnifex, Cams, Casca, Cassianus, Castinus, Castorius, Castus, Catianus, Catilina, Cato, Catonius, Catullus, Catulus, Catus, Cecilianus, Celer, Celsus, Cenaeus, Cencius, Censorinus, Censorius, Centumalus, Cerialis, Cerinthus, Cerularius, Cervianus, Cervidus, Cethegus, Chlorus, Christianus, Cicero, Cico, Cimber, Cinna, Cinnianus, Cita, Cittinus, Civilis, Clarus, Classicianus, Claudianus, Clemens, Clement, Clodian, Clodianus, Cogitatus, Colias, Collatinus, Columbanus, Columella, Comes, Comitianus, Comitinus, Commidius, Commidus, Commius, Commodus, Concessus, Congrio, Constans, Constantius, Corbulo, Cordus, Cornix, Cornutus, Corvinus, Cosmas, Cotentinus, Cotta, Crassus, Cremutius, Crescentius, Cresces, Creticus, Crispian, Crispin, Crispus, Crito, Crotilo, Cucuphas, Culleolus, Cumanus, Cunobarrus, Cupitas, Curio, Cyprianus, Cyprias, Cyricus, Dalmaticus, Dalmatius, Dama, Damasippus, Damasus, Damian, Dannicus, Dardanius, Dardanus, Decentius, Decianus, Decmitius, Decmus, Dexion, Dexippus, Didicus, Dignus, Dio, Diocletianus, Diocourides, Disertus, Docilinus, Docilus, Dolabella, Dominicus, Domitianus, Donatianus, Donatus, Donicus, Dorotheus, Drusillus, Drusus, Dubitatus, Dulcitus, Durio, Durus, Duvianus, Eborius, Eburnus, Ecdicius, Eclectus, Egbuttius, Egnatius, Elerius, Eliphas, Elpidius, Elvorix, Emeritus, Encratis, Ennecus, Ennius, Ennodius, Eonus, Epidianus, Epimachus, Epolonius, Erasinus, Esdras, Eudomius, Eudoxius, Eugenius, Eugenus, Eulogius, Eumenius, Eupapius, Euphemius, Eustacius, Eutherius, Evodius, Excingus, Exsupereus, Exuperantius, Exupertus, Fabianus, Fabillus, Facilis, Fadus, Fagus, Falco, Falconius, Falx, Famia, Familiaris, Fastidius, Faustillus, Faustinianus, Faustinus, Faustus, Felicissimus,

Felissimus, Felix, Ferax, Ferentinus, Ferreolius, Festus, Fidelis, Figulus, Fimbria, Fimus, Firminus, Firmus, Flaccus, Flavian, Flavianus, Flavillus, Flavinus, Florens, Florentius, Florianus, Florus, Forianus, Fortunatus, Fraucus, Fredisius, Frigidian, Frontalis, Frontinus, Pronto, Fructosis, Frugi, Frugius, Frumentius, Fullofaudes, Fulvianus, Furrius, Fuscinus, Fuscus, Gaetulicus, Gaianus, Gaius, Gala, Galarius, Galerius, Gallicus, Callus, Galvisius Garilianus, Gaurus, Gavros, Gavrus, Gelasius, Gellius, Gemellus, Geminianus, Generidus, Genesis, Genialis, Gennadius, Gerardus, Germanus, Germanicus, Gessius, Geta, Getha, Glabrio, Glaucia, Globulus, Gluvias, Glycia, Gordian, Gordianus, Gordio, Gorgonius, Gracchus, Gracilis, Gratian, Gratidianus, Gregorius, Grumio, Gualterus, Habitus, Hadrianus, Hardalio, Haterius, Helveticus, Helvius, Herculijs, Herenus, Herma, Hermia, Hesychius, Hiberus, Hilario, Hilaris, Hilarius, Hirpinus, Hirrus, Homullus, Honoratus, Horatius, Hortensis, Hortensius, Hortensus, Hosidius, Humilus, Hybrida, Iacomus, Igennus, Ignatius, Indaletius, Indus, Ingenuus, Ingenvinus, locundus, lovinus, Irenaeus, Isatis, Isauricus, Italicus, Ianuarus, Iavolenus, Iovinianus, Iovinus, Iovius, Italicus, Iuba, Iulian, Iulianus, Iuncinus, Iuncus, Iunianus, Iustianus, Iustin, Iustinianus, Iustinus, Iustus, Iuvenalis, Kaeso, Lactantius, Laeca, Laenas, Laetini-
anus, Laevinus, Larcius, Lartius, Lateranus, Latinius, Laurentius, Leddicus, Lentullus, Lentulus, Leon, Leontius, Lepidus, Lepontus, Leptis, Libanius, Liberalis, Libo, Licinianus, Licinius, Ligur, Ligustinus, Limetanus, Linus, Litorius, Littera, Litumaris, Livianus, Livigenus, Lovernianus, Lovernius, Lucan, Lucanus, Lucianus, Lucilianus, Lucretius, Luctacus, Lucullus, Lunaris, Luonerus, Lupercus, Lupicinus, Lupinus, Lupis, Lurco, Lurio, Lutherius, Lutorius, Maccalus, Macedonicus, Macrinus, Macro, Macrobius, Mactator, Maecenas, Maecius, Magnentius, Magnus, Maius, Maior, Malchus, Mallus, Maltinus, Mancinus, Manlius, Mansuetus, Marcallas, Marcellinus, Marcellus, Marcialis, Marcipor, Marinianus, Marinus, Maritimus, Marius, Maro, Marsallas, Marsicus, Marsus, Marsyas, Martial, Martialis, Martianus, Martinus, Martius, Martyrius, Marullinus, Marullus, Mater-nus, Matho, Mauricius, Maursus, Maximian, Maxi-mianus, Maximinius, Maximinus, Maximus, Medullinus, Megellus, Melissus, Melitus, Mellitus, Melus, Meminius, Memmius, Memor, Mercator,

