

Nigrasaxa

An Introductory Mini-Saga for **Ars Magica**™

*A free ready-to-play saga including introductory characters
and explanatory notes for first-time Storyguides*

Welcome to Nigrasaxa, a three-part mini-saga that provides an extended introduction to **Ars Magica** Fourth Edition. *Nigrasaxa* works in tandem with the *Promises, Promises* Jump Start Kit to teach new players the basics of the game. Although *Nigrasaxa* does not continue the story presented in *Promises, Promises*, it assumes the level of familiarity with **Ars Magica** that *Promises, Promises* provides.

You'll probably want to purchase a copy of **Ars Magica** Fourth Edition before playing *Nigrasaxa*. Although you might be able to get along without one (as you might have when playing *Promises, Promises*) it will be harder going here. You'll have more fun if you can refer to the rulebook during play.

If you're not planning to be the storyguide for *Nigrasaxa*, you should stop reading now. You'll only spoil your fun.

As *Nigrasaxa*'s storyguide, the first thing you should do is read through *Nigrasaxa* in its entirety, including all of the handouts and all of the player characters. You might want to start by reading the description of the covenant of *Nigrasaxa* on page 18. It's located at the end of this scenario because it's intended to be copied and given out with the other player handouts, but it's must-read information for you, too.

Next, you should look through the **Ars Magica** rulebook. You certainly

don't need to be able to recite it from memory, but you should know where things are. Make sure you take a good look at the Introduction (page 4) and Hermetic Magic (page 64) chapters. You should also have a good grasp on the rules presented in *Promises, Promises*. After that, you're ready to go!

Overview

The events of this mini-saga take place at the covenant of *Nigrasaxa* and in the surrounding area. *Nigrasaxa* is located in Suffolk, in the Stonehenge Tribunal. That particular location is not materially important, though. If you want this mini-saga to tie into a developing saga in some other location, you should be able to adapt this material very easily. The player characters are relatively recent arrivals at the covenant, which was founded by a wizard named Maximianus who remains its leader.

This booklet has three main parts. The first, "One Small Favor," involves the characters in the search for the missing daughter of a local lord. This adventure introduces the players to the medieval setting of **Ars Magica**: the nobility, the church, commoners, and the fae. It provides many opportunities for the use of spontaneous magic.

The interlude between the first and second parts gives the characters a chance to use the development rules, which are a major part of **Ars Magica**.

The second part, "Maximianus' Final Twilight," takes place entirely within the covenant. It introduces the characters to the organization of a covenant and the various roles played by non-magi within it. It also introduces the concept of Wizard's Twilight, (which the players have already experienced if they have played in *Promises, Promises*) and provides more opportunities to use magic.

The interlude between the second and third parts provides another opportunity to use the development rules, and also to meet a Redcap and find out about the Order's message network.

The third part, "The Tribunal," introduces the players to Hermetic politics.

In addition to the scenario material, *Nigrasaxa* contains six pregenerated characters and statistical background on *Nigrasaxa* itself. In addition to having copies of these available for your players, you might also want to have a few copies of the rule and background briefings from *Promises, Promises* handy.

It should be easy to play through this entire kit in three sessions, and you may be able to do it in two.

I: One Small Favor

Summary

Our story starts in early the summer of 1221 AD when a local lord comes to the covenant to ask for its help in finding his daughter, who has gone missing. Maximianus (the covenant's leader—see the handout on page 18) orders all the player magi to go and help him, telling them they need to know their neighbors. The lord takes the characters back to his manor, and explains the problem.

As the characters head for the place where the girl was last seen, they must pass through a village. The local parish priest has an exaggerated fear of magic, and is trying to stir the villagers up against the covenant. The villagers are scared of the magi, who must negotiate their way out of any difficulties that arise.

The characters arrive at a hole in the ground that the girl was seen entering. They must use magic to investigate it, and find an arcane connection to the girl, although she is no longer there. Tracing this connection, they can discover that she is now in a nearby faerie forest.

Upon entering the forest, the magi find themselves trapped in a maze of trees and attacked by straw men. After defeating the straw men, the characters can find a way through the maze.

At the center of the maze there is a faerie glade, and the lord's child is playing with some small fair folk. The characters most likely talk to the faeries and learn they took the child because they thought that she was unwanted. The child herself likes it in the glade,

and doesn't really want to go back home. The characters must convince the fay that the child is wanted, at which point the faeries will allow them to take her back to her family.

At Nigrasaxa

The Library

The story starts with all the characters gathered in the library of Nigrasaxa. There are dozens of books stacked in cupboards all around. The characters are all here to consult different ones; it is pure chance that has brought them together. Have all the players describe their characters and then introduce themselves, in character.

Although the characters' personalities are defined to some extent on their character sheets and by their house membership, there is plenty of room for player creativity in this area. Encourage your players to fabricate additional information. You may want to ask questions to spur the players to think more about their characters' personalities and motivations.

When the introductions are over, the characters are interrupted by Henry Winker, a boy who runs messages round the covenant. He is pleased to find them all in one place, as it saves him some effort, and he tells them that Maximianus wants to see them all in the Great Hall, where he is meeting with a local lord. If necessary, explain

to the players that it would be a poor choice to leave them waiting.

Henry Winker

Henry is thirteen years old and has been at the covenant all his life, as his mother works in the kitchens. He has sandy hair and green eyes, and a twitch that makes him wink his left eye — this is the source of his epithet. His main job is the carrying of messages through the large covenant, and, as such, he is the member of staff that the characters know best. He also has the privilege of entering any area of the covenant to deliver a message.

Henry Winker

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

Size: -1

Personality Traits: Reliable +2, Eager +1

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Attacks | Init | Atk | Dfn | Dam | Fat |
| Brawling | +5 | +1 | +5 | -1 | +6 |

Soak: 0

Fatigue: +4

Fatigue levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Unc.

Body levels: OK, -1, -3, -5, Incap.

Virtues and Flaws: Standard Grog 0, Busybody +1, Long-Winded +1, Secret Hiding Place +1, Disfigured -1, Small -2

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawling 2, Carouse 1, Nigrasaxa Lore 3, Speak English 4, Speak Latin 3

Equipment: Normal clothes

Encumbrance: 0

He knows nothing about Lord Robert, beyond the fact that he is the lord of the nearest manor to the covenant, and has just turned up at the covenant. He knows nothing at all about why he is here.

Henry will be around for the whole mini-saga, and knows more about the covenant than the characters do. If he is treated fairly politely in this story, he will probably be friendly later on. His Secret Hiding Place (see his Virtues) is a real secret room in the residence tower. Maximianus knows about it, if he thinks, but he can't remember exactly where it is, and certainly won't spontaneously think of it — it's been twenty years since he designed the tower.

Lord Robert

As the characters enter the Great Hall of Nigrasaxa, Maximianus is just finishing a discussion with a man whom the characters do not recognize, but whom Maximianus introduces as Lord Robert almost as soon as the characters enter the room.

Maximianus is a powerful magus, but his statistics should not become important in this story. If they do, assume that he has a casting total of 35 in all Technique/Form combinations and knows many formulaic spells, including all the ones listed for Vim in the rulebook, and as well a number of other Vim spells, derived from the guidelines. If the player magi try to use magic on Lord Robert, he uses his magic to stop them.

Despite his power, Maximianus does not look terribly impressive. He is about five feet five inches tall and rather overweight. He is balding, and although he keeps his hair and beard trimmed short, they fail to look dignified. He looks old, possibly around sixty, although he is far older than that. He wears robes of deep purple, embroidered in silver with mystical symbols.

They carry a faint odor of the laboratory with them at all times.

Once Maximianus has introduced Lord Robert to the player characters, he asks him to explain why he has come. Lord Robert explains that Mathilda, his youngest daughter, went missing yesterday. She is only eight years old, and thus not able to look after herself. She was out playing with her nurse when she fell down a hole. The nurse immediately came back to the manor to get help, but although it took them only minutes to get back to the hole, the girl was gone when they arrived. A search of the surrounding area revealed no clues at all, and so he came to the covenant, hoping magic could help.

When he has finished his story, the players may ask questions. They should be courteous, and Maximianus will

remind them of this if necessary. They should also not use magic, at all, and Maximianus stops them angrily if they try to. Robert does not know much beyond what he has said. See below for any other relevant information that they could learn.

When the characters have finished asking questions, Maximianus tells them to go along with Lord Robert and find his daughter. He says that it is about time the magi got to know their neighbors, and that it sounds like an easy enough task. The characters don't really have any choice in the matter, although they do have time to pick up



Lord Robert

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

Size: +1

Personality Traits: Respects magi +2, Just +2, Proud +1

Reputations: Good lord 1, with his vassals

| Attacks | Init | Atk | Dfn | Dam | Fat |
|-------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Brawling | +3 | +3 | +1 | +3 | +3 |
| Mailed Fist* | -1 | -1 | -2 | +4 | -1 |
| Sword and Shield | +8 | +7 | +11 | +7 | +5 |
| Sword and Shield* | +4 | +3 | +7 | +7 | +1 |
| Lance | +9 | +11 | +4 | +9 | +5 |
| Lance* | +5 | +7 | 0 | +9 | +1 |

Soak: +5 (+13*)

Fatigue: +1

Fatigue levels: OK, 0/0, 0, -2, -4, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0/0, 0, -2, -4, Incap.

Virtues and Flaws: Landed Knight +5, Enduring Constitution +1, Inspirational +1, Large +1, Tough +1, Dark Secret -1, Deep Sleeper -1, Dependent (Mathilda) -1, Expenses -1, Favors (to Maximianus and Nigrasaxa) -1, Lycanthrope -2, Poor Hearing -1

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawling 2, Church Lore 1, England Lore 1, Etiquette 2, Folk Ken 3, Guile 4, Hunt 3, Intrigue 2, Leadership 3, Longshaft Weapon 4, Ride 4, Shield and Weapon 4, Speak English 5, Suffolk Lore 2

Equipment: Most things he wants. When armored, he wears half chain mai, and carries a kite shield, longsword, and lance. When escorting the magi, he is wearing the sword and carrying his shield.

Encumbrance: 0 (-4*)

* These statistics apply when fully armored

a few things if they want to take anything with them.

Lord Robert

Lord Robert is very impressive-looking, although he seems intimidated by Maximianus. He is almost six feet tall, and solidly built without an ounce of fat. He is clean shaven, and his hair, which is black with some flecks of silver, is chopped short. He is wearing a green tunic and brown hose, with a fine cloak of deep blue over the top. He is in his early forties (forty two, in fact), and looks like it. When Maximianus founded this covenant, he was a young man, and Maximianus helped him ensure his inheritance. In the process, he got some idea of how powerful the magus is, and this, together with the fact that Maximianus looks no older today than he did then, ensures that he has a great deal of respect for all magi.

He is still a lord, however, and will not take kindly to courtesy. Magi who are rude to him will find him less cooperative in future, unless they compensate by finding his daughter. He is lord of three villages, and thus moderately powerful (a Landed Knight, as per the Virtue). He keeps his association with the magi quiet as far as possible, although it is not really secret.

His wife died giving birth to Mathilda, and he has four other surviving children. His elder son is a knight serving with a local noble, while the younger is fostered with another knight a few dozen miles away. His eldest daughter is married to a knight from Yorkshire, and the middle one has been placed in a nunnery. Mathilda is the only one who still lives with him.

Lord Robert has a dark secret of which even he is unaware. This will probably remain completely irrelevant to this mini-saga, and certainly should not affect the recovery of his daughter. Lord Robert is a werewolf, and has no control over or knowledge of his changes. In the past, he has killed cattle and even attacked a few people. Lord Robert has led hunts for the marauding

beast, which have never been successful for obvious reasons. He has thought about asking the magi for help, but hasn't yet made it a priority. So far, all he's done is help compensate the victims of the attacks financially. This has helped his reputation, but not solved the problem. This situation would be an excellent candidate for further development if you want to continue playing in Nigrasaxa and its surroundings.

Equipping and Leaving

The magi may gather any mundane equipment they wish before leaving the covenant. Many of them will want spell foci. Make sure that the players realize that they can cast spells without the focus at the casting total listed on their character sheets. Allow mundane foci and one gem, but do not allow people to have bits of magical creatures.

At The Manor

The journey to Lord Robert's manor takes about two hours. He rides, although the magi cannot, as their Gift makes horses edgy. If they get too close to Lord Robert's horse it shies away and he asks them to keep their distance until they have returned to his manor. Robert is escorted by three men-at-arms, two of whom are on foot. These soldiers are reluctant to talk to the magi — the Gift again — but have only good things to say about Lord Robert. He pays them well and on time.

The manor house is a two-story structure: the ground floor is stone, with wood above. It is surrounded by a wooden palisade fence, but isn't really fortified. After stabling his horse, Lord Robert tells the magi roughly where the hole is, but encourages the characters to talk to the nurse, who was with

Mathilda when she disappeared, and William, who led the first search party.

Hilda is the child's nurse. She is a young peasant woman, in her late twenties, who wet-nursed the baby and then took on the task of looking after the child. She is pretty, with long, blonde hair, but not overly bright. She is terrified of the magi, and stammers out fast answers to any questions. If the questions are phrased to suggest an answer, she agrees with whatever the magi want to hear. Otherwise, she simply answers 'yes' to everything.

If the magi try to calm her down by talking to her, have them roll Pre + Folk Ken against a difficulty of 9. Remember that having the Gift imposes a -3 penalty on such rolls, but allow a bonus if the player comes up with a particularly good line. If they try to use magic, remind them that they should at least use quiet words and subtle gestures to avoid causing a stir (see page 76 of the fourth edition rulebook). Also, subtract two from their spellcasting totals for the local Dominion aura.

If they calm her down, they can get a more accurate version of events. The child was playing, chasing a butterfly, when the ground opened up and she fell, screaming, into the hole. Hilda ran to the edge, but, although she could hear the girl crying, she couldn't see anything. She immediately ran back to the manor and fetched William, the master of hounds, and some other servants. When they got back a few minutes later, the hole was quiet, and there were no signs of anyone being taken out or leaving. She doesn't know anything beyond that, and certainly can't think of anyone who would want to kidnap the child.

