

# Subtle, and Quick to Anger

This adventure can handle up to six players, including one playing two characters. Pregenerated characters are provided, and the adventure is designed to give each of those characters something important to do.

Darius and Moratamis are magi. If you have people familiar with *Ars Magica* in your group, they should *not* be given the magi to play. Instead, they should be encouraged to make in-character suggestions to the players who do have the magi, and, if necessary, provide out-of-character explanations.

Isabelle, Victor, and Jarvis are companions, although Victor, as a Redcap, is a magus in the eyes of Hermetic law. He has a number of enchanted items, but cannot cast spells. Wulther and Aeolus are intelligent, magical animals. Aeolus can talk to anyone, but Wulther can only talk to Jarvis. (More accurately, Jarvis can talk to animals in general, which includes Wulther.) A sensible pairing would be Isabelle and Wulther, as Wulther has more to do in the parts of the adventure where Isabelle has less to do, and vice versa.

If you are short of players, Wulther and Aeolus can both be doubled up with other characters. Jarvis and Wulther should be played by different people, as should Victor and Aeolus. If there are only four players, Darius can stay at the covenant. His magical abilities are useful, but not essential. If there are only three players, Victor and Aeolus should stay behind as well, perhaps because Victor does not want to risk returning to the village. Alternatively, you could double up Jarvis and Isabelle, Moratamis and Aeolus, and Victor and Wulther; these pairs of characters will tend to be active at different times. The adventure probably won't work too well with only two players.

## In Your Saga

While this scenario was written as a convention demonstration scenario, it can easily be used in most sagas. Most covenants probably do not have a wandering regio, so St Roswith's village needs to be fairly close. On the other hand, most covenants do have mundane members who travel, and the curse's initial victim could even be a Redcap. In a normal saga situation, it doesn't matter so much if the characters who go out first do not have the abilities needed to solve the mystery; they can always go back. However, a covenant full of magi fresh from apprenticeship is probably not powerful enough to handle some of the magical challenges, and it might be better to wait a while.

## What's Going On

The relics have been stolen from a saint's shrine. The thief is a faerie fox, who hoped that the theft of the reliquary would weaken the Divine presence in the village, and allow the Faerie forest to spread. The presence of the holy object is now debilitating the faerie, who is no longer capable of getting the relics back where they belong.

Meanwhile, the saint has cursed the village that used to house the relics. People are becoming tired and listless, their gums, noses, and eyes are bleeding, and their teeth are becoming loose.

It is clear that there is a curse. The lord of the manor has asked the canons who look after the shrine to display the reliquary, and take it round the village, to avert the curse.

The canons do not want to admit that the bones are gone. Really, really don't want to admit it. They are claiming that the saint is angered by the lord's refusal to grant the fields around the shrine to the saint. The lord doesn't believe this, and is refusing to make the grant. This had led to a standoff.

Victor the Redcap passed through the village on his way back to Semita Errabunda, and has been struck by the curse. He wants to take some magi and companions back to sort it out, and restore his health. However, he has no idea what the cause of the curse is, so some investigation will be the first requirement.

The player characters need to talk to the canons and the lord of manor to find out what really happened, and, ideally, resolve the stand-off. The canons do not know who took the relics; they think they just 'vanished'. The characters, however, have the resources to piece the story together.

At the fox's lair, the characters will need to use magic to get to the relics. Getting them back to the village is also difficult, as the saint curses anyone without True Faith who directly touches the reliquary. Still, the characters have a number of ways of doing this.

If the relics are returned, all the curses, including those for touching the reliquary, are lifted, and the saint's cult becomes stronger.

## Victor's Request

Victor returns to the covenant with bleeding gums, loose hair, and a general feeling of tiredness. He has, in game terms, lost his Fresh Fatigue level, and will not get it back until the curse is lifted. The affliction started suddenly, and Victor is sure that it is a curse of some sort. Thus, he appeals for help getting it lifted.

All of the player characters know each other, but Victor going around, with Aeolus, his talking horse, who is played by a different player, is a good opportunity for each player to introduce his or her character. Victor should be encouraged to actually persuade each character to come along, but, obviously, the player characters will decide to go on the adventure. It does make good sense; lifting a curse on one of your friends is a worthy goal, after all.

Aeolus has not been affected by the curse. Neither he nor Victor knows why.

## But My Character Wouldn't Want to Go...

Victor has good reasons for approaching all the characters he chooses. Isabelle is probably the best communicator in the covenant. Jarvis is easily the best woodsman, even better than Victor himself. Moratamis is the best magical investigator, and Darius is the most powerful magus. The characters also have good reason to help Victor: he's their friend.

From the player's perspective, if their character doesn't go along, they can't play. If they don't want to play, why did they sign up for the demo scenario?

# Leaving Semita Errabunda

The players do not need to worry about making preparations for the trip; this is handled off-stage by Victor and Jarvis, who are both experienced travelers, with the help of the covenant staff. The characters are ready to leave by evening.

The covenant is a cluster of buildings set on an island in a lake, surrounded by implausibly beautiful mountains. The sky is an intense blue, reflected in the mirror-like surface of the lake. To the north of the covenant, a high waterfall cascades into the lake, and to the south the lake empties over another waterfall. Despite this, the lake is, truly, extremely calm; the covenant is in quite a high Magic aura, which intensifies natural experiences — in this case, the beauty of the mountain scenery. (Semita Errabunda is described in detail in a free download available from Atlas's website: you might want to read this.)