APPENDIX A ROMAN NAMES

Mercurialis, Mercurinus, Merula, Messala, Messor, Metellus, Metilius, Metunus, Micianus, Mico, Micon, Milonius, Minervalis, Minianus, Minicianus, Moderatus, Molacus, Momus, Montanus, Montaus, Mordanticus, Mucianus, Muco, Muncius, Murena, Mus, Musa, Musicus, Mutilus, Mutius, Nabor, Naevius, Narcissus, Narses, Nasica, Naso, Natalinus, Natalis, Naucrati, Naxarius, Nectaridus, Nelius, Nemesianus, Nemnogenus, Neneus, Nennius, Nepos, Nero, Nertomarus, Nerva, Nicasius, Nicetius, Nigellus, Niger, Nigidius, Nigrinus, Niraemius, Nulus, Nonius, Noster, Novation, Novellius, Numerianus, Numidicus, Numonis, Oceanus, Octavian, Octavianus, Octobrianus, Olennius, Olympicus, Opilio, Opimius, Opis, Optatus, Orientalis, Orientius, Orissus, Orosius, Osterianus, Otho, Ovinus, Pacatianus, Pachomius, Pacuvianus, Paenula, Paetinus, Paetus, Palicamus, Pamphilius, Panaetius, Pansa, Pantensus, Pantera, Papinian, Papus, Paratus, Parnesius, Pascentius, Pastor, Paterculus, Paternus, Patiens, Patricius, Paulinus, Paullus, Pavo, Pelagius, Pennus, Peregrinus, Perennis, Perpenna, Perperna, Pertacus, Pertinax, Petasius, Petreius, Petronax, Petrus, Philippus, Photius, Pictor, Pilatus, Pilus, Pinarius, Piso, Pius, Placidus, Planta, Plautis, Plautius, Plautus, Pleminius, Pollienius, Pollio, Polus, Polybius, Pompolussa, Pomponius, Poplicola, Porcus, Porphyrius, Postumianus, Postumus, Potitus, Praetextus, Prilidianus, Primanus, Primulus, Primus, Prisca, Priscian, Priscillian, Priscillianus, Priscus, Probus, Processus, Proceus, Proculus, Procyon, Profutarius, Propertius, Protacius, Protus, Proximus, Publianus, Publicola, Pudens, Pudentius, Pulcher, Pulcherius, Pullus, Pusinnus, Pustula, Quartinus, Quarto, Quatruus, Quentin, Quietus, Quintilianus, Quintilius, Quintillus, Quiricus, Quirinalis, Rarnio, Ramirus, Ravilla, Reburus, Receptus, Rectus, Regillus, Reginus, Regulus, Remigius, Remus, Renatus, Respectus, Restitutus, Ripanus, Rogatus, Rogelius, Romanus, Romulianus, Romulus, Roscius, Rufinianus, Rufinus, Rufrius, Rufus, Rullus, Ruricius, Ruso, Rusticus, Rutilianus, Sabellius, Sabini-anus, Sabinus, Saenus, Salinator, Salonianus, Sa-