The characters can also talk to William, who confirms the latter part of Hilda's story. He is a man in his late twenties, rather ugly but fairly confident when talking to the magi. He thinks Hilda is probably telling the truth, as she has always been honest as far as he knows.

If the characters talk to Robert again, he vouches for the character of his servants, and confirms he has no enemies who would be interested in kidnapping his youngest daughter. He also subtly suggests that the characters should be off looking for the girl rather than pestering him, as it is getting late.

The characters may undertake further investigation at the manor, but there is nothing else of relevance to be learned here, and Robert begins following them around, asking gradually more pointed questions about their activities. He will not order them about or be actively rude, since he is somewhat afraid of them, but they should get the impression that his goodwill is rapidly wearing out.

The Village

When the characters leave the manor, they find that their route to the hole takes them through the local village. This is a small collection of cottages in various states of repair, each set in its own garden plot. The village as a whole is dominated by the church, a stone structure with a wooden tower. All the cottages are wood framed, with wattle-and-daub walls and thatched roofs. As the magi approach, have them all make Per + Awareness rolls. Those who get 9 or above realize there are more people around than they would expect. Peasant farmers would normally be out in the fields at this time.

As the characters pass through the village, or if they try to go around it, people start to gather near them. They stay at a distance, occasionally whispering to each other, while children run off to fetch their parents. By the time the characters pass near the church they are surrounded. The parish priest (described below) then comes out of the church, dressed in his full vestments, and begins to denounce them.

The villagers act like a mob at all times. The most persuasive speaker will sway them, but they are afraid of the magi and so are unlikely to attack. If the magi use magic in an obvious way, they become more frightened, but also more negatively inclined. "Obvious" use of magic covers any spells with obvious effects (*Arc of Fiery Ribbons*, for example), or any magic cast with words or gestures the people notice. Normal words and gestures will always be noticed, but quiet words and subtle gestures could slip by unnoticed if the crowd is distracted.

The characters should be reminded that fighting their way through the peasants counts as interfering with mundanes, and is against the Code of Hermes (see "Promises, Promises" or page 234 of the fourth edition rulebook). It would also greatly annoy Lord Robert, and so should be avoided if at all possible. The use of subtle magic, mainly *Mentem* and *Imáginem*, to influence the crowd's perceptions, should be encouraged, especially if it is inventive, but the magi should also be encouraged to talk to the priest.

The main goal is not to convince the priest that the magi are all good Christians, as they do not have enough time. Rather, they should come up with good reasons why they should be allowed to continue with their investigations. Simply suggesting that they could prove they are not in league with the devil by recovering the girl would probably work, assuming the magi are sensible in their general demeanor. The purpose of this encounter is for the player characters to talk to a hostile member of the church, not to have them lynched by a mob of peasants. Bear in mind that, as the villagers are afraid of the magi, they will be glad of any good reason they can be given not to fight them. They want to save their souls, but they also want to stay alive.

Father Geoffrey

Father Geoffrey is the parish priest. He is young and new to the parish, and fired with religious enthusiasm. He is in his early thirties (ordination as a priest was not permitted before thirty), and tonsured, so that the center of his scalp is shaved. He appears wearing his full vestments, richly embroidered robes that reach to the ground. Although fine, they are showing signs of age, with gaps and loose threads in the embroidered designs.

He is convinced there are many people in Christendom who have signed pacts with the devil, and that they are the greatest threat to the people. He would probably be searching for such folk in the village if the magi of the covenant weren't such easy targets. He is convinced that the magi are diabolical, and that they have the girl. He even suspects that Lord Robert has made a deal with either the devil or his minions, the magi, and that the girl was payment for something. He won't say this aloud unless pushed, however, because he is afraid of what Lord Robert might do to him. He believes that his faith will protect him from the magic of the devilish magi.

He might be right, as well. He is standing in the church, which has a Dominion aura of 6, which must be subtracted from all spellcasting rolls that target him while he is standing there. He also has a Magic Resistance of 20, although this does not come from his faith. (Once a spell is successfully cast at him, the casting total + the casting magus's Penetration score is compared to his Magic Resistance. If this total does not exceed it, the spell fizzles.) This combination will make it hard for the characters to directly affect the priest's mind, so they will have to take more subtle approaches.

The magi are unlikely to convince Father Geoffrey that they are not in league with the devil. However, he has little in the way of evidence, and if they

can argue their case well enough, he concedes ground, grudgingly, as he realizes he cannot bring the rest of the village with him in his beliefs. Although he continues looking for evidence, that has no effect on the course of this story.

The Hole

Mathilda was playing in a clearing on the edge of a woodland. In the late evening it is shady and rather dark, but it is obvious that it would be a pleasant location during the day. The hole down which she fell is still an obvious feature of the scene. It is also rather small: only just large enough for a child, and far too small for any of the magi.

The characters should be alone at this point. Point out to them that this means they can use magic without worrying about the consequences from superstitious villagers, and encourage them to use formulaic and spontaneous magic as much as possible. Be generous if any of them botch. Keep the results amusing rather than dangerous. There is no supernatural aura here, so they have no aura-related spellcasting penalties, and need only roll a single botch die. Point out to them (if they don't figure it out for themselves) that the best way to find a missing person is with the spell *The Inexorable Search*, but that they will need an arcane connection to cast it successfully, and that they should, therefore, be looking for one. Items of clothing might do, but hairs or blood would be even better.

If the characters examine the clearing, whether by mundane or magical means, they find nothing of interest. The nurse and child were here, as was the search party, but there is no indication of what happened to Mathilda. Further, there is no sign of any arcane connection.

When they examine the hole, they discover that its sides are solid rock. It seems quite deep, and it is very dark, so they cannot see much within it. Creo Ignem creates light, and level 10 makes

enough light to fully illuminate the cave behind the entrance. The small entrance still restricts the characters' view, however.

Terram magic is the easiest way to enlarge the hole. Rego, Perdo, and Muto Terram can all be used, at different levels of effect. PeTe 10 will widen the hole enough to allow a magus to pass through, while Mu/ReTe 15 would be needed, and the characters would have to dig the altered stuff out of the way if Muto was used by itself.

When the hole is enlarged, the magi can see that the floor of the cavern is about twenty feet down. The best way down is to use magic. Corpus magic allows a character to float down, and Herbam will allow the creation of a rope.

A search of the cave reveals no obvious exits, and no sign of Mathilda. Intélego Terram confirms that the cave has no other points of entrance or exit. The important thing now is to look for arcane connections. Suggest that Intélego Corpus would be a good way of doing this if the players do not think of it. InCo 10 or above will find a hair which can serve as an arcane connection to Mathilda.

If any character thinks to use Intélego Vim in the cave, he discovers fairly powerful magic was used in it a day ago. To learn this at all, the caster will need a spell level of 10. Higher levels give more precision in timing.

The characters are unlikely to discover the actual course of events, but they may be lucky or clever, so it is given here to allow the storyguide to decide what they learn. The hole was created by faeries, right under Mathilda. After the nurse left, they appeared to the child, healed her, and took her back to the faerie forest along a faerie road. She is there now.

By the time the characters complete their investigations here, it will be getting dark. They will also, most likely, need a map so that they can perform the spell *The Inexorable Search* and find the girl. Suggest that it would be sensible to

return to the covenant at this point and set out to find the girl in the morning. When they return, Maximianus refuses to help them, saying that they seem to have things under control. He sends them off again the next day.

The Forest Maze

The Inexorable Search locates Mathilda, right in the middle of a local faerie forest. Morlen knows a bit about this forest (though these are not the faeries with whom he must debate for a season each year, as described in his Obligation Flaw). It is not home to very powerful faeries, and they are generally reasonable, willing to talk about things and see them from a human point of view. They have never been the sort of fay who kidnap children, which makes the current events somewhat puzzling.

The characters will be unable to do anything unless they go to the forest, and this should be obvious to them. It is only a few hours' journey from the covenant, so there is no real problem in getting there. Let the magi make any reasonable preparations they wish, including loading themselves down with anti-faerie charms. Morlen is aware that things like cold iron are only slightly effective against most faeries, but tend to annoy all of them, and may wish to suggest that the other magi be a bit more tactful.

The journey to the forest is uneventful, taking the characters across farmland and through a stretch of mundane woodland. Morlen notices immediately when they enter the faerie forest, and the others will notice soon thereafter. The forest has a faerie aura of 2, so all the magi get +1 to casting totals, but must roll an additional two botch dice if they botch.

The faerie forest is very dry, as if after several weeks without rain in summer. The trees are still in leaf, but there is a brittle feeling about everything, and it is obviously highly flammable. This is strange, since the weather has been

rather rainy for that last month. Further, despite the dryness, there is a great abundance of undergrowth and creepers. In fact, there is a clear path between the trees, but this is hemmed in on either side by walls of vegetation.

This path forms part of a maze. Do not bother with a map; the maze shifts as the characters pass through it. Let them map it, and even let the players do so, but the map will be no use. It will be helpful if they still have an arcane connection to Mathilda, as this can tell them which way to go. If they didn't explicitly say they were bringing it, let each character make an Intelligence roll. If any character gets 6+, he remembered to pocket the arcane connection. If no one does, let them come up with alternative strategies. If these don't work, they will eventually be collected by faeries from the clearing and led there. This appearance of incompetence will hurt their case if they try to use their presence as evidence that the girl is wanted by her family.

The only way to get through the maze is to use magic to break through the walls. Physical force might work, but none of the magi are strong enough. If they have an arcane connection to Mathilda, or come up with a good alternative strategy, they can find the direction in which they need to be heading, and make paths that go that way. *Intellego Corpus* 10, with the arcane connection, gives them a direction to the girl. They can get through the walls in a number of ways. *Rego* or *Perdo Herbam* is the most obvious option, and level 10 will suffice to make a hole large enough for the characters to pass through. Using *Creo Ignem* to burn through is a bad idea, as it would probably set the whole forest on fire. Quite apart from the damage this would do to the characters, it would really annoy the faeries. If no one thinks of this on his own, Morlen thinks of it, so you should tell the his player. If they go ahead anyway, they will need to use *Rego* or *Perdo Ignem* to damp down the fires after they've been set, or risk being

caught up in a firestorm. If that happens, the faeries rescue them, put out the fires, and dump them outside the forest with asses' ears. They will then have to explain to Lord Robert just what has happened to his daughter.

The Straw Men

The maze has defenders: faerie straw men, who will attack the magi. Each straw man is made of a bundle of long pieces of straw, bound together, with roughly indicated arms, legs, and heads. They do not wear any clothes or carry any items.

The characters might hear the straw men shadowing them (call for Per + Awareness rolls), and may even catch glimpses of them, but they shouldn't be attacked until they are paranoid or stuck. Once they have figured out how to get to Mathilda, the straw men should attack. If the characters are stuck, have the straw men break through the maze wall from the correct direction to attack them, hopefully giving them a hint. There should be one straw man for every character.

The magi do not have the necessary abilities to fight back physically, so do not run this as a standard combat. Have the magi roll Dex + Skill for anything that they can justify to you, and have the straw men roll and add 6. If the magi win, they dodge, while the straw men do one Body level of damage every time they hit.

Each straw man has a Faerie Might of 20 (this provides a Magic Resistance of 20), and thus a good chance to resist any magic. This does not apply against *Ignem*, however, and even a CrIg spell of level 5 is enough to ignite one of them. Burning straw men flail about for three rounds before expiring, and each round, this flailing may ignite a maze wall on a roll of 6+ on a simple die, unless magical steps are taken to prevent this. PeHe and ReHe spells of level 10 can also destroy them, if such attacks get past their magic resistance. Attacks with physical objects do very

little damage. Blunt implements are completely ineffective, and sharp ones simply cut them into two smaller straw men.

In the fight, encourage description and strategy. Let the straw men be fooled by tricks: if the magi come up with a good plan to have a burning straw man ignite his fellows, for example, let it work. Conversely, make the players think. If they just stand to cast spells, have a straw man hit them so they have to make concentration rolls. Make them devise a strategy to get clear casting time.

The Clearing

Mathilda is in the faerie clearing at the center of the forest. When the characters break through the last wall of the maze, she will be the first thing they see. She is running around on a small hill, giggling, playing tag with a group of small fay, some of whom have wings, some don't. All of them have some animal feature: rabbits' ears, cloven hooves, wool, and so forth. She seems happy, and does not appear to be a prisoner.

They will, however, immediately be approached by a larger faerie, Demissel, who is described below. He wants to know why the magi are here, although he is not hostile. If the magi explain, he says Mathilda wasn't wanted where she was, and she is happy here.

The magi may take several approaches. They could try to fight their way through. If they suggest this, point out that there are several other fay lounging around the clearing, eating and playing games. They are outnumbered at least three to one, and it is likely that most of the faeries have some form of magical ability. Morlen thinks they would probably lose if they tried to fight. If they fight anyway, the fay bind them with plants and spider

webs and dump them outside the wood. They will spend an unpleasant couple of days bound there before Eleanor Sworder, sent by Maximianus, lets them out. They will also have no chance of getting Mathilda back, and will have to explain this to Lord Robert.

Some form of negotiation is a more promising approach. They could offer to trade something for Mathilda's return. Morlen knows that faeries tend to like creative offerings, and magical ones would be gladly received. An imaginative performance with spontaneous magic might be acceptable, or a promise of some future magical or artistic service. Let the players lead the negotiating, and have the faeries try to get as much as they can. However, do not make them so unyielding that the players are tempted to give up. Rolls may be required if the characters are trying to convince the faeries that they are skilled. Demonstrations of spontaneous magic, or rolls of Com + Skill for mundane abilities, would be appropriate. The characters could also have planned in advance and brought some artistic item with them. There will be some available at the covenant and Lord Robert's manor, if the characters can convince the Lord or Maximianus to let them take them.

The best approach, however, is to argue that Mathilda is wanted, and that the faeries have thus offended the local Lord by taking her. If the characters can convince the fay of this, then they will

let them take Mathilda away. If they really push it, they might be able to convince the faeries they ought to make reparations. The fay offer two pawns of Imáginem vis per year in compensation, which the magi would be able to keep for themselves. If they insist on something useful to Lord Robert, the faeries promise to look after his crops for the next seven years, ensuring they don't fail.