You should describe the scene as the characters walk to the edge of the island, where a beach shelves gently into the lake. The characters then walk out onto the lake, and continue across to the far shore.

There is a reasonable chance that at least one of the players will interrupt you at this point to check that they heard correctly. The player characters, as residents of Semita Errabunda, are indeed all capable of walking on the water of the lake. This is a natural side-effect of living in the regio for a significant period of time, and everyone in the covenant is used to it.

Once back on the shore, the characters follow a path that climbs the mountain. The lower slopes are wooded, and the scent of the pine trees fills the air. Brightly-colored birds fly about, and sing in exquisitely complex melodies. Small mammals dart across the path from time to time, but there are no threats. This level of the regio is still effectively part of the covenant, and the characters have nothing to fear.

The path climbs to a pass west of the covenant, where there is a small hut to wait for the right moment. If the characters climb the pass early, they find a path on the other side, leading down to a beautiful lake containing an island on which stands the covenant. The shape of the land is such that you can't look into both valleys at once without flying, but you can check that, indeed, if you leave the valley in the west, you re-enter it in the east.

As the sun falls low in the sky, it shines straight in the eyes of anyone using the pass. The characters walk through it at that point, and find themselves in rather different territory. Instead of a mountain pass, they are in a saddle between two hills, and the hills rapidly flatten out to farmland. Finding the way out of the regio from here is straightforward; just follow the track.

At this point, you should make sure to explain the concept of a regio to the players, and mention that, while this regio leads to different places at different times, most regiones are fixed in place. You should also explicitly mention, both now and when the characters enter the mundane world, that their tracks just start at the regio boundary, and have stopped at the boundary on the other level. Later in the adventure the players need to realize that there is a regio involved, so draw attention to this one.

Within the regio the sky is blue with lots of small white clouds chasing each other across the sky, although there is no wind at ground level. The path is deserted apart from the player characters, and there aren't even any birds. The sun is slightly higher in the sky than it was at the covenant, but such minor mismatches in time are normal.

The path goes around a blind corner between two hedges, and the characters suddenly find

themselves on a track a short distance from a large village. The sky is gray, a light drizzle is falling, and crows call from the trees. They have left the regio and are back in the mundane world.

## At the Village

The village, St. Roswith, grew up around the shrine housing the relics of St. Roswith, and is quite large. It is the site of a monthly market, although it is not currently market day, and is dominated by two buildings, at opposite ends.

## The Gift

The Gift, the ability to work magic, has an insidious effect on those around a magus or maga. People instinctively distrust and envy them, although they do not necessarily know why. Most people make up justifications for their feelings, believing that the magus 'looks like a cheat' or 'is that robber I've heard of'. The Gift also imposes a -3 penalty on all social rolls, making it hard for magi to overcome this initial impression.

It is important to play this up while the magi are in the village. People at the covenant are used to their magi, but the villagers are not. Thus, if the magi try to talk to people in the village, they will find everyone uncooperative and slightly hostile, although not hostile enough to cause trouble if the magi are polite. The companions and grogs do not have any such problems, and, at least in this adventure, shouldn't have to overcome any lingering suspicion inspired by the magi. The characters already know that it is better for unGifted people to deal with mundanes, and the players should be told.

In the north of the village is the parish church of St. Roswith, a large, stone building. Attached to the eastern end of the church is an almost separate building, the shrine that normally houses the relics of St. Roswith. The church is also home to a small community of canons, clergy who follow a rule of life similar to, but not as strict as, that followed by monks. There are three canons currently living at the church.

## Magic in the Village

The power of God protects the village and the people in it from the influence of other powers. It has a Dominion Aura of 2, and as a result, all magical abilities suffer a -6 penalty to all rolls. This covers all of the magi's spells and Victor's Wilderness Sense. Jarvis's Wilderness Sense is faerie in origin, and thus suffers a -8 penalty, not that it is much use in a village anyway. His Animal Ken suffers a similar penalty, although he isn't likely to use that, either.

The magi know that using obvious magic in a village can get you in trouble with the Quaesitores, and Moratamis is a Quaesitor herself, so she certainly won't want to breach the Code. For all these reasons, the magi should be encouraged to take a back seat in this part of the adventure, and let the companions and grogs handle negotiations.

The other dominant building, in the south, is the manor house. This is a large wooden hall, surrounded by a moat. While it is definitely not a castle, it could hold off a band of robbers, or any similar small force.

## Languages

For simplicity, this adventure assumes that all characters can talk to all others, with the exception of Wulther, who cannot form human language. It isn't a very good idea for Aeolus to talk to the villagers, though.

In between are the houses of the village, much smaller structures, primarily of mud over woven panels (wattle and daub), with thatched roofs. The market green is near the center of the village, slightly to the west.

When the characters arrive, most of the village appears deserted. A crowd of people, most of the villagers, is gathered outside the church, and an animated discussion seems to be taking place at the doorway.