loninus, Saloni, Salvian, Salvianus, Salvius, Sanctus, Sandilianus, Sanga, Sarimarcus, Sarrius, Saturninus, Saunio, Scaevola, Scapula, Scaro, Scato, Scaurus, Schlerus, Scipio, Scribonianus, Scrofa, Sebastianus, Secundus, Segestes, Seianus, Sellic, Seneca, Senecianus, Senecio, Senilis, Senna, Senopianus, Sentius, Septimianus, Sergius, Seronatus, Serranus, Sertorius, Servanus, Servatius, Servilius, Seuso, Severlinus, Severus, Sevso, Sevtonius, Siculus, Sidonius, Sigilis, Silanus, Silius, Silo, Silus, Silvanus, Similis, Simo, Simplex, Simplicianus, Siricus, Sisenna, Sisinnius, Sita, Sollemnis, Sorex, Sorio, Sosius, Sotericus, Soulinus, Spartacus, Spendius, Speratus, Stadius, Stichus, Strabo, Sudrenus, Suilius, Sulinus, Sulla, Sulpicius, Super, Superbus, Superstes, Sura, Surinus, Surlus, Sums, Sylla, Sylvius, Symmachus, Synistor, Synnodus, Tacitus, Taenaris, Tancinus, Tanicus, Tarquinius, Tarsicius, Tarius, Tatian, Taurinus, Telesinus, Terenteianus, Tertius, Tertullian, Tertullianus, Tertulus, Tetricus, Thrasea, Tiberillus, Tiberinus, Tibullus, Tiburs, Tiburtius, Ticinius, Titianus, Titillus, Torquatus, Toutius, Traianus, Trailus, Tranio, Tranquillus, Trebellius, Trebius, Trebonianus, Trebonius, Tremerus, Tremorinus, Trenico, Trenus, Triarius, Trifer, Triferus, Trimalchio, Trogius, Trupo, Tuccianus, Tuditanus, Tullius, Tullas, Tullius, Turibius, Turpilianus, Turpilinus, Turpilius, Tuticanus, Tutor, Typhoeus, Tyranus, Ulfila, Ulixes, Ulpian, Umbonius, Urbicus, Ursacius, Ursinus, Ursus, Uticensis, Vala, Valens, Valentinian, Valentinus, Valerian, Valerianus, Valgus, Varius, Varro, Varus, Vatia, Vedrix, Vegetius, Velius, Velus, Venantius, Venator, Ventor, Venustinius, Vepgenus, Veranius, Verecundus, Vergilius, Verinus, Verres, Verrucosis, Verullus, Verulus, Verus, Vespasianus, Vespillo, Vestinus, Vestorius, Vetrano, Vettonianus, Veturius, Viator, Vibennis, Vibius, Vibullius, Victor, Victorinus, Victricius, Vincentius, Vindex, Vinicianus, Vipsanius, Virginius, Viridio, Virilis, Virnius, Vitalinus, Vitalion, Vitalis, Vitoricus, Vitulus, Virus, Vocula, Volturcius, Volusenus, Volusianus, Vonones, Vopiscus, Voteporix, Vulso, Zeno, Zoilus, Zosimus

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

ab urbe condita or AUC: "from the founding of the city"; a Roman method of dating years measured from April 21, 753 BC

aedilis: an aedile; a commissioner of commerce responsible for tariff and business regulation

Agilitas: agility; one of the four Attributes

agnomen: an honorific name awarded for achievement

ala: a cavalry wing consisting of 16 or 24 individual squadrons [*turnwe*]

amphora: a large storage vessel for wine, oil or fish sauce [*garum*]

annona: the public distribution of free grain to the poor

aquila: an eagle; the standard of the legion carried into battle

Ara Pads: the Altar of Peace in Rome erected by Augustus and dedicated to the *Pax Romana*

as: a bronze coin of the Imperium worth 1/4 of a *sestertius*

augur: a diviner who interprets signs and portents

aureus: a gold coin worth 100 *sestertii*

auxilia: "helpers"; the auxiliary soldiers of the Roman army chiefly recruited from the Foreigner rank

Calligeniae: "the Fair Birthers"; a secret society of women with radical notions of female superiority