The best evidence the characters have that Mathilda is wanted is their own presence. Her father cared enough to send six magi looking for her. If the characters have done well on their way through the forest, this strengthens their case, as they appear to be six competent magi.

Mathilda soon realizes she is being talked about, and comes over to join the negotiations. Initially, she is reluctant to leave, and screams and yells, begging to stay. The characters will find it easier to convince the fay to let her go if they can convince her that she wants to go. Demonstrations of appealing magic, persuasive words, or flat-out mind control will all work.

Demissel

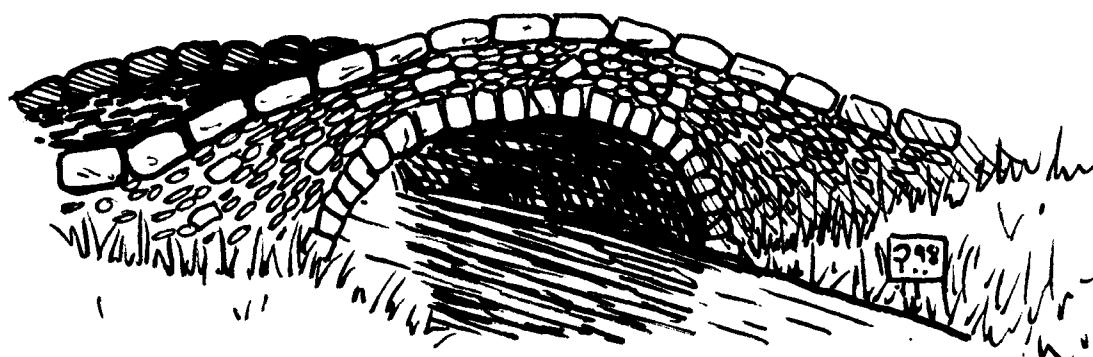
Demissel is over seven feet tall, extremely thin, and clothed in a pale green robe that hangs loosely off him. His hair is dark green, and reaches almost to the ground. He tends to talk

in long, rambling sentences, and is most interested in the consequences of actions and events. This means he will be open to arguments about how Mathilda's family will miss her, and even, perhaps, seek revenge.

Wrapping Up

Leaving the forest, with or without Mathilda, is easy; a straight path leads from the clearing to the outside. Once outside, the characters will have to explain what has happened to various people. If they have successfully retrieved Mathilda, Lord Robert is very grateful, and the villagers will wonder even more about their suspicions, now that it is obvious that the magi weren't responsible for the abduction. If the characters fail to retrieve her, people will be generally more suspicious, but this is unlikely to have any effect within the scope of this story.

Lastly, you should award the characters with an experience point or two for their efforts in rescuing Mathilda. Refer to "Story Experience" on page 186 of the fourth edition rulebook as a guideline. The players, of course, will want to know how they can spend these. Refer to the "Using Experience Points" and "Spending Story Experience" sections on page 186 for answers to these questions.



First Interlude

When the characters have returned to the covenant, things quiet down for two seasons, giving them the chance to do some research, and giving the players the opportunity to try out the laboratory and study rules.

You will have to guide the players through the rules, as they are relatively complex. Make sure that you understand them properly, first. You'll want to have read through the "Basic Laboratory Activities" (page 80) and "Experience and Advancement" (page 185) sections of the fourth edition rulebook.

Tell the players about four options: studying Arts from vis (page 190), studying Arts from the library (pages 188-190), studying spells from the library (page 80), and researching spells

(pages 80-82). Make sure you pass out information on Nigrasaxa's library and vis stores (pages 18-19 of this mini-saga). Make sure that they understand the different kinds of books in Nigrasaxa's library, and what vis they have. If a player wants to have his magus study a mundane Knowledge from one of the texts, that is fine. You should discourage the players from having their characters make enchanted items, however — the rules for this are complex, and the process usually takes many seasons.

When everyone has decided what to do, help them follow the appropriate procedures for calculating the relevant statistics and revising their scores. Check their calculations to make sure they are including everything.

Remember that those who invent spells get an experience point in Magic Theory for every season they spend at it. You should also remind Thamik's player to record the vis he gains as a result of his Secret Vis Source.

If the players want to explore the surrounding region, discourage them, reminding them that magi are scholars, and so most prefer to spend their time in research. If necessary, tell them that you have nothing prepared, and would prefer them to stay in the covenant for the moment.

When they have completed two seasons of study, move on to the next chapter. Note that, unless you have particularly long gaming sessions, you are unlikely to get on to the second chapter in the first session.

Also From Atlas: Return of the Stormrider



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The Return of the Stormrider
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II: Maximianus' Final Twilight

In this story, the leader of the covenant goes into Final Twilight, and the characters have the chance to find out more about how their covenant functions. It should also introduce them to Final Twilight and the Redcap network, as well as giving them further opportunities to practice their magic. As in "One Small Favor," the following summary is intended purely to help you orient yourself. The players may well go off in a completely different direction.

Summary

Henry Winker finds all the magi in the library, and announces that Maximianus has exploded! After a while, they calm him down and find out what has really happened. They go to see the manifestation of Maximianus in the passage, and meet William on the way. He tries to take control, but obviously has no idea what he is doing. Eventually, the magi manage to assert their authority.

They investigate the manifestation and finally discover a way to get past it. This allows them to enter the private tower of the covenant, where they are chased by screaming bolts of flame. They find Eleanor Sworder, trapped and particularly harried, and get her free. As they search the rest of the tower, they find Frederick, who has barricaded himself in and will not move, and Aline, who thinks that the bolts are messengers from God, and keeps trying to catch them.

When they return to the public tower, they discover that Adrian has

been preaching that this is the start of God's vengeance on the magi, and that the covenfolk should burn them to save their own souls. They finally manage to calm him down. When they go to investigate Maximianus's laboratory, they discover that it has a magical ward on it and they cannot enter.

Beginnings

Henry

Once more, all the player magi are gathered, by chance, in the library. Henry Winker, the same messenger as in the first story, comes rushing in, out of breath, and announces,

"Maximianus has exploded!"

Henry is panicked and a little out of breath, and will want the magi to come with him right away. They may do so, or they can try to calm him down. Magical means will be most effective here, but if the magi promise to come along as soon as he explains what is going on, he gives them a very fast account.

Unfortunately, he doesn't know much. He knows that the image of Maximianus has appeared in the lower corridor (see below), but he doesn't know why, nor does he know about the image in the upper corridor. He does know that no one can get past the image, and that about half the covenfolk are in the private tower. He also knows that William of Thanet is trying to organize things in the Great Hall.

The magi can go wherever they want, and Henry tags along, feeding them information about the covenant, unless they strongly urge him to go away. If the players look like they are thinking about doing this, remind them that he knows his way around the covenant better than they do, and knows all the inhabitants, while they only know William and Eleanor Sworder. If they follow him, he takes them to the Great Hall.

William

William of Thanet, the autocrat (that is, the individual who looks after the mundane day-to-day needs of the covenant), has gathered all those covenfolk who were in the public tower in the Great Hall. At first, everyone is shocked and slightly panicked, and William provides necessary support. If the magi go directly to the Hall, he is just finishing a roll call when they arrive, writing the names of those covenfolk in the private tower on a wax tablet.

William (who has no magical abilities) has been at the covenant ever since it was founded, and has run the daily operations very efficiently. He has very little respect for the player magi, feeling that they cannot properly organize themselves, let alone the covenant, and that he should be in charge in this hour of crisis. Unfortunately, he doesn't have the faintest idea of how to deal with the manifestations resulting from Maximianus's Twilight, and the player magi must overrule him if they are to get anything useful done.

The following account covers William's planned course of action. The characters will arrive at some point during it, most likely, and from that point on William is likely to find it harder to continue with his plans.

Once the roll-call is finished, he asks all the covenfolk to tell him what they have seen, and what they know. This is not very much, and Adrian, one of the guards, states his opinion that this is the beginning of God's

vengeance on the magi. William rejects the suggestion out of hand, and nothing more comes of it at this point.

William then sends the women and children out of the covenant, to ensure their safety, and leads the men to the lower passage. He sends a couple of guards, but they cannot pass the image of Maximianus. If the magi are around, he tells them to go through, but not to risk doing anything that could provoke Maximianus further. If they are not pre-

sent, he takes the men to start knocking a hole in the wall of the private tower.

This will take a long time, but if it is completed the screaming bolts of fire will be able to stream out and attack all the covenfolk. The magi are likely to want to divert the plan at some point, but William is strongly against it. He argues that he has successfully run this covenant since long before they arrived, and he knows best what should be done. The covenfolk also, on the whole, have more respect for William than for the magi, whom they regard as scary and aloof figures who know little about the real world.

The magi can just shout William down, or even use magic, but this will not do their reputation with the covenfolk any good. It is much better if they argue that the problems are magical, and thus need to be left to them, while William deals with the practical problems. However, since there are many ways the players could handle this situation, you will have to improvise.

The Corridors

The two corridors between the towers are almost exactly the same. The upper one is used only by magi, the lower by the covenfolk, although the magi certainly may use the lower if they wish. At the moment, both corridors are blocked by images of Maximianus.

These images are identical. Whatever one does, the other also does, and anything that affects one also affects the other. They appear perfectly solid and opaque. Each image appears to be Maximianus, dressed as normal, surrounded by tongues of flame in all the colors of the rainbow. The image seems to be looking straight into the eyes of any character who looks at it, even if several do so at the same time.

The flames spread out from the body to fill the corridor, so that it is not possible to see what is happening on

William of Thanet

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

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Bossy +3, Overconfident +3, Obsessed with Details +2

Reputations: Competent, with covenfolk 2

| Attacks | Init | Atk | Dfn | Dam | Fat |
|----------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Brawling | -3 | -3 | -4 | -1 | -4 |

Soak: -1

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incap.

Virtues and Flaws: Busybody +1, Educated +1, Knack with Leadership +2, Well Known +1, Dutybound -1, Overconfident -2, Oversensitive (disorganization) -1, Uncommon Fear (the Sea) -1

Abilities: Artes Liberales 3, Awareness 3, Bargain 4, Concentration 3, Etiquette 3, Folk Ken 5, Intrigue 4, Leadership 5, Nigrasaxa Lore 5, Scribe Latin 3, Speak English 5, Speak Latin 5

Equipment: Normal clothes

Encumbrance: 0

William is in his early fifties, and has been autocrat of the covenant since its foundation twenty years ago. He was born on Thanet, an island off the Kentish coast, but moved inland after he nearly drowned in a boating accident. He was intelligent and educated, and got a job as a clerk with a minor lordling. His master was neither wise nor competent, and about twenty years ago he fired William, putting the blame onto him.

Maximianus was looking for an autocrat for his new covenant, and, since he could tell through magic that William was merely a scapegoat, he was happy to take the young clerk on. This proved to be a wise choice, as, without the burden of a foolish lord, William was a highly capable administrator. Over the years, Maximianus has left all the mundane aspects of running the covenant to his autocrat.

William is a little overweight, as he takes advantage of his position to indulge his taste for game and wine (although never beyond the bounds of propriety). His hair is thinning and gray now, but his voice is still strong and he runs the covenant as well as ever. He has gained a somewhat exaggerated opinion of his abilities, since Maximianus helped the covenant through a couple of crises with magic, but forgot to tell William what he had done. As a result, William thinks that the covenant's survival is entirely due to his administrative brilliance. He is very good, so the delusion is not, usually, obvious.

the other side. They also block all sound, and form a magical barrier to any attempt to use Intélego magic on the space beyond. They do not radiate heat, however.

If anyone approaches the image more closely than three paces, the flames lash out towards him. Anyone who is not expecting this steps back by instinct. If a character is prepared, he may make an Int + Concentration roll of 9+ to keep going forward. In that case, the flames throw him back with a Rego Corpus effect. This effect has a penetration of 40, which means that Herrit could well resist it and continue moving forward. Other magi may also resist it if they roll well.

If Herrit does make it to the other side by himself, point out that he is isolated, and encourage the player to help work out a way to get the other characters through. If he insists on exploring, chase him back with bolts of flame (see below). He also notices that the image appears to be looking at him, even when he is on the other side.

Intélego magic can be used on the image itself. It is highly magical, and it is an image (*Imáginem*) rather than a solid object. The only way to get past, without facing the Rego Corpus effect, is to manipulate the image. Perdo *Imáginem* 25 would destroy it altogether, but the characters are unlikely to manage that. Muto or Rego *Imáginem* 15, if used imaginatively, allows the characters to make a passage through, although this only lasts for as long as the caster concentrates (or for a duration of Diameter). Ignem and Corpus magic are completely ineffective, as the image is really neither a body nor a flame.

The images disappear by themselves at the next sunrise, but if the magi do nothing constructive in that length of time, they will lose most of the confidence of the covenfolk.

Even if the characters destroy lots of bolts, this has no obvious effect on their numbers, as they are continually being produced.

There are about a dozen covenfolk scattered around this tower. The magi can find them most easily by calling out. They are keen to leave, and the protection the magi can offer is very attractive. If they simply search, it will take them much longer. Roll for bolts five times between each discovery. If they call, you need only roll half a dozen times before most of the covenfolk come to them.

The covenfolk fall into two groups: the guards and the servants. All of them are rather in awe of the magi, but the guards are more confident. They know the magi rely on them for protection to a certain extent. If the magi talk to the covenfolk, it will be the guards who answer, unless one of the servants was specifically addressed. Note that the guards in this tower were off duty, and so are not wearing armor. They are, however, noticeably bigger and tougher-looking than the servants.

When they have led the first group out, it would be a good idea to check William's list to see who is still missing. If they didn't search the tower thoroughly, then Eleanor Sworder, Aline, and Frederick are still missing.

Eleanor

For some reason, the fires are picking on Eleanor. (This is probably due to Maximianus's attitude toward her, although it could indicate particular favor as much as particular dislike. Twilight effects rarely make good sense. It doesn't matter for this scenario, and you can choose whichever fits your purposes if you continue playing in Nigrasaxa.) She is in the main grog barracks on the third floor, dodging bolts and deflecting them with her shield. She has been hit a few times, and she cannot get past the bolts to leave.