## The Curse

The curse strikes as soon as the characters enter the village. Victor is already afflicted, and so does not suffer again. Jarvis immediately suffers its effects, losing one Fatigue level as his gums start to bleed. If he runs his hand through his hair, some comes out. The other characters all have magic resistance strong enough to protect them, or are unaffected because they are animals. Isabelle, Darius and Moratamis all feel an effect try, and fail, to penetrate their magic resistance. The animals feel nothing, as they were not targeted. Since Isabelle does not have very strong magic resistance, the magi can deduce that the source of the curse is not particularly powerful; probably no more powerful than Darius.

## A Full and Frank Exchange of Views

The player characters have little choice but to approach the villagers, as it is quickly obvious that they have been seen. The villagers are curious, and immediately wary of the magi (Darius should be hiding his face), but they are more concerned with the debate going on in front of them. The curse is a more immediate problem than an odd group of travelers.

The two main figures in the debate are Sir Robert, the lord of the manor, and Father John, the parish priest and leader of the canons. Father John is standing just outside the door to the church, which is closed and barred from the inside by the other two canons. Sir Robert stands in front of him, and the villagers are crowded around, getting as close as they can while maintaining a respectful distance from their two leaders. Everyone shows obvious signs of the curse; patchy hair, traces of blood trickling from the nose, and a generally pale complexion.

Unless the characters have deliberately tried to look like peasants, which is unlikely, at least in the case of the magi, the peasants think that they are important people of some sort, and allow them to make their way to the front of the crowd. From there, they can catch all the details of the discussion between Sir Robert and Father John. If the characters have any sense at all, they will listen for a while, to find out what the problem is. Sir Robert makes his request, for the relics to be brought out, and Father John explains the saint's demand, for half of the fief. Sir Robert queries whether that is really the saint's will; Father John insists that it is. Sir Robert angrily asks Father John why he is trying to exploit the situation, but immediately apologizes for his harsh tone.

## What if They Hide?

It is not feasible for the characters to hide in a mundane fashion; they come into view of the villagers as soon as

they leave the regio, so there is no time. On the other hand, they might be magically invisible. In this case, they can snoop around without being seen, but they won't actually learn anything useful unless they talk to the villagers. Since the villagers are inclined to ignore the characters until the immediate problem is resolved, invisibility grants no real advantage.

## Sir Robert

Sir Robert is very worried about the curse, coming as it does on top of a series of mysterious thefts from the village. He believes, correctly, that some supernatural force is targeting the village, and wants to do something about it. He is genuinely concerned to protect his villagers, at least as much as to protect himself and his family.

However, he isn't convinced by the canons' declaration that the curse is a result of his refusal to grant half his fief to the shrine. He hadn't promised this land to the saint, none of his ancestors had promised this land to the saint, and the canons had never really asked for it before. He thinks that Father John is simply trying to exploit the crisis for personal gain, and thus he is genuinely quite angry with the cleric, as well as somewhat disappointed, as it seems out of character.

Sir Robert firmly believes that St. Roswith can lift the curse, and that if the reliquary is paraded round the village, as it is on her feast day, everything will be all right again. He would even be willing to promise some grant to the canons, after they had shown the relics, but certainly not half of his fief.

Sir Robert, then, is trying to persuade Father John to be reasonable, while keeping his anger under control. He doesn't want to shout and make threats, but he is genuinely worried and angry, and occasionally briefly loses his composure. However, he quickly calms down again.

The knight is a tall, well-built man in late middle age. Despite the curse, he is more robust than any of the peasants, and his clothes are much finer, being dyed in green, with some embroidery. He is wearing a sword, but no armor. While he is a competent warrior, that should not be relevant in this adventure.

## Father John

Father John is frightened. The relics of St. Roswith have simply vanished from the shrine, and he has no idea where they've gone. He is sure that the curse is a result of the saint's anger at this violation, and he is right, and he thinks that the only way to break the curse is to recover the relics (right again).

However, he has no idea where to even start looking for the relics, and does not want to admit that he has lost the village's greatest treasures. He is starting to wish that he had told the truth from the beginning, but he certainly can't back down now. He issued the ridiculous demand to Sir Robert as a reason to not produce the relics, and he is sorry that the knight's good opinion of him has been tarnished.

For Father John, the player characters seem like a literal godsend. They are from outside the village, so he can tell them what has really happened and enlist their help without losing too much face. The problem is that he cannot simply ask them into the church; the current confrontation must be resolved first.

The priest is an older man, his tonsured hair gray and thin. His priestly robes are in good condition, but not particularly rich, and he is thinner than most of the peasants. On the other

hand, he seems somewhat healthier than they do; he eats less, but has a much better variety of food.

## Resolving the Confrontation

Aeolus should not try to resolve the issue. A talking horse would certainly distract the participants, but real progress is unlikely. Similarly, The Gift makes it impossible for the magi to make any useful progress towards a reconciliation. Wulther might be intelligent, but he can't talk. That leaves Isabelle, Jarvis, and Victor. Isabelle is easily the best choice. Her appearance will get attention, and the wisdom and piety in her words gives both sides a good opportunity to back down a bit. However, Jarvis or Victor could succeed, if they chose their words well.

Once a player character intervenes, the goals of the antagonists change a little. Father John wants an excuse to talk to the player characters alone, preferably in the church, so he can enlist their help to solve his problem. Sir Robert wants someone to talk some sense into the priest. Luckily, these two goals coincide, so the negotiations should go fairly easily. They should be roleplayed out for a while, before the crowd disperses and Father John takes the characters into the church to explain his problem. They may be a little surprised that he expects them to bring their animals in, too, although he does expect the animals to stay in the porch rather than entering the church proper.