Canes: "The Dogs"; a roll of the tali that results in all 1's showing

Caput Mundi: "Head of the World"; a name for Rome

carmen: a spell or song

castra: a military encampment or fort

censor: a commissioner of the census

census: a public record of the citizen body

centuria: a legionary unit of 80 soldiers

centurio: a centurion; a legionary officer in command of 80 soldiers

charakteres: the arcane alphabet of the spirit world used by magi

Cholericus: yellow bile; one of the four Humors; an excess indicates anger and nervousness

circus: a racetrack for chariots; also called a *hippodromus*

classis: a naval fleet

cognomen: a last name; one of the *tria nomina*

Conors Amazona: the Amazonian Guard; a ceremonial unit of women warriors who protect the female members of the Imperial household

Cohors Praetoria: the Praetorian Guard; the Emperor's personal army

Cohortes Urbanae: the Urban Cohorts; the police force of Rome

collegium: a guild or college

consul: one of the two supreme magistrates of the Roman government

contubernium: an eight-man squad or a marriage union between Slaves

APPENDIX B GLOSSARY

- Cryfii*: "the Hidden Ones"; a secret grade of Mithraic priests
- curator*: a public commissioner who oversees the maintenance of buildings, roads and aqueducts
- Curatores Fumis*: "The Guardians of Smoke"; the Imperial intelligence agency
- cursus honorum*: a career path
- Cursus Publicus*: the Imperial messenger service
- Cyclopes*: the followers of Aufidius Caelus; a group of engineers who practice scientific experimentation
- damnatio ad bestias*: condemned to be eaten by wild animals
- damnatio ad metallam*: condemned to working in the mines
- damnatio memoriae*: condemned from public memory
- decuria peregrina*: "wandering vexillation"; an elite detachment of ten legionaries
- decurio*: a local magistrate or the commander of a cavalry squadron [*turma*]
- denarius*: a silver coin worth 4 *sestertii*
- di inferni*: the gods of the Netherworld
- divus*: a god; often referring to a deified Emperor
- domus*: a townhouse
- dupondius*: a brass coin worth 1/2 of a *sestertius*
- Ephesia grammata*: "the Ephesian letters"; six magic words used by most magi
- Equites*: Equestrians; one of the six Ranks
- Equites Singulares Augusti*: the Imperial Horse Guard
- Externi*: Foreigners; one of the six Ranks
- fabula*: an adventure or story
- factio*: a chariot team
- fibula*: a brooch or decorative safety pin
- flamen*: a priest of the Roman state religion devoted to one deity
- Flegmaticus*: phlegm; one of the four Humors; an excess indicates illness or lack of will
- Forma Urbis*: a map of the city of Rome located in the Temple of Peace
- forum*: a plaza
- frumentarius*: a legionary officer responsible for intelligence and espionage
- fulgurator*: an Etruscan diviner who specializes in interpreting lightning
- fulminata*: gunpowder
- fulminatus*: a legionary officer responsible for fulminata weaponry and ammunition
- galerus*: an armored shoulder-piece worn by gladiators
- garum*: a fermented fish sauce used as a condiment
- gladius*: a short stabbing sword
- harpax*: a naval grappling harpoon
- haruspex*: an Etruscan diviner
- hasta*: a spear
- hastula*: "little spear"; the pistol
- Hippika Gymnasia*: an elaborate display of horsemanship conducted by the Roman cavalry
- horreum*: a warehouse
- Imperator*: commander-in-chief of the Imperial army
- imperium*: the power of a magistrate to enforce Imperial law
- Imperium* or *Imperium Romanum*: the Roman Empire
- insulae*: "islands"; apartment buildings