The Private Tower

The private tower of the covenant contains the sancta of all the magi and the quarters for the covenfolk. There are no doors to the outside, all entrance and egress being via the public tower. Each floor is divided into many rooms, with the magi getting a half a floor each towards the top. Maximianus took the whole of the top floor as his sanctum.

The covenfolk on this side are, therefore, trapped by the images. This would be bad enough, but the tower is also filled with bolts of flame. These fly through the corridors and into the rooms, screaming loudly as they do so. They do not burn nonliving things, but do +5 damage every time they strike someone living.

The bolts appear in small groups. Roll a simple die every few minutes of game time. On a roll of one to five, that many bolts appear, heading for the characters. On a roll of 6+, there are none around at the moment. The bolts seem to have some awareness, although they are certainly not intelligent. They will change course to try to hit the characters, and then continue on their way through the covenant.

If the characters simply try to dodge the bolts, have them roll Qik + Brawling against a difficulty equal to twice the number of bolts. If they succeed, they are fine, but if they fail one of the bolts has hit them, for +5 damage. These bolts are real fire, and so they can be affected by Ignem magic. Perdo *Ignem* 10 destroys one bolt, while PeIg 15 destroys a whole group. Rego *Ignem* 5 deflects one bolt from one character, with no need for another die roll, and ReIg 10 deflects a whole group from one character, while ReIg 15 keeps all the characters safe from a whole group of bolts.

Freeing her is relatively easy with the use of magic. Relg 15 will suffice to get the bolts out of her way, although the caster will have to maintain this

Eleanor Sworder

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

Size: 0

Personality Traits: Chivalrous +3, Determined +2

Reputations: Fair, among the grogs 2

| Attacks | Init | Atk | Dfn | Dam | Fat |
|---------------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Brawling | +3 | +2 | +2 | -1 | +2 |
| Brawling* | 0 | -1 | -1 | -1 | -1 |
| Sword/Shield | +4 | +4 | +10 | +3 | +2 |
| Sword/Shield* | +1 | +1 | +7 | +3 | -1 |
| Spear | +7 | +8 | +3 | +6 | +2 |
| Spear* | +4 | +5 | 0 | +3 | -1 |

Soak: 0 (+5*)

Fatigue: -1 (-4*)

Fatigue levels: OK, 0, -2, -4, Unc.

Body levels: OK, 0, -2, -4, Incap.

Virtues and Flaws: Enduring Constitution +1, Strong Willed +1, Knack (Leadership) +2, Common Fear (being touched) -2, Disfigured -1, Oversensitive (unchivalrous behavior) -1

Abilities: Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawling 3, Etiquette 2, Folk Ken 3, Leadership 5, Longshaft Weapon 3, Nigrasaxa Lore 2, Ride 3, Shield and Weapon 3, Speak English 5

Equipment: longsword, kite shield, spear/lance, steel scale hauberk (not worn)

Encumbrance: -1.5 (-4)

* Asterisked statistics reflect Eleanor's statistics when armored.

As soon as she could walk, Eleanor wanted to be a knight. She listened to the tales of chivalry and pestered her parents with questions as to why she couldn't. The parish priest eventually decided she was possessed by the devil, and tried to exorcise her. While this wasn't a brutal affair, it wasn't particularly pleasant, and Eleanor decided to keep her ambitions to herself.

A few years later she heard about Nigrasaxa, and the rumors that one of their guards was a woman. She left home that night and arrived at the covenant a few days later. She was accepted into the grog turb and learned to fight. She was not particularly talented at this, but she was good at leading and organizing the grogs. Maximianus noticed this, and five years ago he promoted her to grog captain.

Eleanor still wants to be a knight, and she has been developing the necessary skills. A few of the grogs resent the fact that a woman is in charge, and that she cannot fight as well as some of them. However, most of them recognize that she is a good leader and shout the dissidents down.

Eleanor would be average looking, were it not for the nasty scar on her left cheek. There are a number of stories circulating round the covenant: that she got it from a dragon, a giant eagle, the sword of a Knight Templar, or that it was a training injury. Actually, it is a scar from a demon claw. She killed the demon, but she still has nightmares. The scar is her disfigurement, and it doesn't impede her in leading the grogs. If anything, it gives her a slight edge.

plans to knock a hole in the wall she talks him out of it.

Aline

Aline is one of the covenfolk. Rather simple-minded, she has decided that the bolts of fire are angels, and that if she can catch them, they will bestow a message from God upon her. Fortunately for her she has a high Stamina and is tough, so she has been able to handle the minor burns she has received so far. She hasn't received a message from God yet, though.

The magi could drag her out kicking and screaming, but it is much better if they can persuade her to come. They could try to persuade her that the bolts of fire are not messengers from God. The best way to do this is to explain their real origin, or at least some other origin. Since she has caught a few and has learned nothing, she will be willing to listen to alternative explanations.

Frederick

Frederick has barricaded himself into a room. The door is shut, and has furniture piled against it. He will not open it. The bolts of fire cannot get through, so he is safe as long as he stays inside. The magi will probably need to use *Intellego Corpus* to find him, although a simple inference from the fact that the door is barred in some way would do.

The magi will have to convince Frederick that they can protect him from the bolts of fire. This will not be easy, as he is new to the covenant and not terribly familiar with the power of magic. The easiest way, therefore, is to



demonstrate magic to him. ReHe 15 will open the door despite his barricade, and other showy magic could then convince him of the power of the magi.

Maximianus' Sanctum

The characters will probably want to investigate Maximianus's sanctum. This is the source of the bolts of fire; they are constantly passing in and out of the door (this is the only door in the tower that they can pass through). Because of the profusion of fire here, all characters at the sanctum entrance must make Qik + Brawling rolls of 10+ every round (there are five bolts each round), unless they magically ward themselves against the bolts.

The door is closed, and protected by a Rego Corpus ward with penetration 60, which will not go away at sunrise. The characters will not be able to enter Maximianus's lab at this point.

Wrapping Up

The magi will probably return to the public tower to assure the covenfolk that everything is resolved. There, they face one last problem.

Adrian

Adrian, one of the covenant's general staff, has long harbored doubts about the magi and their relationship to

God. The burning apparition of Maximianus decided him. They are corrupt, and the image is a sign from God. The magi must all be burned, or the covenfolk will be held responsible.

While the magi have been in the other tower he has been talking to the other covenfolk, trying to bring them around to his point of view. William is having none of it, but his authority has been diminished by the crisis. He manages to stop an immediate lynch mob from forming, and, if the magi return during their exploration of the tower, he keeps the covenfolk under control, although the magi should get a sense that all is not well.

As a result, when the magi do finally return, they have the opportunity to talk to the covenfolk, rather than having to fight. Adrian is fully convinced and will leave the covenant unless he is killed. Other members of staff can be won back to the magi by persuasive argument. The behavior of the magi while dealing with the crisis will strongly influence the reactions here.

You should avoid a mass attack on the magi. Enough covenfolk know that they would die if they tried. Adrian may throw himself at them if things go particularly badly, but they will not face serious physical danger. However, if the magi deal badly with the covenfolk (who are, after all, scared), large numbers of them might walk out, refusing to serve the evil wizards any longer. If they do, make the next couple of seasons difficult, pointing out the growing problems, but don't let anything get to crisis point, unless you want to run an adven-

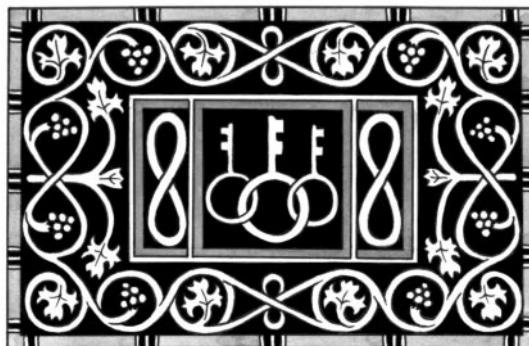
ture where the magi search for more grogs.

If the magi rescued any of the characters who were particularly trapped, those characters speak in favor of the magi. Aline will assert that she thought the bolts were from God, but they weren't, and Eleanor and Frederick will vouch for the magi. This should be enough to retain nearly all the staff.

Aftermath

The characters will probably succeed in rescuing the covenfolk, and the manifestations go away at sunrise. They will have to deal with the loss of Maximianus, which means deciding how the covenant should now be run, and talking to William and Eleanor about the practical arrangements. Let the players roleplay this out, improvising details as needed, for as long as it is fun. Of course, if large numbers of the covenfolk left, this will be more difficult. In this case, William and Eleanor complain constantly about staff shortages.

The characters will now have some sort of reputation with the covenfolk. Try to play this up in their interactions with them. If they handled things well and tactfully, they probably have good reputations. Efficient but ruthless work gains them respect mingled with fear. Complete no-hoppers will be viewed with pity by William and Eleanor, who probably help them out of respect for Maximianus's memory, unless they were insulted during the events.



Second Interlude

After Maximianus's Twilight, the characters get another season of research. This should be handled just like it was in the First Interlude.

At the end of this season, a Redcap arrives at the covenant, bearing the announcement of the next tribunal, to be held at the end of the following season at the covenant of Blackthorn. There is little news of the rest of the tribunal, although you might want to mention some of the more public issues that will be raised at tribunal. The Redcap mentions that questions are being raised about their dealings with faeries and the local nobility.

For more information about Redcaps, refer to "House Mercere" on page 19 of the fourth edition rulebook. For more information about who will be present at the tribunal and what

might be discussed, refer to the descriptions of those who will be attending on page 17.

After the Redcap's visit, the characters have another season of research.

The characters will also have to decide who will represent them at the tribunal. Get them to send two representatives. The other players will play non-player characters (see "The Tribunal," on page 16).

For more information on tribunals, both as geographical areas and as gatherings of wizards, refer to page 234 of the fourth edition rulebook. If you are lucky enough to possess or have access to *The Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition* (a supplement for *Ars Magica*) you can get an even more in-depth background on the subject on pages 19-24 of that book.

Perceval, the Redcap

Perceval is an unGifted Redcap in his late forties. He is tall and thin, and wears his cap at all times, refusing to take it off even indoors. He has been delivering messages to the covenant for several years, and is known to all the magi. He asks about Maximianus, and if he is told of his Final Twilight he expresses sympathy and offers to take the news to the other covenants in advance of the tribunal.

He knows a lot about how tribunals work, and offers to explain to the magi, since this will be the first time they have to represent their covenant. This gives you a good excuse to help the players plan for the final part of the Jump Start Kit.

Also From Atlas: *The Wizard's Grimoire*



Magic is the supreme power of Mythic Europe, and this tome of knowledge contains a whole host of new directions for magic. *The Wizard's Grimoire Revised Edition* features new templates for player character magi, essays that examine topics of concern to the wizardly class, rules for improving laboratories in a myriad of ways, sample magic items that demonstrate possibilities and save storyguide time, more than a hundred new spells for use in your *Ars Magica* saga, and much more.

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III: The Tribunal

Staging

This final portion of *Nigrasaxa* is best staged as a free-form roleplaying event. Don't worry about the particulars of the characters' arrival at Blackthorn covenant, or any of the mundane concerns of the meeting. Just concentrate on the interaction between the magi.

Remember that only two characters from the players' covenant are invited – the others will have to stay behind. That doesn't mean that the players whose characters are not chosen will be left out. They'll be taking the roles of the emissaries from four other covenants: Blackthorn, Voluntas, Ungulus, and Schola Pythagorans. Character notes for these characters are provided on handouts on the next page. Just cut them out and hand them out. Statistics are not provided for these characters, and they should not be needed. Combat and spellcasting will not be tolerated by the officials of the tribunal meeting.

Getting Started

When everyone is ready to start, let them begin negotiating and talking with one another informally. The actual tribunal meeting has not yet started at this point. This time simulates the discussions that the magi are having beforehand. Allow this to go on until the players seem to have exhausted the

possibilities for pre-meeting interaction.

It is a good idea to play this portion of the game in a fairly large room (or series of rooms) so the players can have private conversations. This is particularly important if the covenants try to set up plots against each other.

The Meeting

Next, summon everyone together for the formal portion of the meeting. You will play the roles of the Praeco (the eldest magus in the tribunal and leader of the proceedings) and presiding Quaesitor (the chief legal authority of the proceedings), which means that you have in-character control of the proceedings as well as authority as storyguide. The Praeco is Josephus of House Tremere, a member of Blackthorn. He must at least appear to be impartial, but is politically allied with Blackthorn, and his decisions may reflect that. The name and background of the quaesitor is unimportant. Fabricate a name and background if any player really wants to know.

In the formal tribunal meeting, each magus present may put forward any number of topics he wishes to discuss and vote upon. Once all topics have been put forth, the Praeco oversees debate and voting on these topics in any order he chooses. You should allow votes on just about any motion. Once the meeting has started, the characters will not be able to have private conversations. Anything they want to say must be addressed to everyone present.

When a vote takes place, each magus may cast a number of votes equal to the number of sigils he carries. Each magus in the Order has one sigil, and generally, magi who will not be attending a tribunal hand their sigils over to magi who will be attending. Each non-attending magus from *Nigrasaxa* should decide which attending magus he will give his sigil to. The magi from other covenants each control of a number of sigils that is listed on their handout sheets.

One of your main jobs during "The Tribunal" will be to answer out-of-character questions about the game background. You can refer to the rulebook as necessary, (the Mythic Europe chapter will be especially helpful) but don't let it bog you down. Make up any background information you're not sure about, especially about the various covenants, or tell the players that they can make it up, as long as they check it with you. Your main goal is to make the meeting exciting.

Moving On

We hope that once you have played this mini-saga you will want to keep on playing *Ars Magica*. The pre-generated characters provided here are significantly more powerful than starting magi, so you may wish to start a new saga with your own characters. Even if you do, there is nothing to stop you using the covenant of *Nigrasaxa* as your home base. It could easily be moved to anywhere in Europe without changing many details. Even if you don't like the covenant as described, you might still want to use some elements, such as the library.