## In Church

The church of St. Roswith is rather more grand than might be expected for the village, because there is some pilgrim traffic. It has fine wall-paintings, showing the life of St. Roswith, and fine carved furnishings. At the moment, it is strangely empty and silent.

As soon as they are alone, Father John turns to the characters with a look of deep concern.

"I find that I must trust your discretion," he says. "The relics of St. Roswith have vanished from the shrine, and I do not believe that the curse will be lifted until they are returned. Will you help me to find them?"

The player characters will doubtless have many questions. If the magi talk to him, the priest becomes extremely nervous, agitated, and evasive, as he feels sure that these people will betray his secret. With the companions he is much more forthcoming, and it is quickly clear that he deeply regrets starting out by lying. However, he is even more afraid of what would happen if he admitted everything now, so he hopes that the characters can solve his problem. It should be obvious that he will be very, very grateful if they do.

## Saint Roswith

Saint Roswith is a local saint, a martyr from three centuries ago. She was in the habit of going into the woods behind the village to pray, alone, and on one such visit she witnessed a group of devil-worshippers practicing their foul rites. The devil-worshippers saw her, too, and fired a number of arrows at her. Every arrow broken as it struck her skin, and she was able to flee back to the village and rouse the population against the fiends. As the last diabolist died under the pitchforks of the peasantry, Saint Roswith collapsed, dead from dozens of arrow

wounds. Because of the means of her martyrdom, she is portrayed as a woman holding a broken arrow.

**Divine Might:** 20 (Corpus)

**Powers:**

*Arrow Balm*, 4 points, Corpus: The saint can cure any wound caused by an arrow, no matter how serious. She can also raise someone killed by arrows, but this costs ten points. (Penetration 0)

*Convulsions*, 0 points, Corpus or Animal: If anyone without True Faith touches her reliquary directly, St. Roswith can inflict convulsions on them. These convulsions cause a Light wound, and render the target helpless for two minutes (one Diameter). The target also drops anything he is carrying. (Isabelle is not targeted by this power. The magi can resist it. All other player characters are affected.) (Penetration 20)

*Curse*, 3 points, Corpus: St. Roswith can curse a person or a village with an unpleasant wasting disease. The disease never kills, but it can only be healed if the saint lifts the curse. (Penetration 5)

*True Messenger*, 5 points, Corpus: The saint can bless someone carrying a message. The recipient of the blessing does not suffer from wounds, fatigue, or a poor environment until he has delivered the message. Once the message is given, however, all effects of the journey are applied at once, which can be very dramatic. (Penetration -5)

He is willing to show them the shrine, at the eastern end of the church. A door in the east wall of the main church, behind the high altar, leads into the shrine, which is almost a separate building. It has several windows, although only the main east window is glazed, and its own altar. There is an obvious gap behind the altar, which, he explains, was where the reliquary used to sit. The reliquary is in the form of a statue of a woman sitting on a throne, holding a broken arrow, one half in each hand. It is about half life size, and contains the saint's bones, so it is large, awkward, and heavy. In addition, the saint strikes down anyone who touches the reliquary directly with convulsions; the canons use a special framework to carry it. The framework is still here. The reliquary wouldn't fit through the windows; they are far too small. Father John or one of the other canons is in the church at all times, and they saw nothing.

He has no idea how the reliquary could have been stolen, or how to get it back.

## Magic in the Shrine

The power of God is much more pronounced in the shrine than in the village; the shrine itself has a Dominion Aura of 5. All spells take a -15 penalty, as does Victor's Wilderness Sense, and Jarvis's Animal Ken and Wilderness Sense, if there was a use for them, would take a -20 penalty. This makes magical investigation rather harder.

Outside the shrine, but within the church and churchyard, the Dominion Aura is 4, and the penalties are -12 and -16, respectively.

## Investigating the Shrine

The obvious thing to do is to have a look around the shrine, both magically and mundanely, to see what can be found. The magi will almost certainly conclude that some sort of supernatural power was involved, but they should also look for mundane evidence.

## What Happened



The information below covers what the player characters are likely to be able to learn. However, in case they come up with an investigative plan that really impresses you, or just get a really lucky roll, this is what actually happened.

A faerie fox opened the wall of the shrine and came in, then grew to its full size. At this size, it jumped onto the altar and touched the reliquary, turning it invisible and levitating it. It jumped back down, guiding the reliquary out of the gap, and shrank down to normal fox size before leaving the shrine and closing the gap behind it. The fox could touch the reliquary safely because its magic resistance, despite the aura penalty, was high enough to resist the convulsion curse.

The following table shows what Perception + Awareness checks reveal at various Ease Factors. This assumes that the characters just 'look around'; reduce the Ease Factor by three if a player specifies that a character is looking in an appropriate place, or in an appropriate way. A single search should yield a single piece of information, appropriate to the highest Ease Factor that was actually beaten. This may be redundant, if an earlier roll was better.

### **Ease Factor    Discovery**

6        The reliquary is gone. It isn't hidden anywhere, nor are parts of it hidden anywhere.

9        The reliquary was taken out of the shrine intact. There are no traces of it, as there would be if it had been broken into pieces.