APPENDIX B GLOSSARY

<i>Intelligentia</i> : intelligence; one of the four Attributes	<i>paterfamilias</i> : head of the Roman family
<i>lanista</i> : a trainer of gladiators	<i>Pater Patriae</i> : "Father of the Country"; a title of the Emperor
<i>lares</i> : the gods of an individual household	<i>Patricii</i> : Patricians; an aristocratic sub-class of the Senatorial rank
<i>latifundium</i> : a slave plantation	<i>Pax Romana</i> : "the Roman Peace"; the enforced peace of the Roman state
<i>latus clavus</i> : "broad purple stripe"; a privilege of the Senatorial rank worn on clothing	<i>persona</i> : a fictional character; the part you will play in <i>FVLMINATA</i>
<i>legatus legionis</i> : a legionary commander	<i>pharmaka</i> : drugs and medicines
<i>legatus Augusti</i> : a military governor of an imperial province	<i>Pietas</i> : piety; one of the four Attributes
<i>Libertini</i> : Freedmen; one of the six Ranks	<i>pilum</i> : a musket
<i>liburnia</i> : a swift warship	<i>Plebs</i> : Plebeians; one of the six Ranks
<i>limes</i> : borders or frontiers	<i>pontifex</i> : "bridge-builder"; a priest of the Roman state religion who controls cult activity
<i>lorica</i> : armor	<i>pontifex maximus</i> : the chief priest of the Roman state religion
<i>ludi</i> : public games and spectacles	<i>populus Romanus</i> : the Roman people
<i>lupata</i> : "wolf's teeth"; jagged teeth at the base of a pilum barrel that tear the linen fulminata cartridge	<i>praefectus Urbi</i> : Prefect of the City of Rome
<i>magus</i> : a magician or wizard	<i>praenomen</i> : a first name; one of the <i>tria nomina</i>
<i>manes</i> : the dead shades of the Netherworld	<i>praetor</i> : a chief magistrate in Roman government
<i>manica</i> : a banded gauntlet worn by gladiators	<i>primarius</i> : the chief gunner of a tormentum crew or the Priest-King of the <i>haruspices</i>
<i>matrona</i> : a lady of rank	<i>primi pilus</i> : senior centurion of a legion
<i>medicus</i> : a physician or medic	<i>Princeps</i> : the Emperor
<i>Melancholicus</i> : black bile; one of the four Humors; and excess indicates depression or lack of energy	<i>proconsul</i> : a governor of a senatorial province
<i>miles</i> : a soldier	<i>procurator</i> : an agent of the Emperor assigned to a particular duty, usually an Equestrian
<i>mithrax</i> : a Mithraic priest	<i>pugio</i> : a broad dagger
<i>Mulus Marii</i> : "Mule of Marius"; a nickname for a legionary	<i>pullarius</i> : an augur who specializes in taking the auspices from the sacred chickens
<i>nomen</i> : a family name; one of the <i>tria nomina</i>	<i>pulli</i> : the sacred chickens
<i>ocrea</i> : a greave worn by gladiators	<i>quadriga</i> : a four-horse chariot
<i>parma</i> : a small shield	

APPENDIX B GLOSSARY

- quaestor*: a financial deputy attached to a senatorial province or magistrate
- regio*: an administrative region of a city
- Rex Sacrorum*: "The King of Sacred Things"; a senior priestly office of the Roman state religion
- salve*: "health"; a traditional Roman greeting
- Sanguinicus*: blood; one of the four Humors; an excess indicates activity and lack of self-control
- scutum*: a large shield
- Senatores*: Senators; one of the six Ranks
- Senio*: "The Six"; a roll of the tali that results in one six showing
- Servi*: Slaves; one of the six Ranks
- sestertius*: a sesterce; a brass coin that serves as the basic unit of Imperial currency
- Sol Invictus*: "the Invincible Sun"; epithet of Mithras
- spatha*: a cavalry saber
- spina*: the central median strip of a circus track
- stola*: a woman's dress
- tali*: the bleached knucklebones of sheep; special dice used in *FVLMINATA*
- terra fulminata*: gunpowder
- thermae*: public bath complexes
- toga*: a man's outer garment; a symbol of Roman citizenship
- tormentarius*: a gunner
- tormentum*: a cannon
- tria nomina*: the three name convention used by Roman citizens
- tribunus legionis angustidavius*: a senior legionary officer of Equestrian rank
- tribunus legionis latidavius*: a senior legionary officer of Senatorial rank
- Tribunus Plebis*: Tribune of the People; a title of the Emperor
- tridinium*: a dining room or a couch for three diners
- trierarchus*: the captain of a trireme
- trieris*: a trireme; a warship with three banks of oars
- turma*: a cavalry squadron of 32 men
- unguis*: "talon"; the hammer of a pilum or hastula
- Urbs*: "The City"; a name for Rome
- vale*: a traditional Roman farewell
- venefica*: "maker of poisons"; a witch
- Venus*: a roll of the tali that results in one of each number showing
- Vestales*: virgin priestesses of Vesta, goddess of the hearth
- vexillatio*: a legionary detachment
- via*: a road
- vicus*: an administrative district or precinct in a region
- vigiles*: the night watchmen of Rome who patrol the streets putting out fires and apprehending criminals
- vigintivir*: one of the twenty magistrates who oversee public life
- villa*: a country estate or working farm
- Vis*: vitality; one of the four Attributes
- Vulturius*: "The Vultures"; a roll of the tali that results in four of a kind
- XII Tabulae*: "The Twelve Tables"; a set of legal codes that serves as the basis of Imperial law

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NAME	
PLAYER	
RANK	
OCCUPATION	