Edward of Schola Pythagoranis

You are a member of House Jerbiton, and the representative of the covenant of Schola Pythagoranis. Your covenant is in Cambridge, housed in several buildings scattered through the town. You control four sigils.

You are aware of Nigrasaxa's encounter with the fay. Consult the storyguide about your precise attitude (since it depends on what actually transpired).

Since the last tribunal, your covenant has been fighting with Voluntas over the right to search for vis in a highly magical wood in Lincolnshire. This has consumed substantial resources, and has been inconclusive. You want the tribunal to assign all exploration rights to your covenant, so that you can take action against Voluntas if they interfere.

Nigrasaxa has a copy of the spell *Hermes Portal* in its covenant library. You would very much like to be allowed to copy it, and would be willing to trade votes for the privilege. Your covenant has a good source of *Imáginem* vis, which you would also be willing to offer in trade, up to 10 pawns now, or up to two pawns per year, for vis of any Technique.

Flavius of Ungulus

You are a member of House Ex Miscellanea, and a member of Ungulus. Your covenant is on the coast in the Lake District, housed in a single huge tower. You control five sigils.

You are aware of Nigrasaxa's encounter with the fay: consult the Storyguide as to your precise attitude (as it depends on what they actually did).

In recent years, Blackthorn has been mounting a subtle campaign to destabilize your covenant. Most recently, they have been using subtle magic to harm your cattle. It took you a while to notice, as they did nothing flashy, just reducing the amount of milk the cows gave and increasing the frequency and severity of disease. After you discovered that magic was involved, you analyzed the sigils of the spells and determined that Blackthorn's magi were responsible, including Goliard, their representative at this Tribunal. Unfortunately, the traces of the spells have all long since faded, so you have no evidence beyond your word. You will have to get the votes of other covenants on your side.

You desperately want some *Animál* vis. If Nigrasaxa talks to you about your support, you will bring it up. You would like to trade votes for vis on a one-for-one basis, but you will take a lower rate if that's all you can get. You might also be willing to trade your support in their motion for their support in yours.

Goliard of Blackthorn

You are a follower of Tremere, and a member of Blackthorn. You hold all six of their sigils at this Tribunal. Your covenant is sited in South Wales, in a complex of caves.

You want to see Nigrasaxa censured for their actions against the faeries, and for dealing with the mundanes. Ideally, you want to take their Creo vis source from them and have it assigned to Blackthorn. If you cannot manage that, you at least want them to be prohibited from exploiting it, aiming to get it assigned to Blackthorn at the next Tribunal. You are open to bribery with their Creo vis source, but nothing else will convince you to vote for Nigrasaxa.

Your covenant has been trying to destabilize the covenant of Ungulus recently by cursing their cattle. You have kept the magic subtle, decreasing milk given and increasing the frequency of disease rather than striking all the animals dead. You think the precautions have been fairly successful, and that Ungulus has no firm evidence of your covenant's involvement. (You were personally involved in this on occasion.) You have denied all involvement, but it is inevitable that Ungulus will raise it at the

Julia of Voluntas

You are a member of House Jerbiton, and the representative of the covenant of Voluntas. Your covenant is in the Yorkshire Moors, housed in a sturdy manor house. You control five sigils.

You are aware of Nigrasaxa's encounter with the fay. Consult the storyguide about your precise attitude (since it depends on what actually transpired).

Since the last Tribunal, your covenant has been fighting with Schola Pythagoranis over the right to search for vis in a highly magical wood in Lincolnshire. This has consumed substantial resources, and has been inconclusive. You want the tribunal to assign all exploration rights to your covenant, so that you can take action against Schola if they interfere.

Nigrasaxa has a superb *Liber Quaestionum* on Vim in its library, *The Pulse of Magic*. You are willing to trade your votes in their support for the opportunity to copy this book, and you may suggest it if they approach you. You will also trade support for support.

Your library is superb, and you are willing to give the magi of Nigrasaxa up to two seasons each of study in it, in return for their support in your case or for other favors. You might be willing to let them copy for a total of two seasons, if they have something good to offer.

The Covenant of Nigrasaxa

Your covenant is a fairly young one, founded a mere twenty years ago, in 1201, by Maximianus of House Bonisagus. He is much older than any of you, and rules the covenant. The library is of average quality, there are some small supplies of vis, and the covenant is in a magic aura with a value of 3.

The covenant buildings consist of two towers, magically conjured of shining black rock from which the covenant takes its name. These towers are linked by two bridges, one usable by all covenfolk and the other, the higher, restricted to magi. Only one tower has a door to the outside; the second tower must be entered from the first. The first tower contains the common areas of the covenant: the kitchens, the great hall, the library, and the council chambers. The second contains the living quarters for the staff and the sancta of the magi. The towers are rather larger than the covenant needs, and are sparsely furnished. They are structurally sound, however.

The mundane operation of the covenant is something of a mystery to you. There is an autocrat, William of Thanet, and he organizes the servants, reporting to Maximianus. The captain of the guard, Eleanor Sworder, organizes the grogs, the covenant guards, and also reports to Maximianus.

The covenant is located in Suffolk, in the Stonehenge Tribunal. You have only recently arrived, and know very little about it or the surrounding area.

The Library

Arcane Texts

- Health and True Function of the Human Form*, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (summa on Corpus, level 15, quality 9)
- The Passage of the Waves*, by Henricus of Mercere (summa on Aquam, level 10, quality 7)
- Change and Renewal and Decay*, by Gerfallon of Criamon (summa on Muto, level 12, quality 5)
- Beginnings*, by Odoacar of Merinita (liber quaestionum on Creo, target 0, quality 11)
- Healing*, by Maximian of Bonisagus (liber quaestionum on Creo, target 3, quality 12)
- Control*, by Pertinax of Tremere (liber quaestionum on Rego, target 0, quality 12)
- Mastery and Majesty*, by Pertinax of Tremere (liber quaestionum on Rego, target 3, quality 10)
- Bone and Sinew*, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (liber quaestionum on Corpus, target 6, quality 11)
- The Digestion of Food*, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (liber quaestionum on Corpus, target 8, quality 12)
- The Four Humors*, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (liber quaestionum on Corpus, target 10, quality 12)
- The Pulse of Magic*, by Junius of Tytalus (liber quaestionum on Vim, target 13, quality 16)
- Threshold of Resurrection*, by Hagar of Ex Miscellanea (tractatus on Corpus, quality 15), Shadow of Life Renewed

Warriors' Deliverance, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Corpus, quality 10), Healer's Ring

Full Health and Vitality, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Corpus, quality 8), Incantation of the Body Made Whole

The Lame Leap, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Corpus, quality 6), Severed Limb Made Whole

Watching Over, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Corpus, quality 6), Eye of the Sage

Purging the Infection, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Corpus, quality 5), Restoration of the Defiled Body

Closing the Wounds, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Corpus, quality 4), The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch

Questions and Justice, by Tullius the Quaesitor (tractatus on Mentem, quality 4), Posing the Silent Question

Authority and Humility, by Deuderach of Tremere (tractatus on Mentem, quality 4), Aura of Rightful Authority

On Standing Firm, by Dhuoda of Bjornaer (tractatus on Terram, quality 3), Hands of the Grasping Earth

Mundane Texts

Health and Healing, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (summa on Medicine, level 6, quality 9)

On the Order, by Deusdeditur of Bonisagus (summa on Hermes Lore, level 4, quality 8)

The Balance of Humors, Volume I, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (liber quaestionario on Medicine, target 0, quality 12)

The Balance of Humors, Volume II, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (liber quaestionario on Medicine, target 2, quality 12)

The Gate of Learning, by Alberic of Lyons (liber quaestionario on Artes Liberales, target 0, quality 11)

The Code Interpreted, Volume I, by Tullius the Quaesitor (liber quaestionario on Hermetic Law, target 0, quality 12)

The Code Interpreted, Volume II, by Tullius the Quaesitor (liber quaestionario on Hermetic Law, target 2, quality 11)

A Warning Against the Works of Hell, by Brother Humilitas of Caen (liber quaestionario on Occult Lore, target 0, quality 10)

On the Eye, by Maximianus of Bonisagus, Medicine (tractatus on Medicine, quality 10)

On Bleeding, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Medicine, quality 8)

On Congestion of the Lungs, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Medicine, quality 8)

On the Stars and Humors, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Medicine, quality 7)

On the Limits of Magic, by Maximianus of Bonisagus (tractatus on Magic Theory, quality 5)

The Hermetic Arts, by Scriptor of Bonisagus (tractatus on Magic Theory, quality 4)

Spells

Listed Alphabetically by Technique and Form

Parching Wind (PeAq10)

Curse of the Desert (PeAq20)

Calling the Odious Drought (PeAq35)

Bind Wound (CrCo10)

Charm Against Putrefaction (CrCo10)

Free the Accursed Body (CrCo15)

Gentle Touch of the Purified Body (CrCo15)

The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch (CrCo20)

Restoration of the Defiled Body (CrCo25)

Free the Accursed Body (CrCo30)

The Severed Limb Made Whole (CrCo30)

Incantation of the Body Made Whole (CrCo40)

Free the Accursed Body (CrCo45)

Healer's Ring (CrCo50)

Free the Accursed Body (CrCo60)

The Shadow of Life Renewed (CrCo75)

Physician's Eye (InCo5)

Revealed Flaws of Mortal Flesh (InCo10)

The Inexorable Search (InCo20)

Tracing the Trail of Death's Stench (InCo20)

Eye of the Sage (InCo30)

Sight of the True Form (InCo30)

Disguise of the New Visage (MuCo15)

Gift of the Bear's Fortitude (MuCo25)

Dust to Dust (PeCo15)

Confound the Connection (PeCo25)

Rise of the Feathery Body (ReCo5)

Gift of the Frog's Legs (ReCo10)

Endurance of the Berserkers (ReCo15)

The Gift of Vigor (ReCo20)

The Leap of Homecoming (ReCo35)

Illusion of the Shifted Image (ReIm10)

The Captive Voice (ReIm15)

Confusion of the Insane Vibrations (ReIm30)

Image from the Wizard Torn (ReIm 30)

Haunt of the Living Ghost (ReIm30)

Return of Mental Lucidity (CrMe15)

Gift of Reason (CrMe25)

Return of Mental Lucidity (CrMe30)

Return of Mental Lucidity (CrMe40)

Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie (InMe20)

Posing the Silent Question (InMe20)

Thoughts Within Babble (InMe25)

Peering into the Mortal Mind (InMe30)

Emotion of Reversed Intentions (MuIm20)

Aura of Rightful Authority (ReMe20)

Hands of the Grasping Earth (ReTe15)

Hermes' Portal (ReTe75)

Sense of the Lingering Magic (InVi30)

Sight of the Active Magics (InVi40)

Wizards' Communion (MuVi20)

Wind of Mundane Silence (PeVi20)

Demon's Eternal Oblivion (PeVi30)

Wind of Mundane Silence (PeVi40)

Demon's Eternal Oblivion (PeVi50)

Aegis of the Hearth (ReVi20)

Aegis of the Hearth (ReVi30)

Vis

Stores

Animál: 20 pawns

Corpus: 4 pawns

Creo: 12 pawns

Intélego: 7 pawns

Vim: 12 pawns

This is the total amount of vis in the covenant. Any distribution must be agreed upon by the magi running the covenant. 6 pawns of Vim vis will be needed at the end of the year to cast *Aegis of the Hearth*.

Sources

Animál: 5 pawns/year

Corpus: 2 pawns/year

Creo: 3 pawns/year

This year's harvests have been included in the totals listed under "Stores," above.

Ariel, Follower of Flambeau

Characteristics

Int +3, Per +2, Pre -2, Com -1, Str +1, Stm +1, Dex 0, Qik 0

| Size | Soak | Confidence | Encumbrance |
|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 0 | +1 | 3 | 0 |

Fatigue levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Unconscious

Body levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Incapacitated

Abilities

Affinity with Ignem 1, Awareness 3, Concentration 1, Finesse 5, Magic Theory 4, Parma Magica 5, Penetration 6, Scribe Latin 2, Speak English 4, Speak Latin 5

Arts

Creo 10, Intélego 0, Muto 7, Perdo 8, Rego 10, Animál 0, Aquam 0, Auram 7, Corpus 8, Herbam 0, Ignem 12, Imáginem 0, Mentem 0, Terram 0, Vim 0

Character Notes

You are a member of House Flambeau, and particularly skilled with fire magic. You are particularly good at creating and controlling fire, but changing and destroying it are also easy. The only thing that you are not very good at is finding things out about it.

You also have some ability with human (or human-like) bodies, and with air. Your skills also mean that you have good Magic Resistance, and are good at affecting other magical creatures with your spells.

Whenever you are surprised or startled, roll a stress die + Quickness. If you get a 3 or better, you respond reflexively. You must tell the storyguide what one type of action (attacking, blocking, running, etc.) you would like to respond with. If attacking in response, you gain +9 to your Initiative Total. The storyguide is the final arbiter of what happens (though it is always in the best interests of your immediate self-preservation). You only react to threats that you are not fully aware of, so you don't get a bonus against an assassin you watch sneak up on you. Note that you do not get a choice about whether to react. You could just as easily skewer a friend sneaking up in fun as you would an assassin about to strike. Also note that you must perceive an action to react to it—you can still be easily killed in your sleep. This Virtue gives you no special powers of perception.

are at a -3 in all related rolls. Furthermore, roll an extra botch die when taking actions related to Dexterity. Roleplay your clumsiness.

Short-Lived Magic (-2): Your spells do not last as long as they should. Spells that should be permanent last a year; those of a year, a moon; those of a moon, only to the next sunrise or sundown; and those of a sun, merely Diameter. Diameter, Concentration, and Instant spells are not affected, nor are those whose duration is enhanced by vis.

Spells

Arc of Fiery Ribbons

Creo Ignem 25

R: Spec, D: Mom, T: Group

Spell Focus: A Yellow Diamond (+1)

Casting Total: +24

A dozen multi-hued ribbons of flame leap from your hands and fly out 15 paces, covering a 60-degree arc. All those in the arc take +20 damage, modified by -1 for every pace of distance between you and the target. The area affected by this spell is so broad that targeting rolls are only necessary in exceptional circumstances. Targets who sees the ribbons coming can fall flat and therefore suffer half damage. A Qik – Enc stress roll of 18 or better is required to do this, though a +1 bonus to the roll applies for every pace between the target and caster. If this escape roll botches, the target suffers an extra +5 damage.