9        The reliquary was not taken out through the windows, as there are no traces of it on the (stone) frames.

12      A *very* large fox has been in the shrine recently. There aren't many traces of it, but there are enough. It must have been almost the size of a wolf, which is clearly unnatural.

15      The fox went in and out through the north wall of the chapel, but that appears to be solid stone.

The magi may wish to use spontaneous Intellego magic to make further investigations. They may be reluctant to use magic in front of Father John, but fortunately he is called back to deal with someone who wants to see the relics, leaving them alone in the shrine.

Don't forget that spontaneous magic is inhibited by the aura of the shrine. Subtract 15 from the Casting Score, that is, the total before division.

### **Spell Effect    Where Information**

InAn 5 In the shrine    A fox has been in here, and it went near the altar and the north wall.

InCo 5 In the shrine    Apart from the player characters, only three different people have been in the shrine recently enough that their hair (etc.) remains. Asking Father John confirms that all three canons come in here every day.

InTe 5 While touching the north wall The stone here has been supernaturally opened and closed in the recent past.

InVi 10        While touching the place where the reliquary was, or the north wall.

Significant faerie power has been used here in the recent past. (Requires a spell seeking to detect faerie powers.)

If the characters learned that something was strange about the north wall, they are likely to look there on the outside. Even if they don't, investigating outside the shrine is a good idea, and should be encouraged. Mundane searching, using Perception + Awareness, gives the following results:

### **Ease Factor    Result**

6        Lots of animals pass to and fro outside the shrine, but very few people, and no people

recently.

12 There are normal-sized fox tracks going to and from the outside of the north wall.

15 There is a single giant fox print just outside the north wall, pointing out.

The magi should be reluctant to use magic here; they are outside and in full view of the village. Using magic subtly, with the penalty from the Divine aura, is all but impossible. If they do use it, Intellego Vim or Terram of the same level as listed above confirms the use of magic on the northern wall, and Intellego Animal 5 allows them to detect the fox's tracks, as long as they are touching the relevant part of the ground.

It is extremely likely that the characters' investigations will be successful, and since they need to be to get to the next stage of the adventure you should fudge die rolls if they are being very unlucky. At this point they should realize that it would be a good idea to follow the fox's tracks.

Father John wants to know what they found, and is completely willing to believe their story of a supernatural thief. He knows that there are such things, and he can't think of any other way that the reliquary could have been taken. He certainly doesn't want to pursue such a thief himself, but he does ask the characters to return the reliquary without drawing attention, if at all possible. If they ask, he happily lends them the carrying frame, which Aeolus can carry without problems, but the priest will not think to mention this himself.

## Into the Forest

Wulther can normally follow the trail of any beast, but he finds, quickly, that he cannot follow this trail. There is simply no scent at all; another of the fox's magical powers. Jarvis and Victor both have some skill in following tracks, although Jarvis is much better. Following the tracks requires a Perception + Hunt roll against an Ease Factor of 12, making one roll every thirty minutes. On a failed roll, the characters must retrace their steps and take up the trail again from where they left off.

The trail leads into the forest, and the timing of encounters in the forest are given in terms of how long it is since the characters started following the trail. This time is *successful* time, so half hours spent getting lost and going back to where they started do not count.

It is most likely that night will fall before the characters can find the fox and the reliquary; it becomes dark two hours after they leave the shrine. If the characters are trying to do things in the dark, add two botch dice to all stress rolls, and three to most Ease Factors. The magi can, and probably should, magically create light.

While most medieval people are distinctly nervous about entering forests, with good reason, Victor and Jarvis are both extremely comfortable there. If the players can roleplay this difference, it should heighten the experience.

The first hour is spent in a mundane forest, with no aura. Thus, all supernatural abilities work without any bonus or penalty. After the first hour, the characters enter a faerie forest, with a Faerie aura of 3. Magical powers, like the magus's spells and Victor's Wilderness Sense, get a +2 bonus. Faerie powers, like Jarvis's Animal Ken and Wilderness Sense, get a +3 bonus.

## Forest Sentry

After one hour (two successful rolls) of following the fox, the characters enter a faerie forest. The transition to the faerie forest is obvious to the two magical animals. The faerie forest is more like the human conception of a forest than a natural forest, so while humans do not notice the difference, it immediately stands out to the animals. Aeolus can even mention this, if he wants. At the moment of transition, Moratamis and Darius both feel something fail to penetrate their magic resistance.

Moments later, the characters round a bend in the track and are confronted by a wolf the same size as Aeolus, or possibly a bit larger, who stands across the path. He growls. Aeolus and Wulther can both understand him; human beings cannot. Aeolus can, however, translate.

The wolf introduces himself as the guardian of the boundaries of this forest, and demands to know their business within. If Aeolus tries to speak, the wolf silences him, saying that he does not speak to potential meals. This ought to make Aeolus rather nervous. The wolf does not, however, seem to mind if Aeolus translates his conversation with Wulther for the benefit of the rest of the group.