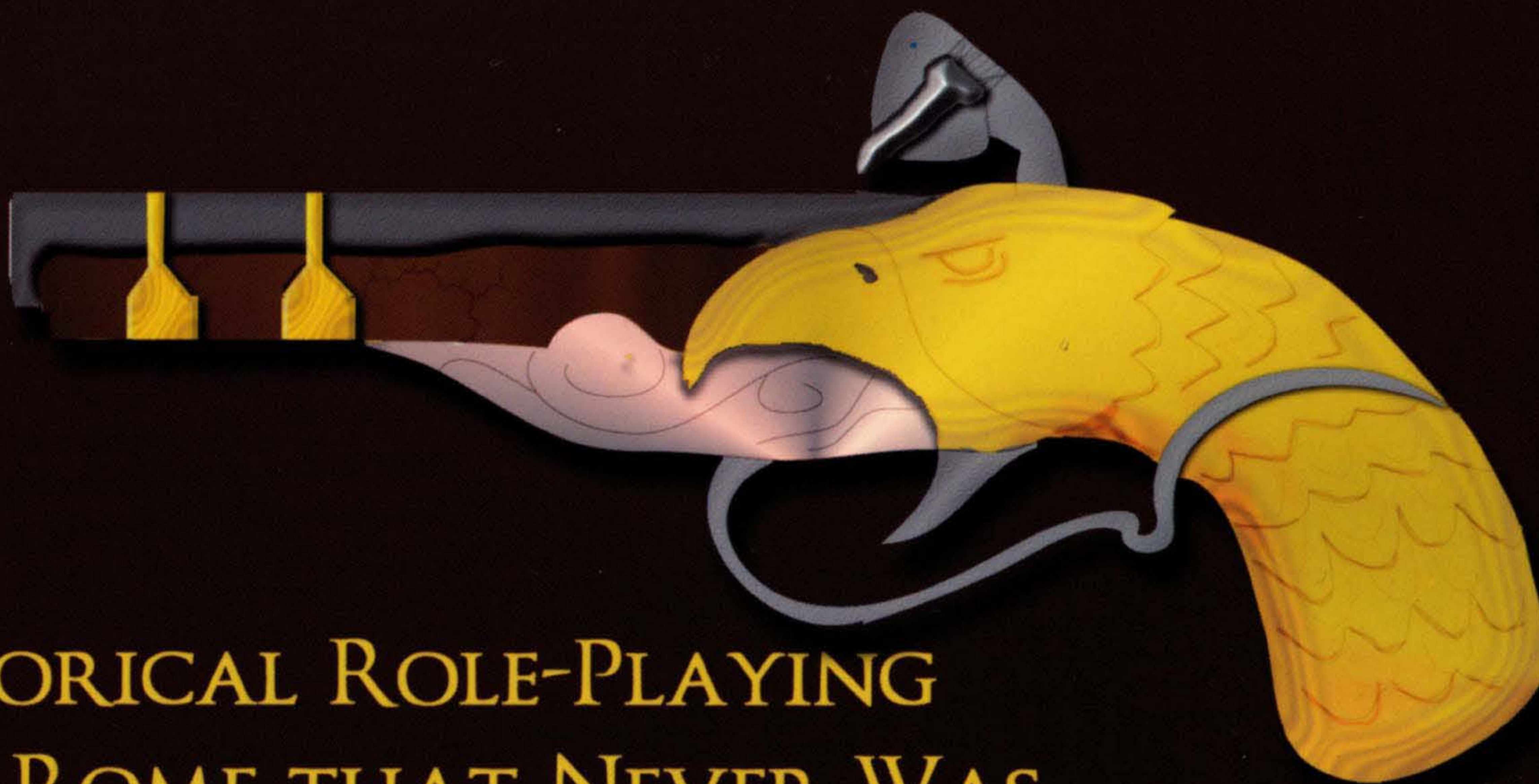


ATTRIBUTES		Modifiers		Temperaments		HUMORS	
Intelligentia Intelligence	I					F	Flegmaticus Phlegm
Agilitas Agility	A					X	Cholericus Yellow Bile
Pietas Piety	P					M	Melancholicus Black Bile
Vis Virility	V					S	Sanguinicus Blood

WOUND POINTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

HUMOR POINTS

SKILLS		UNUSED SKILL POINTS	
APOLLO		BACCHUS	
CERES		DIANA	
IUPPITER		MARS	
MERCURIUS		MINERVA	
NEPTUNUS		QUIRINUS	
VENUS		VOLCANUS	



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