The yellow diamond has associations with the Sun.

Virtues and Flaws

Virtues

Magical Affinity (+3): You are attuned to a specific kind of magic, namely, Ignem. This gives you a special Arcane Talent, Affinity with Ignem. You may add your Affinity score to all spell rolls and Lab Totals involving Ignem. You may increase this rating just as you increase other Talents—by spending experience points.

Lightning Reflexes (+2): You respond to surprises almost instantly. In fact, your reflexes are sometimes so fast that you don't have a chance to think about how you are going to respond.

Flaws

Creative Block (-1): You have problems creating new things in the lab. You receive -3 on Lab Totals when you invent new spells, craft magic items, and make potions, unless you are working from a lab text. If you experiment, rolls twice as many dice on the experimentation table.

Clumsy (-2): You are not very graceful and tend to drop things—you

Burst of the Sweeping Flames

Rego Ignem 25

R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Ruby (+3)

Casting Total: +24

This spell causes a fire to explode outwards from its source along the ground, as if a giant wind were blowing on it from above. The fire travels no more than 10 paces, but it ferociously ignites anything in its path. The original fire is left dead, but in all probability a number of new fires will be started. The flames cause +5 to +20 damage, depending on the size of the original fire.

Ward Against Heat and Flames

Rego Ignem 25

R: Touch/Near, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Scale of a Flame Drake (+3)

Casting Total: +24

Keeps heat and fire at bay, unable to approach within 1 pace of the target. This renders the target immune to damage from flames or heat of intensity less than that of a house fire. The target gets a +15 Soak against all fire-related damage. Any fire that is smaller than a house fire in intensity (that is, has equal to or less than a +15 damage bonus) doesn't penetrate the ward. Such fires simply dim at the protected person's passing and flare back up after he is gone.

Blade of the Virulent Flame

Creo Ignem 20

R: Reach/Near, D: Spec, T: Small

Spell Focus: The Blood of a Fire Drake (+3)

Casting Total: +24

Forms a fire along the length of a metal blade. This flame doubles the weapon damage score for the blade (or adds +6, whichever is greater), and can start fires as well. After half an hour, the blade becomes so hot that it begins to melt. Once this occurs, the spell ends. The user of the flaming blade must wear gloves as the hilt gets hot, or else the sword cannot be handled. If using the spell focus, you spread the blood along the blade. The +3 focus modifier is also added to damage caused by the blade, because the fire is hotter and more intense.

Conjuration of the Indubitable Cold

Perdo Ignem 20

R: Reach/Far, D: Mom, T: Room

Spell Focus: A Garnet (+3)

Casting Total: +22

Cools the air in the targeted room (or within 10 paces of the target outside), leaving it a little below freezing. All nonliving things are chilled thoroughly, not just on the surface. All living things (except you, if you cast with a Rego requisite) lose one Fatigue level and

must make a Stamina stress roll of 6+ to avoid losing a second. House fires become as small as campfires, bonfires become as small as torch fires, and campfires and smaller fires go out.

Charge of the Angry Winds

Creo Auram 15

R: Near, D: Conc, T: Spec

Spell Focus: An Agate (+1)

Casting Total: +18

A wall of wind roars away from you, starting up to 10 paces away and continuing up to 30 paces. The wind is 5 paces wide. All within the area must make a Dex + Size stress roll of 9+ or fall down and be blown along by the winds. The rolls must be made at the start of the gale and each subsequent round that the wind is maintained. You must concentrate on the gale, but you may only maintain it for a maximum of five rounds. Missile fire into or out of the gale is futile, and marching against the gale requires a Str + Size stress roll of 15+. Failure in this attempt mandates another Dex + Size stress roll of 12+ to keep from falling.

Prison of Flames

Muto Ignem 15

R: Reach/Far, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Small Iron Cage (+1)

Casting Total: +21

Turns a bonfire into a prison shaped like a miniature castle. A person thrown into the middle is not burned, but takes +25 damage if he tries to escape.

The Wound that Weeps

Perdo Corpus 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Aimed: +0

Spell Focus: A Branch of Holly (+1)

Casting Total: +17

When casting this spell, you point at the victim, possibly with a branch of holly, and a large wound opens on his body. The wound is not a deep one, but it bleeds profusely.

The target must make a Stamina stress roll every round. If the result is a botch, he loses two Fatigue levels. If the result is 2 or less, one Fatigue level is lost. If the result is 3 to 8, no level is lost. If the roll is 9+, the bleeding stops. An unconscious target loses Body levels instead of Fatigue levels. A target who is active suffers a -3 penalty to these Stamina rolls, and a completely still target receives a +1 bonus. Of course, accumulated Fatigue and wound penalties apply to all rolls. If outside help is received, a Chirurgy stress roll of 6+ stops the bleeding.

Gift of the Frog's Legs

Rego Corpus 10

R: Touch/Near, D: Spec, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Legs of a Frog (+1)

Casting Total: +19

Allows the target to leap up to 15 feet vertically or 25 feet horizontally (2 feet less for every Encumbrance point). The person must make a Dex – Enc stress roll of 6+ to land without injury. A miss indicates the loss of one Body level, and a botch indicates a broken ankle or other crippling injury. The target can only leap once for each casting of the spell, and that leap must be made within ten seconds. As with a frog's leap, a running start does not improve the leap.

Lamp Without Flame

Creo Ignem 10

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Room

Spell Focus: Lantern Oil (+1)

Casting Total: +24

Illuminates the room that you are in with a light equal to torch or lamp light, as long as you concentrate. When using lantern oil, you spread it over some object, and the light emanates from that object. When cast outside, this spell illuminates an area about 5 paces across.

Thief of the Stolen Breath

Perdo Auram 10

R: Near/Sight, D: Mom, T: Small

Spell Focus: A Branch of Holly (+3)

Casting Total: +16

Takes a creature's breath out of its lungs, causing panic and the instant loss of a Fatigue level, plus a second level unless a Stamina stress roll of 6+ is made. Casting requisite is Animál for beasts and Corpus for people. This spell cannot effect a target more than once a round.

Caltis, Follower of Tremere

Characteristics

Int +3, Per 0, Pre +1, Com 0, Str +1, Stm +2, Dex -1, Qik -2

| Size | Soak | Confidence | Encumbrance |
|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 0 | +2 | 3 | 0 |

Fatigue levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Unconscious

Body levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Incapacitated

Abilities

Certámen 3, Concentration 5, Finesse 4, Folk Ken 3, Guile 2, Hermes Lore 2, Intrigue 2, Magic Theory 4, Parma Magica 4, Penetration 3, Scribe Latin 3, Speak English 4, Speak Latin 5

Arts

Creo 10, Intélego 7, Muto 8, Perdo 10, Rego 8, Animál 0, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpus 0, Herbam 0, Ignem 0, Imáginem 0, Mentem 0, Terram 12, Vim 7

Character Notes

You are most powerful when dealing with stone and other materials drawn from the earth. You are also good at creating and destroying things in general, and you have some skill with the essence of magic itself.

You have some mundane political ability, and you have good defenses against magical attack.

Strong-Willed (+1): You cannot easily be coerced into activities, beliefs, or feelings. You get +3 on any roll which may require strength of will.

find it merely unpleasant, you consider it intolerable. If you are the violent type, you may start fights with those who offend you.

Flaws

Magic Addiction (-3): You crave the rush of casting and holding power over magic. Whenever you cast a spell, you have a difficult time stopping yourself from casting again and again until you drop from exhaustion. Whenever you use a stress die in spellcasting, you must, whether or not the spell succeeds, make an Int + Concentration stress roll, against a target number of half the level of the spell (or, if you botched, the full level you were attempting). If you fail, you must immediately either cast a Formulaic spell of at least the same level as the previous spell, or cast any spontaneous spell, expending fatigue. If you botch, you continue casting spells until you fall unconscious.

No Sigil (-1): Your sigil (the symbol of your membership in the Order of Hermes) is held by your parents. You cannot vote at tribunal, and the holder of your sigil can call on you to perform tasks or missions. Any filii you have do not hold their sigils until you possess your own. You must defeat the holder of your sigil in certámen to claim your right.

Oversensitive (-1): You are oversensitive to disrespect. While others

Spells

Circle of the Faerie Stone

Creo Terram 30

R: Near/Sight, D: Sun/Perm, T: Str

Aimed: 0

Spell Focus: A Faerie Mushroom (+3)

Requisite: Vim

Casting Total: +19

Creates a 12-foot-high stone wall in a circle up to 10 paces across. It has a Magic Resistance of +20. This spell only needs to be aimed if you intend to encircle a specific target.

Stone to Falling Dust

Perdo Terram 25

R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: 100-Year-Old Dust (+3)

Casting Total: +22

One solid non-living, non-metal object weighing up to 500 pounds turns to a pile of dust. A casting requisite may be required, of the Form appropriate to the target.

Earth that Breaks No More

Muto Terram 20

R: Reach/Sight, D: Sun/Inst, T: Spec

Spell Focus: A Chunk of Stone (+1)

Casting Total: +20

Turns a volume of packed dirt up to the size of a Room into stone.

Eyes of the Treacherous Terrain

Intéllego Terram 20

R: Sight, D: Mom/Conc, T: Bound

Spell Focus: A Troll's Eye (+3)

Casting Total: +19

You can tell intuitively if any natural terrain you see is treacherous, such as if a rock field is prone to sliding.

Hands of the Grasping Earth

Rego Terram 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Sun, T: Spec

Spell Focus: A pair of brown gloves (+1)

Requisite: Muto

Casting Total: +20

Earthen hands from beneath the target, rise out of the ground, and grasp the target's ankles. The target can avoid the hands on a Quickness stress roll of 12+. A roll of 9+ indicates that only one ankle is caught (the other hand disappears into the earth). To break free requires a Strength stress roll of 15+ if both ankles are caught, and a roll of 12+ if only one is caught. (One attempt is allowed per round, and each requires a Fatigue roll.) Each hand can be destroyed by beating its +25 Soak roll (hacking weapons do double normal damage). Each hand has one Body level

Pit of the Gaping Earth

Perdo Terram 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Mom, T: Spec

Spell Focus: Earth Taken from a Deep Cavern (+1)

Casting Total: +22

The dirt in a circle 6 paces across recedes into the ground, leaving a pit 9 feet deep.

Seal the Earth

Creo Terram 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Sun/Inst, T: Room

Spell Focus: A Handful of Dirt (+3)

Casting Total: +22

Creates enough dirt to fill in a pit of up to 6 paces across and 3 paces deep.

The Crystal Dart

Muto Terram 10

R: Reach/Far D: Mom, T: Small

Aimed +4

Spell Focus: A Rock Crystal (+3)

Requisite: Rego

Casting Total: +20

A 10-inch crystal dart rises from the ground at your feet, floats into the air, and speeds off like an arrow at a target that is within Far range. It does +10 damage.

Trackless Step

Rego Terram 10

R: Per/Touch, D: Spec, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Hoof-Shaving from a Deer (+3)

Casting Total: +20

You leave no tracks in the earth until you come to a stop, such as to rest or fight.

The Unseen Porter

Rego Terram 10

R: Near/Sight, D: Conc, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Silver Shaving (+1)

Casting Total: +20

Like *Unseen Arm* (ReTe 5), but it can carry large objects such as crates. Roughly speaking, it has the capabilities of a very strong person (Str +5). The heavier the object is, the slower the unseen porter moves. If delicacy is required, high Finesse stress rolls (12+ or so) are needed. The spell can only carry inanimate objects, and cannot carry you. It also cannot lift things more than 6 feet above the ground. The focus must be from a valued serving platter. Casting requisites of an appropriate Form for target are required.

Herrit, Follower of Cytalus

Characteristics

Int +3, Per 0, Pre 0, Com -2, Str -1, Stm +1, Dex +1, Qik +2

| Size | Soak | Confidence | Encumbrance |
|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 0 | +1 | 4 | 0 |

Fatigue levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Unconscious

Body levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Incapacitated

Abilities

Concentration 3, Folk Ken 5, Hermes Lore 3, Intrigue 4, Magic Theory 4, Parma Magica 6, Penetration 4, Scribe Latin 2, Speak English 4, Speak Latin 5

Arts

Creo 8, Intélego 10, Muto 0, Perdo 8, Rego 10, Animál 0, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpus 12, Herbam 0, Ignem 0, Imáginem 7, Mentem 7, Terram 0, Vim 0

Character Notes

Your magic is strong when dealing with humans or human-like bodies, and you have a fair degree of skill with images and minds, as well. You also have excellent magic resistance.

You are good at understanding people, and figuring them out (and you have magic to help you), but you are not very good at actually talking to them and convincing them to do what you want, although *Aura of Rightful Authority* helps.

from using your voice normally or using a booming voice.

Self-Confident (+1): You have firm confidence in your own abilities. You begin the game with one extra Confidence point. This is already included in your statistics.

out per season. You may only write summa up to one-third of your level in an Art of Knowledge, and write two levels less per season than normal. You copy summae at (Scribe + Dexterity) x 2 levels per season.

Flaws

Flawed Parma Magica (-1): Your Parma Magica (a ritual of protection against spells) is defective and provides only half the normal magic resistance against a certain Form: Ignem, in your case.

Noncombatant (-2): You have no interest or ability in the fighting arts. You cannot learn any Weapon Skills, and suffer -3 on all Attack and Damage scores. You may not learn combat spells (defined at storyguide discretion). You cannot pick Virtues and Flaws relating to armament quality. You may learn and engage in certámen.

Tormenting Master (-1): Your master does not believe you have successfully passed the apprentice's gauntlet (the test of becoming a magus). He periodically troubles you with political moves and indirect attacks.