## The Forest Guardian

**Faerie Might:** 35 (Animal)

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

**Size:** +2

**Age:** n/a

**Decrepitude:** n/a

**Virtues and Flaws:** None

**Personality Traits:** Patient +3, Reliable +2

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:** Bite: Init +12, Attack +10, Defense +14, Damage +12

**Soak:** +10

**Fatigue levels:** n/a The guardian is tireless.

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24)

**Abilities:** [Area] Lore 6 (game trails), Brawl 6 (biting), Hunt 7 (in a pack), Living Language 5 (hunting terminology), Stealth 6 (stalking), Survival 6 (forests)

**Powers:**

The listed penetrations include the bonus for the forest's Faerie aura.

*Confront Intruders:* 1 point, Init +20, Animal: The guardian can move instantly to face any intruders entering the forest. (Penetration 33)

*Detect Intruders,* 0 points, constant, Corpus or Animal: The guardian knows if anyone enters the faerie forest from outside. (Penetration 38)

*Pack of One,* 2 points, Init +10, Animal: The wolf can create five duplicates of himself, who can then fight as a trained group. For these purposes, treat the wolf as having a Leadership score of 5, so that he can get the full +15 group bonus to his attacks. The power lasts until the pack brings down its opponent, which may be a group, or disengages from the fight. As the pack is really all one creature, the nomination of a vanguard is arbitrary. Further, the group does not need to disengage and reform when the vanguard is killed; it can seamlessly transfer the role to another wolf. Finally, the wolf only dies if all the copies are killed. When the duplicates vanish, the least wounded wolf remains. (Penetration n/a)

*Speak with Animals*, 0 points, constant, Animal: The wolf can speak to, and be understood by, any animal, whether supernatural or mundane. He can also understand the animal's answers. Mundane animals may not have much of interest to say. (Penetration 38)

**Equipment:** None. He is still a wolf.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** 4 pawns of Animal, one in each paw. One pawn of Intellego in each eye, and a pawn of Rego in his skull.

**Appearance:** A gray male wolf, far larger than normal, and with leaves and twigs tangled in his fur.

The guardian is very curious about this group, because he did not know that the two magi were there until he arrived in person. On the other hand, he cannot allow anyone to enter who is a threat to the forest. The presence of the magi and the magical animals means that he wants to talk, rather than attacking immediately. He isn't sure how powerful these intruders are. (In fact, if he does attack he is almost certain to win; the magi cannot penetrate his magic resistance, and, fighting as a group, he is far, far better than the player characters. If the situation breaks down to combat, you should give the player characters lots of chances to run away.)

The wolf treats Wulther as the leader of the party, with Aeolus as his lieutenant or servant. He is curious as to why the dog has bothered bringing these humans along, and is actually quite insulting about them. However, he is most interested in the characters' purpose.

As it happens, the truth will work here, as long as the characters have a fairly good idea of what they are doing. The wolf has become aware of the relics, and their divine power is having a bad effect on the forest. Thus, if the characters say that they are going to remove them, and make it clear that they have a chance of succeeding, he allows them to pass.

Players being as they are, Wulther is more likely to lie. The wolf has no particular ability to detect the truth, so anything that sounds plausible and doesn't sound like a threat to the forest will be allowed to pass. Remember that the wolf is a predator; he does not feel that plans to hunt animals are a threat, unless the characters announce an intention to wipe out all the birds.

Judge just how plausible you think Wulther has been. The wolf is almost certain to let the group pass, but if he is unsure of their actions, he will follow and observe. He can understand the human characters' speech, and even speak it — he just chose not to. If he discovers that the characters were lying to him, he will confront them again. Wulther will have some serious explaining to do.

The wolf does not want to attack the characters. The wolf does not know that he is likely to win a fight, and the fact that he was, and still is, unable to detect the magi makes him very nervous. Thus, he will only fight in self-defense. If he does fight, of course, he will quickly discover that he out-matches the player characters, so they will have more difficulties if they come back to the forest.

## The Lair of the Thief

After two hours of following the trail, it vanishes, abruptly and completely. A Perception + Hunt roll against an Ease Factor of 9 (with their bonuses, there is about a 0.01% chance that both Jarvis and Victor will fail this) reveals that the fox didn't even stop; it is as if it vanished from the world between one step and the next.

This will immediately suggest the presence of a regio to all of the characters, although players new to *Ars Magica* may need to have the concept explained to them. Conveniently, Moratamis has a formulaic spell that allows her to see into, and thus enter, Faerie regiones, and she should be encouraged to use it.

## Magic in the Regio

The regio has a Faerie aura of 4, stronger than the forest, so Magical abilities gain a +2 bonus, while Faerie abilities gain +4. However, the fox's lair currently has a Divine aura of 2, due to the presence of the relics, so Magic used there takes a -6 penalty, while Faerie-based abilities are at -8.

With the aid of the spell, entering the regio is extremely easy. Things then get slightly more difficult. The regio contains a high, steep, and rocky hill, which is not there on the lower level. Perception + Hunt rolls against an Ease Factor of 12 pick up the fox's trail again, and show that it jumped up the rocks. Human beings cannot go up that way, and even Wulther would have problems. Aeolus can't do it at all, of course. Climbing the hill is difficult: Dexterity + Athletics against an Ease Factor of 12. Victor and Jarvis might manage it, as might Darius if he is very lucky. Lowering a rope from above would cut the Ease Factor to 6, and a failed roll would mean nothing but a wasted few minutes.

