



Part One

Introduction



Welcome to *The Fallen Fane*. This book is something of a new departure, as it presents a freeform live-action scenario for *Ars Magica*. There are twenty four player characters and no NPCs, and the storyguide actually has very little to do.

The Rhine Tribunal is meeting to rule on the recent actions of the covenant of Fanum, whose foolish interference with mundanes led to the near-destruction of the covenant of Schola. While this is the main business, the attending magi also have other concerns to see to. The players take the roles of all the attending magi.

Practical Considerations

The first consideration is finding twenty four players. You do not need the full twenty four, but the scenario will not work with less than a dozen, and improves as the number of players increases. The insert lists the characters in order of importance; start with number one (the Praeco) and work down. Note that Estella is obsessed with an utterly hopeless cause; if possible give her to a player who will be able to have fun with such a character.

Note that each character name begins with a different letter of the alphabet, running from A to X.

This will allow you make abbreviated notes, if necessary.

There are two ways to gather the requisite number of players. One is to run the game at a convention, this is by far the easier option. The other is to organize it yourself, advertise for players, and cancel if you don't get enough. Most of the notes apply to both methods, but will concentrate on the problems of running the game at a convention.

First, you need to organize a place and time. The scenario can be finished in four hours without too much trouble, but the pacing is largely out of your hands so you should avoid a rigid finishing time if at all possible. You will need a large area, as the characters need to be able to have private discussions in small groups. Ideally, you also need somewhere that everyone can sit at the end, for the formal part of the tribunal meeting. The area should be one that non-players are not constantly passing through, to help avoid confusion, and should not be too noisy, as the players need to be able to talk without shouting. The best solution is obviously a large room with chairs. As a rule of thumb, the room should be able to seat about a hundred, but if it actually contains a hundred chairs you need to be able to move them out of the way.

Second, prepare your materials. You will need two copies of every character sheet and thirty copies of the background briefing. You should also prepare sticky labels with the characters' names on; the magi would all recognize each other. Other than

Character Priority

1. Quirinus, the Praeco.
2. Richildis, the Presiding Quaesitor.
3. Necopinus
4. Bertoldus
5. Gunhilda
6. Orderic
7. Westamia
8. Viridia
9. Xavier
10. Saphronia
11. Umaldi
12. Ptolemaeus
13. Coriolanus
14. Hostiensis
15. Doraldus
16. Arviragus
17. Lalith
18. Theudar
19. Iacopo
20. Maximus
21. Kakondera
22. Junius
23. Flavius
24. Estella

that, no props are necessary, although you should feel free to decorate the playing area. Encourage the players to dress up, but it is not necessary to require. ('Costume admired but not required' is a good way to put it—this was in the blurb for a freeform I played in at GenCon.)

Third, you need to sign up players in advance. At conventions, you can expect about 20% of those who signed up to fail to appear for the game. Thus, you should sign up twenty four players and six reserves; four or five of the players and one or two of the reserves will fail to appear, so everyone who shows up should get to play. Make it clear that players who turn up late may not get to play at all. When a player signs up, give her the background briefing and the character sheet for the next unas-

signed character (you may copy these for personal use only). Give the reserves the background briefings only; you will give them the relevant character sheets at the game itself. Some of the character names tend to indicate a sex for the player — you can match these up if you like, or change the names. The sexes of the characters do not matter for the plots.

If you have friends who want to play, give them roles that suit them. If at all possible, you should have the Praeco and Quaesitor played by people you can trust; these two characters have the ability to wreck the game for everyone else.

Finally, you should show up at the game itself, and hand out stickers. Give people about ten minutes after the official start time before assigning their roles to reserves, but no longer — the reserves need time to read and think about their character before they start playing.

Once everyone is assembled, you can hand the running of the tribunal over to the Praeco. Make it clear that you are happy to answer questions at any point, especially the beginning, and then sit back to watch. It's a good idea to have something to read at this point, as you probably won't have enough to do — do make sure that the players know that you are only reading to fill in spare time and that they should interrupt.

Keep an eye on the players. If anyone looks lost and left out, ask them if they are all right. Freeform games attract people who have never played *Ars Magica*, and they might be a bit overwhelmed by the background, and confused as to what the details on their character sheet mean. Similarly, if anyone seems to be trying to dominate the whole game, you should intervene. This probably won't happen; it's hard to dominate twenty four people.

The game finishes with the formal tribunal session, when motions are proposed and votes counted. Motions should be submitted to the Praeco in writing and in advance. The players actually have to