Weak Writer (-1): You write about magic slowly and methodically. You copy spells from your shorthand at (Scribe Latin x 10) levels per season, and copy (Scribe Latin x 30) levels of spells that have already been written

Spells

The Eye of the Sage

Intélego Corpus 30

R: Arc, D: Spec, T: Spec

Spell Focus: A Griffin's Eye (+3)

Requisites: Imáginem

Casting Total: +18

Lets you see a specific person and what is within one pace of that person. The image is clear enough to allow reading. The vision lasts for an hour or until concentration is broken. At distances over 100 miles, the image grows cloudy and becomes obscured. Each pawn of vis expended in casting can extend this limit by 50 miles.

Strings of the Unwilling Marionette

Rego Corpus 25

R: Near/Sight, D: Conc, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Mannequin of the Target (+3)

Casting Total: +23

You can control the physical movements of a person, such as walking, standing, and turning. If the target resists the control, the movements are jerky. The target can yell, but you can prevent intelligible speech by controlling the target's mouth. The target must be conscious to be moved about. A Strength stress roll of 12+ allows resistance, rolled each round.

Virtues and Flaws

Virtues

Gentle Gift (+1): Unlike other magi, whose magical nature disturbs normal people and animals, your Gift is subtle and quiet. You do not suffer the usual penalties on rolls for interacting with people and animals.

Keen Vision (+1): You can see farther and more clearly than most. You get a +3 bonus to all rolls involving sight, not including attacks with missile weapons.

Quiet Magic (+2): You can cast spells using only a soft voice at no penalty, and at only a -5 penalty if you do not speak at all. You gain no benefits

Aura of Rightful Authority

Rego Mentem 20

R: Touch/Near, D: Sun/Moon, T: Spec

Spell Focus: Violet Amethyst (+3)

Casting Total: +18

Those who listen to the individual touched during the casting of this spell have their obedience and tendency to follow orders enhanced greatly. Common people generally do as they are told without question (as long as the orders are within the realm of reason). Those who are accustomed to giving orders themselves are much less likely to follow the target's. Bishops, dukes, generals, and magi are not affected by this spell unless it is cast on someone of status near to their own. Even then, such figures are allowed to attempt an Intelligence stress roll of 15+ to resist.

The violet amethyst is commonly made into a brooch or clasp. While casting the spell, usually you give it to the target of the spell to wear and make a shallow bow. Violet amethyst is the stone of Jupiter, and gives political power and ascendancy over the masses.

The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch

Creo Corpus 20

R: Touch/Near, D: Sun/Inst, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Bloodstone (+3)

Casting Total: +20

The person touched can recover a lost Body level by making a Stamina stress roll of 3+, to which is added the highest Chirurgy skill of anyone who has successfully tended the wounds. Also, subtract the wound penalty from the roll. Does not heal damage from poison or disease. Note that the healing is not permanent unless vis is expended to boost the duration.

The Inexorable Search

Inté尔lego Corpus 20

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Feather from the Target's Pillow (+4)

Casting Total: +23

Determines the location of a specific person. To cast the spell you need a map and an arcane connection. After casting the spell, you can move your finger over the map at the rate of one hour per square foot of map. When your finger passes over the person's location as represented on the map, you sense the person's presence. (If the person is not in the area covered by the map, no sensations result.) You can locate the person to within a thumb's width on the map. Thus, a map with a larger scale gives more-precise information. Each casting of the spell allows for the searching of one map. A similar spell allows you to search

for a dead body (*Tracing the Trail of Death's Stench*), but you do not know that spell.

Posing the Silent Question

Inté尔lego Mentem 20

R: Eye/Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Sapphire (+1)

Casting Total: +18

You can ask one silent mental question of the target, then detect the answer. The truth of the answer is limited by the knowledge of the target. Questions to the effect of "What would you do if . . . ?" often receive inaccurate replies. You are likely to get what the target thinks he would do, not necessarily what he would really do. The target of this spell does not notice the questioning unless he makes a magic resistance roll.

Confusion of the Numbed Will

Rego Mentem 15

R: Eye/Sight, D: Sun/Moon, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Speck of Alcohol (+1)

Casting Total: +18

Confuses a person, who must make an Intelligence stress roll to take any direct action. A roll of 12+ ends the spell, while a roll of 9+ lets the character take the intended action, but the spell remains in effect. Any lower roll means the character is confused and takes some other type of action. When it is imperative for the victim to take an action, the storyguide should allow an appropriate modifier to the roll. While under this spell, a character always strikes last in combat and gets at least a -1 on all attacking and defending rolls.

Endurance of the Berserkers

Rego Corpus 15

R: Touch/Near, D: Conc/Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Lock of Hair from a Berserker (+3)

Casting Total: +23

The target's body acts as though it were unwounded and unfatigued for as long as you concentrate (or until sunrise or sunset if vis is used to increase duration). Keep track of the actual Body and Fatigue levels that the body loses while "berserk," because as soon as the spell wears off, the target loses those levels. If the target runs out of Body levels at any time during the spell, the spell terminates immediately and the character dies. If the target runs out of Fatigue levels, the spell terminates immediately and the character falls unconscious.

Grip of the Choking Hand

Perdo Corpus 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Conc, T: Ind

Spell Focus: Branch of Holly (+3)

Casting Total: +20

The target feels an invisible, strangling hand on his throat. Each round, the target loses a Fatigue level, or a Body level if already unconscious. It requires a Stamina stress roll of 6+ to break the spell, rolled each round. If using the holly spell focus, you point the branch towards the victim while you cast the spell. Holly is dangerous for magi to carry, as peasant superstition holds it to be a harmful plant and it may therefore attract unfavorable attention.

Veil of Invisibility

Perdo Imáginem 10

R: Reach/Touch, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A fern seed (+1)

Casting Total: +16

The target becomes completely undetectable to normal sight, regardless of what it does, but still casts a reflection in a mirror.

Wizard's Sidestep

Rego Imáginem 10

R: Per/Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: An opal (+3)

Casting Total: +18

Your image appears up to 1 pace from where you actually are, so attacks aimed there are likely to miss you. Whenever the image is successfully struck, it disappears and reappears in another spot.

Rise of the Feathery Body

Rego Corpus 5

R: Touch/Near, D: Conc/Moon, T: Ind

Spell Focus: The Feather of an Eagle (+3)

Casting Total: +23

Allows the target to float vertically to any height, carrying up to 50 pounds, and rising as fast as smoke rises, slower if carrying a heavy load. The target cannot move horizontally through this spell.

Morlen, Follower of Merinita

Characteristics

Int +3, Per 0, Pre +2, Com +1, Str -2, Stm -1, Dex +1, Qik 0

| Size | Soak | Confidence | Encumbrance |
|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 0 | -1 | 3 | 0 |

Fatigue levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Unconscious

Body levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Incapacitated

Abilities

Awareness 4, Concentration 2, Faerie Lore 6, Faerie Magic 1, Finesse 5, Hermes Lore 1, Magic Theory 5, Parma Magica 2, Play Lute 4, Scribe Latin 3, Speak English 4, Speak Latin 5

Arts

Creo 7, Intélego 10, Muto 10, Perdo 8, Rego 0, Animál 0, Aquam 7, Auram 8, Corpus 0, Herbam 0, Ignem 0, Imáginem 12, Mentem 0, Terram 0, Vim 0

Character Notes

You are a member of House Merinita, and have a deep knowledge of faeries. If faeries are encountered, you should ask the storyguide whether you know anything relevant, because there is a good chance that you will.

Your magic excels with images. This covers the creation of illusions and invisibility, as well as magically spying on distant locations. You are particularly good at finding things out about images, and at changing them, but you are talented at any manipulation of them. You have lesser talents with air and water, and are good at finding out things and changing them, no matter what they are.

The higher your score in this Ability, though, the more strange and like the fae you become.

Free Study (+1): You are better at figuring things out for yourself than you are at poring over books. Add +1 to rolls when studying from raw vis (before multiplication).

Inventive Genius (+1): Invention comes naturally to you. You receive +3 on Lab Totals when you invent new spells, craft magic items, and make potions. If you experiment, you get +6.

Sidhe Blood (+2): You are descended from one of the noble Sidhe who rule the lands of Summer and sunlight. You get +1 to all rolls to avoid afflictions due to aging, and +3 to all natural resistance rolls for those spells you want to resist. In addition, because of the striking and unusual qualities of your nature add +1 to your Presence, even if it brings you total over +3 (this has already been figured in above). Many mortals may consider you fascinating or alluring.

to perform this service may have serious or lasting consequences.

Poor Reader (-1): You don't like to read, and don't read very well. When studying Arts or Knowledges from a book, treat the book as if its Quality were two levels lower.

Poor Student (-1): You don't understand what others teach you very well. You get a -6 penalty to Lab Totals when learning spells or when working from the lab texts of others.

Spells

Discern the Images of Truth and Falsehood

Intélego Imáginem 30
R: Near/Sight, D: Conc/Moon, T: Room
Spell Focus: A Sapphire (+3)
Casting Total: +21

You can tell whether an image has been created or altered through a spell, seeing both the original and false images in the case of alterations. Roll a stress die, adding the level of this spell + 5 when you cast the spell; any illusion spells higher than your roll are not discerned. If you botch the roll, you mistake illusions for the real thing and reality for illusion.

Image Phantom

Muto Imáginem 25
R: Near/Sight, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind
Spell Focus: A Cocoon (+1)
Casting Total: +21

Any one thing, including a living thing, can be made to appear as if it were something else of approximately the same shape and size. The illusion cannot be cast on things that

Virtues and Flaws

Virtues

Faerie Magic (+1): This gives you a unique Arcane Skill, Faerie Magic, which you purchase along with your other Abilities and improve with experience points. Add your score in this Ability to rolls resisting faerie magic and to rolls when casting faerie magic spells that you learn or invent (you may add this bonus to any of the formulaic spells listed on your character sheet).

Flaws

Loose Magic (-1): You lack the concentration, will, or ability to Master spells.

Obligation (-2): You are required to perform certain services for someone. Your obligation is to the faeries at a local forest, where you must lead a debate for one season per year. Failure

have a shape or size improper to the final appearance, and is broken if anyone, including the target, takes an action that suggests it is something other than what it seems to be. For instance, a person has to curl up to be made to look like a rock; the person's standing up or being touched shows the illusion to be false and ends the spell.

Clouds of Thunderous Might

Muto Auram 20

R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Spec

Spell Focus: The Essence of an Air Elemental (+5)

Casting Total: +17

Changes rain clouds into a full-fledged storm. The storm is non-magical, and lasts as long as a normal storm, usually several hours. This spell cannot be used to make an already existing storm more severe.

Phantasmal Animal

Creo Imáginem 20

R: Reach/Near, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A topaz (+3)

Casting Total: +18

Creates an image of any animal or beast up to the size of a horse (Size +2). Under your direct mental command, it moves about and makes appropriate noises. You need to be able to concentrate whenever you wish to direct the illusion to move in some manner. Note that the image has no scent (or taste), and that this may be noticed by real animals (or people). Of course, a magus may not use this spell to create the image of an animal he or she does not know exists.

The Ear for Distant Voice

Intélego Imáginem 20

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Room

Spell Focus: A Rock Crystal (+3)

Casting Total: +21

You can hear what is happening in the place you designate. You must have an arcane connection with the place or with a person there.

Disguise of the Transformed Image

Muto Imáginem 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: An Icon (+3)

Casting Total: +21

Makes someone look, sound, and smell different, though at least passably human. The icon must resemble the changed appearance of the person.

Breath of Winter

Muto Aquam 15

R: Touch/Sight, D: Sun/Inst, T: Spec

Spell Focus: Beryl (+5)

Requisite: Terram

Casting Total: +9

Turns a circle of water up to 5 paces across into snow. Beryl is a gem associated with water.

Whispering Winds

Intélego Auram 15

R: Sight, D: Conc/Moon, T: Spec

Spell Focus: Three Leaves from an Oak Tree (+1)

Casting Total: +16

The winds bear their tidings to your ears, allowing you to hear words spoken by any group of people within your line of sight, provided no solid barrier (including glass) intervenes.

Silence of the Smothered Sound

Perdo Imáginem 10

R: Near, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A feather (+3)

Casting Total: +19

Makes one being or object incapable of producing sound. Magi who cannot utter their magic words suffer the normal penalties to their spellcasting rolls.

Veil of Invisibility

Perdo Imáginem 10

R: Reach/Touch, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A fern seed (+1)

Casting Total: +19

The target becomes completely undetectable to normal sight, regardless of what it does, but still casts a reflection in a mirror.

Touch of the Pearls

Intélego Aquam 5

R: Touch/Reach, D: Conc/Moon, T: Small

Spell Focus: A Pearl (+5)

Casting Total: +16

Tells you whether a liquid you hold or touch is poisonous, just as a pearl sometimes does. Not surprisingly, having a pearl present makes it very hard to fail when casting this spell.

Siffed, Follower of Criamon

Characteristics

Int +3, Per +1, Pre +1, Com +2, Str 0, Stm 0, Dex -2, Qik +1

| Size | Soak | Confidence | Encumbrance |
|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 0 | +0 | 3 | 0 |

Fatigue levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Unconscious

Body levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Incapacitated

Abilities

Awareness 3, Charm 5, Concentration 4, Enigmatic Wisdom 3, Folk Ken 6, Guile 5, Hermes Lore 2, Magic Theory 4, Parma Magica 2, Scribe Latin 2, Speak English 4, Speak Latin 5

Arts

Creo 7, Intélego 10, Muto 10, Perdo 7, Rego 8, Animál 0, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpus 0, Herbam 0, Ignem 0, Imáginem 8, Mentem 12, Terram 0, Vim 0

Character Notes

You are naturally very good at dealing with people. You understand them, and you can be very charming, and very deceitful, at need. As a member of House Criamon, your face is tattooed with arcane symbols, but you have a spell to let you hide that. The second syllable of your name is the accented one: sif-FED.

Your magic also concentrates on the control and understanding of the mind. This sort of magic works best when used subtly, so that no one realizes his companions are bewitched. It is also likely to be of limited use on non-human creatures, and casting it on other magi is a gross breach of the Code of Hermes.