Magic can also get the characters up. *Lift the Dangling Puppet* allows Darius to magically levitate people up the cliff face. (It only works on people; he cannot use it to levitate Wulther or Aeolus.) Spontaneous magic could also be used to make the climb easier, and even, with lucky rolls, to make a path allowing Aeolus to climb. There is no question about whether the characters can get up the hill; the only issue is how they do it.

Near the top of the hill is a cave entrance. The fox tracks (Ease Factor 9 here) enter the cave, and don't come back out. Inside the cave, it is dark, as it is, at the earliest, evening when the characters get here. The best thing to do is magically create light, although that may be harder than the characters expect (see the insert).

The cave appears to be empty. There are signs that an animal lived here recently, but no sign of the animal itself, and certainly no sign of a large reliquary. At this point, everyone should suspect a regio, and Moratamis will likely use her spell again. It reveals nothing; the reliquary is, indeed, in a regio, but a Divine regio, so her spell cannot reveal it. The fox is merely hiding, and scared.

## Finding the Culprit

Finding the fox is not, in fact, very hard. A Perception + Awareness roll against an Ease Factor of 15 allows characters to simply spot it. If they actively search, for anything, the Ease Factor drops to 6, as it is hard for the fox to move without revealing itself. (Moratamis has a total bonus of +10 to this roll; the fox is going to be found.)

The problem is that, once it is found, it appears to be a completely mundane fox. At the moment, it is. The presence of the relics in its home has suppressed its faerie nature, and while it still remembers being an intelligent faerie, it reacts much more like a normal animal.

While in this form, the fox has no magic resistance, so Moratamis can use *Opening the Tome of the Animal's Mind* to find out what it knows. Jarvis, using Animal Ken, can simply speak to the creature. The spell is quick and efficient, but the conversation, with a confused and

frightened fox, is probably more fun to roleplay.

Either way, the characters learn that the fox is called Reynard, and that he did steal the relics. He was worried about the advancing power of the Divine in the village, and thought that, by stealing the relics, he would restrict its power and allow the faerie forest to grow again. However, soon after he got the relics back to his cave, he found himself in his current state, and the relics were gone. He put the relics in a small alcove near the back of the cave. While the alcove is now empty, it gives the characters somewhere to look.

A level 5 Intellego Vim spell cast to detect Divine regiones will reveal that there is a Divine regio in the alcove; spells to detect other sorts of regio will show nothing. Unfortunately, actually getting in this way would need level 20, and unless someone gets a *very* lucky roll this is beyond the ability of the magi.

At this point, you should reward creativity on the part of the players. Encourage them to come up with schemes to get the relics out of the alcove. Isabelle's True Faith can certainly help, particularly if people are getting a bit stuck. Normally, mundane means are no help in crossing regio boundaries, but in this case the regio is small and temporary. Certainly, begging St. Roswith to come out, and promising greater respect for her relics, will work. Imagine that the relics are a sulky child who refuses to come out and play.

## Medieval Saints

Saints are, of course, not actually sulky, petulant, or vindictive. However, in medieval legends they frequently act that way. Theologically, this behavior is clearly designed to encourage people to treat God with more respect, and thus return to the path of righteousness. In game terms, it makes saints much more fun and interesting to deal with than always-helpful, perfectly tolerant, and supernaturally beneficent characters would be.

The saint may favor the characters with signs of her displeasure, or hints as to what they should be doing. Essentially, the characters' schemes should work at the point when they are about to stop becoming fun. When they do work, the reliquary reappears in the alcove.

Getting it out is the next challenge. Even with the Divine penalty to their magic resistance, Darius and Moratamis can touch it safely, as can Isabelle, thanks to her True Faith. Jarvis, Victor, and the animals would suffer convulsions if they touched the relic directly. If the characters thought to bring the carrying frame, getting the relic out of the forest and back to the village is quite easy. Getting it down the hill is harder. The reliquary has a magic resistance of 20, 22 in the cave, which makes it tough for the characters to manipulate it directly by magic, particularly given the penalty to their casting scores in the cave itself. However, the characters can affect other things by magic and use them, or devise a completely mundane solution.

The reliquary is quite heavy. Add (5 + Strength) for every person helping, directly or indirectly, to carry it. A total of 15 points is needed to carry it comfortably, and a total of 7 points to move it at all. This shouldn't be a problem, but it will require some co-operation.

Again, this part of the adventure is about coming up with creative solutions, using magic and mundane abilities together. Anything not clearly stupid should work.

When the characters get the reliquary to the bottom of the hill, something makes them look up. They see a giant fox, glowing slightly in the dark of the night, standing at the entrance to the cave. Reynard nods to them in acknowledgment, and returns to his cave. (This assumes that they didn't kill the fox earlier, but there's no reason why they should have.)

Getting the reliquary back to the village without being seen is easy if it is still night, and unless they failed a lot of rolls when tracking the fox, it is still night. Note that, while Aeolus cannot carry the reliquary directly without suffering convulsions, he can easily carry it if some sort of harness is rigged.

## Aftermath

Father John is waiting at the church, and is overjoyed when the characters return with the reliquary. He quickly helps them to reinstall it in the shrine, and offers them accommodation for the rest of the night. This accommodation involves giving the characters the canons' beds; they will spend the night apologizing to the saint. At this point, Father John is even polite to the magi, although he is more reserved with them than with the companions. (He still gets a terrible shock if he sees Darius's face, though.)