Virtues and Flaws

Virtues

Cyclic Magic (positive) (+2): Your magic is attuned to the cycle of day and night, and so you gain +3 to all spellcasting rolls and Lab totals during the day. Note that you may, on the whole, do all lab work during the day.

Gentle Gift (+1): Unlike other magi, whose magical nature disturbs normal people and animals, your Gift is

subtle and quiet. You do not suffer the usual penalties on rolls for interacting with people and animals.

Piercing Gaze (+2): By staring intently at people you make them feel uneasy, as if you are peering into their souls. Those with ulterior motives, uneasy consciences, or lying tongues must make rolls against an appropriate Personality Trait, Guile, or whatever the storyguide deems appropriate, to remain calm. Furthermore, you gain a +3 to rolls involving intimidation. Faeries and demons are unfazed by your power.

Flaws

Cyclic Magic (negative) (-2): The counterpart to your Virtue of the same name, you have -3 to all spellcasting and Lab totals during the night.

Incomprehensible (-1): You have an eccentric understanding of magic which you are almost completely unable to describe. Your rolls are at -3 when discussing or writing about magic (assuming that you are trying to communicate clearly).

Lame (-2): One of your legs is weakened, whether since birth or through some accident. You move slowly and clumsily. Your base speed is a mere one mile per hour, and anyone can outrun you. You suffer a -6 penalty on rolls involving moving quickly or

with agility, -3 on Dodge, and -1 on other combat scores.

Spells

Peering into the Mortal Mind

Intélego Mentem 30
R: Eye/Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind
Spell Focus: A Sapphire (+1)
Casting Total: +22

You can thoroughly probe and understand the contents of the mind of the target, including his immediate and long-term motives, personal strengths and weaknesses, and other pertinent information. The sapphire is said to bring wisdom. The target may resist this spell by making an Intelligence stress roll of 9+.

Blessing of Childlike Bliss

Perdo Mentem 25
R: Eye/Sight, D: Sun/Moon, T: Ind
Spell Focus: A Lock of a Child's Hair (+1)
Casting Total: +18

Reduces an adult mind to a child's level. The target solves problems, reasons, and expresses emotions as would a three-year-old. Magi affected cannot cast spells. At first, anyway, the target is likely to be happy at having lost a world of cares and troubles that are no longer imaginable.

Emotion of Reversed Intentions

Muto Mentem 20
R: Eye/Sight, D: Sun/Moon, T: Ind
Spell Focus: A Ruby (+3)
Casting Total: +22

The main emotion influencing a character at the time of casting is replaced by its opposite over the next minute. The new emotion is felt as strongly as the original, but lacks

justification and can therefore be talked out of someone. Intelligence stress roll of 9+ to resist.

Memory of the Distant Dream

Creo Mentem 20

R: Eye/Sight; D: Sun/Moon, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Sprig of Rosemary (+1)

Casting Total: +19

Inserts a full and complete memory into a person's mind. If the target gives the memory some thought and concentration, and makes an Intelligence roll of 9+, the memory is revealed as false. When cast with the spell focus of rosemary, which is commonly associated with good memory, the herb is crumbled, and then blown toward the victim.

Disguise of the Transformed Image

Muto Imáginem 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Sun/Year, T: Ind

Spell Focus: An Icon (+3)

Casting Total: +18

Makes someone look, sound, and smell different, though at least passably human. The icon must resemble the changed appearance of the person.

Perception of the Conflicting Motives

Intéllego Mentem 15

R: Eye/Near, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Sapphire (+3)

Casting Total: +22

You can detect the conflicting motives behind one target's actions. Thus you might learn that a guard feels conflict between fear and duty. This spell is often used before application of a Muto spell, since it is usually easier to change a target's emotions after you've sensed them than it is to create emotions.

Scent of Peaceful Slumber

Rego Mentem 15

R: Near/Sight, D: Mom, T: Room

Spell Focus: A Lilac (+1)

Requisite: Auram

Casting Total: +8

A very light purple haze that smells of lilacs slowly rises from the ground and remains for a few minutes. Those who breathe the haze and fail a Stamina stress roll of 9+ fall asleep. The haze first appears at about knee level. You must concentrate for two rounds in order for it to reach the height of a standing person's nose.

Phantasm of the Talking Head

Creo Imáginem 10

R: Near, D: Spec, T: Small

Spell Focus: A Mask (+3)

Casting Total: +15

Creates an illusory face on a wall or other flat object. The visage can speak up to 20

words before the spell expires. Individual wizards' sigils can produce very interesting differences in how the voice sounds, how the face looks, and so on.

The Call to Slumber

Rego Mentem 10

R: Near/Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A pinch of sand (+1)

Casting Total: +20

The target becomes sleepy and falls asleep within five minutes unless some current need makes wakefulness imperative. The target can resist with a stamina stress roll of 12+.

Snap of Awakening

Rego Mentem 10

R: Near/Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Twig (+1)

Casting Total: +20

When you snap your fingers or break the spell focus, you instantly awaken the target from sleep to alert consciousness. Does not work on someone unconscious from Fatigue-level loss, wounds, or magic.

Subtle Shift of Heart

Muto Mentem 10

R: Eye/Sight, D: Sun/Moon, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Figure (+3)

Casting Total: +22

Subtly change an emotion into a related but different one. For instance, loathing can become hate, and greed can become jealousy. The figure used must represent the spell's target.

Trust of Childlike Faith

Perdo Mentem 10

R: Eye/Sight, D: Diam/Sun, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Lock of Child's Hair (+3)

Casting Total: +19

The target loses judgment and believes almost any passable lie for the duration of the spell. An Intelligence stress roll of 6+ is allowed to resist. Truly incredible lies allow easier resistance rolls.

Thamik, Follower of Verditius

Characteristics

Int +3, Per +1, Pre -2, Com -1, Str 0, Stm +1, Dex +2, Qik 0

| Size | Soak | Confidence | Encumbrance |
|------|------|------------|-------------|
| 0 | +1 | 3 | 0 |

Fatigue levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Unconscious

Body levels

✓ OK, □ 0, □ -1, □ -3, □ -5, □ Incapacitated

Abilities

Concentration 3, Woodcrafter 6, Hermes Lore 3, Magic Theory 5, Parma Magica 2, Scribe Latin 3, Speak English 4, Speak Latin 5, Verditius Magic 1

Arts

Creo 7, Intellego 8, Muto 8, Perdo 7, Rego 10, Animál 0, Aquam 0, Auram 0, Corpus 0, Herbam 12, Ignem 0, Imáginem 0, Mentem 0, Terram 0, Vim 10

Character Notes

You are a member of House Verditius, which is renowned for the manufacture of magical items. Your main abilities lie with wood, and you are highly skilled in its mundane and magical manipulation. You are also skilled with the essence of magic, a necessary condition for making magical items.

can use. You gain one pawn of vis per season (four pawns a year); the source and type is determined in consultation with the storyguide. You do not start with any of this vis, though, having spent it or just discovered how to get it.

Special Circumstances (+1): You are able to perform magic better when you are in a forest, gaining a +3 bonus to your rolls to cast or resist spells.

casting tools is included in the time it takes Verditius magi to learn spells.

You also have a unique Arcane Skill, called Verditius Magic, reflecting your special aptitude at crafting magic items, which you may improve with experience points. Add this Ability score to your Lab total when creating magical devices, including longevity potions.

Weakness (-1): You have a soft spot for fine woodcrafted items. In the face of this, all else is unimportant: promises are forgotten, duties neglected, and common sense cast to the winds.

Virtues and Flaws

Virtues

Inventive Genius (+1): Invention comes naturally to you. You receive +3 on Lab totals when you invent new spells, craft magic items, and make potions. If you experiment, you get +6.

Knack (+2): You have an innate aptitude that gives you a positive modifier on rolls with your Craft—Woodworking Ability. Whenever you use it, you get the bonus, which is equal to the value of this Virtue (+2). Knacks are never cumulative with other Virtues that grant bonuses to die rolls—you get the highest applicable bonus, not the sum of them.

Secret Vis Source (+1): You have a secret or personal supply of Herbam vis (raw magical energy) that you alone

Flaws

Clumsy Magic (-2): You have trouble targeting your spells accurately. Any spell that requires a targeting roll to aim its effect is subject to disastrous failure: a roll of 0 is automatically a botch. You receive a -3 penalty to any rolls involving Finesse.

Deep Sleeper (-1): When you sleep, you don't go halfway. You can sleep through loud noises and generally only wake up when shaken, or when good and ready. Even then you suffer -3 on your rolls for half an hour or so after awakening, and you're likely to head back to bed if at all possible.

Follower of Verditius (-1): Your magic requires the use of small devices called casting tools. These must simply be held and focused on as the spell is cast in order for it to work. Verditius magi still must use gestures and words as other magi do. Each spell known requires a separate tool. The creation of

Spells

Freeing the Striding Tree

Rego Herbam 30

R: Reach/Far, D: Conc, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Violet Amethyst (+1)

Casting Total: +23

Causes a tree to move under your mental command. The tree can move its branches and bend its trunk as you direct, and walk half as fast as a human can. A large tree striking with its branches has Initiative +5, Attack +7, and Damage +10. Normal weapons are practically useless against large trees.

If you botch a Concentration roll to maintain control, the tree attacks you, having been awakened and disturbed by this spell. The violet amethyst aids this spell because it is the stone of Jupiter and thus aids in the command of others.

Converse with Plant and Tree

Intélego Herbam 25

R: Touch/Far, D: Conc, T: Ind

Spell Focus: A Chewed Leaf (+1)

Casting Total: +21

You can speak with a plant for one conversation. The level of conversation depends on the type of plants; longer-lived and more noble plants have more to say. A single question and response takes ten to thirty minutes, with slower-growing plants speaking more slowly. Typically, plants can talk about the soil and about other plants around them, but have limited awareness of more momentary events, such as the passing of animals or people, unless that passing has a direct bearing on the plant (for example, a person cut its trunk). News can spread quickly through a forest when it has to, called from tree to tree on the wind. Bystanders cannot understand your conversation.

Maintaining the Demanding Spell

Rego Vim 20

R: Per, D: Diam, T: Ind

Casting Total: +21

You cast this spell on a spell that you have already cast and are maintaining through concentration. The spell that requires concentration is then automatically maintained for the duration of this spell, whether you concentrate or not. You cannot change the effects of the first spell without concentrating on it again. For instance, you can use *The Unseen Arm* (ReTe 5) to hold an object in the air without concentrating, but to move the object still requires concentration. An Int + Concentration stress roll of 6+ must be made in order to cast this spell while keeping the first one going (a lower roll than normal because this is what the spell is designed for). This spell only works on spells of equal or lower level.

Wall of Thorns

Creo Herbam 20

R: Near/Far, D: Sun/Perm, T: Str

Spell Focus: A Single Thorn (+1)

Casting Total: +20

Within seconds, this spell creates a straight wall of woody, thorny bushes up to 20 paces long, 1 pace thick, and 4 paces high. The thorns, which are unnaturally resilient, have a +15 Soak and four Body levels (and are cut by edged weapons only). Bodily forcing one's way through the wall requires a Strength stress roll of 9+ and does +15 damage whether the attempt succeeds or fails. If the roll botches, an additional 5 points of damage are suffered. The wall grows out of existing bushes or fertile soil. A Climb stress roll of 9+ allows a

character to scale the wall, but the character takes +10 damage in the process.

Shriek of the Impending Shafts

Intélego Herbam 15

R: Per/Touch, D: Conc/Moon, T: Spec

Spell Focus: A Hazel Wood Rod (+1)

Casting Total: +21

Lets you know where anything wooden will be in the immediate future (in the next few seconds) by a shriek that sounds in the air in advance of the wood's coming. You get a +9 bonus on Defense scores against wooden weapons (provided that you have the freedom to dodge and have engaged the wielder), and you can automatically dodge wooden missiles fired from greater than Near range unless so many are coming at you that you can't get out of the way, in which case the ease factor of shots is still modified by +3. Missiles from archers in Near range or closer still have to add +6 to their normal ease factor to strike you.

Tangle of Wood and Thorns

Rego Herbam 15

R: Near/Far, D: Conc, T: Ind

Aimed: +1

Spell Focus: A small net (+1)

Requisite: Muto

Casting Total: +21

Takes a length of wood that you designate and hurls it at a target (a targeting roll is required). The wood wraps around and immobilizes the target (assuming that there is enough wood), who must make a Strength stress roll of 9+ to break free (one attempt per round). If the victim ever botches, he cannot escape without outside help. If the length of wood has thorns, it does +6 damage when it hits, and again each time the target tries to break free, whether successful or not. When the caster stops concentrating, the target can escape on a Strength roll of 6+. A small net made out of plants and grass aids this spell sympathetically.

Intuition of the Forest

Intélego Herbam 10

R: Per/Touch, D: Sun/Year, T: Bound

Spell Focus: Chips from a Faun's Hoof (+5)

Casting Total: +21

You engage in a type of communion with the woods that you are in, giving you an intuitive sense of how to get along in the forest, and how to get the most out of the forest without causing it harm. You get a +3 to all nature-oriented rolls (not including spells) when in a forest or similar area. Causing significant harm to the forest cancels this spell.

Repel the Wooden Shafts

Rego Herbam 10

R: Reach, D: Conc/Sun, T: Small

Spell Focus: A Staff (+3)

Casting Total: +23

Deflects a single blow of any weapon made of wood, up to the size of a two-handed club. You can deflect a different attack each round. The attack automatically misses, but the attacker still rolls to see if he or she botches (with two extra botch rolls for melee weapons). If you ordinarily carry a staff, it must be tossed aside for the casting.

Trap of the Entwining Vines

Creo Herbam 10

R: Near/Far, D: Spec, T: Spec

Spell Focus: A Leaf from a Vine (+1)

Casting Total: +20

Causes strong, woody vines to grow rapidly from fertile earth. The vines cover a circle 2 paces across and reach 6 feet high. Anything caught within them is immobilized. To avoid the vines, the target must make a Qik – Encumbrance stress roll of 9+. To break out requires a Strength stress roll of 12+ (allowed once a round). Someone not trapped can cut a trapped person free in two rounds, assuming proper tools. The vines weaken and wither to dust after an hour.