After the relics have been returned, Jarvis and Victor notice that the curse is clearing up. They are not fully restored to health immediately, but by dawn they are back to normal; lost hair even regrows overnight.

Shortly after dawn the villagers gather outside the church again. Father John goes out, and announces that, in her pity for the village, Saint Roswith has agreed to heal them. He then has the canons, assisted by one of the player characters, if they are willing, bring the reliquary out. Everyone who sees the reliquary is instantly healed of the effects of the curse. In gratitude, Sir Robert promises to give the shrine the right to cut wood in one of the forests. While a lot less than half his fief, this is still a significant gift.

The return trip to the covenant is uneventful, and can either be glossed over, or used to provide the players with an opportunity to discuss the events of the adventure in character.



## Aeolus, magical horse ridden by Victor of Mercere

Aeolus is the “magical animal companion” of Victor of Mercere; Victor might say (out of earshot) the Aeolus is “his” horse, but Aeolus would have it that Victor is merely “his” rider..

**Magic Might:** 8

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

**Size:** +2

**Age:** 10 (5)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 1 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magical Animal Companion; Venus’ Blessing(\*); Vain

(\* only works on females of the same kind. Aeolus is (more than) happy to recount tales of his experiences when once he was under the influence of a shape-change spell, and how the blessing shifts to match his current form...)

**Personality Traits:** Vain +4, Brave +3, Proud +2

**Reputations:** Lecherous old nag 3 (covenant and neighbors)

**Combat:** Trample/Kick(\*): +4, +6, +6, +7

(\* includes Brawl ability score)

**Soak:** +5

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

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

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 1 (logic), Awareness 3 (alertness), Athletics 5 (running), Beast ken(\*) 3 (horses), Brawl 5 (fighting solo), Charm 3 (females), Covenant Lore 2 (who’s who), Covenant surroundings lore 4 (roads and trails), Folk ken 1 (redcaps), Latin 4 (magi), Living Language (Victor’s) 4 (trail talk), Philosophiae 2 (existentialism), Ride (#) 4 (speed), Stealth 3 (silence), Survival 2 (woods), Tribunal Lore 3 (geography)

(\* Beast ken – like Folk ken, but if you are a beast applying it to other beasts; actual “Folk” ken is much harder for horses to learn)



(# Ride – for a horse, this is the skill of “being ridden”: it is, for example, useful when the rider is distracted or when carrying an unskilled rider.)

**Powers:**

*From Nag to Charger*, MuAn 10, 2 points: the horse may change his appearance, so long as he remains a natural kind of horse. He may appear as anything from a worn out nag, to the finest charger; coat, mane etc change to suit his whim. The change ends at will, or when the sun rises or sets..

Equipment: magical amulet, comfortable harness, exceptionally fine and expensive saddle.

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Vis:** 2 Animal (in head).

**Appearance:** his native appearance is that of a horse of good but not exceptional breeding, chestnut coat, and well groomed black mane and tail. For appearances sake when in public, he will wear a bridle, but this has been specially fashioned for comfort (his), and has no bit; besides, he “can’t tork pwopuhlee wiv a bah ih hih mouf”.

Victor has obtained a fine, expensively tooled and ornamented saddle for Aeolus, to match his vanity. It annoys Aeolus no end that Victor will insist on pointing out that the saddle’s value draws undue attention, and that they must generally share a plain saddle in public.

Aeolus is the closest companion of Victor, a human Redcap: he is, a free-willed, talking, magical being. He shares Victor’s mad passion for the chase and the hunt, and is particularly vain and proud of his superior nature, and of his “way with the ladies”. He will attempt to charm any ladies who will listen, but his looks only have a real effect on other horses. Aeolus is an intact stallion, and there is no way he will consider being gelded! [If any will listen, he has a particularly long tale to tell of his exploits when once a magus place him under a shape-change spell, and how intrinsic good looks carry with one, and ...]

It is Aeolus’ considered opinion that he is the more intelligent and better looking of the pair of them, and that he is the one who comes up with all the bright ideas – he merely allows Victor to believe otherwise, as it is less confusing to outsiders, and also it keeps Victor better under control to flatter him. They spend many hours on the road debating the meaning of life and the nature of existence, how fate deals external form at birth, and whether this matters or not.

He has a Magic Might of 8 and an ability to vary his appearance from “unassuming nag” to “fine charger”. Aeolus will generally go along with Victor’s needs in this, as he understands the role the two play as a Redcap team, but he is particularly vain, and may choose to show off his fine looks at inopportune moments.

*Aeolus’ Amulet:* (technically this “belongs” to Victor). A leather charm woven into the mane of Aeolus. When one speaks the command word, the charm grants the horse it touches the power to ride across water, mud or any other surface. [ReAn 15, based on ReCo 4, +2m Touch/Conc, +1m Size. 1 use daily]. Aeolus wanted a charm that would let him gallop through the skies, but Victor’s budget would not stretch that far. [This may be the first item Victor requests when he finds enough Vis to pay a magus...] Note that since Aeolus is a talking horse, he is generally the one to decide whether the charm is used or not.

Some liberties have been taken with the character-design rules to stretch them to cover an intelligent horse.



# Darius, filius Xerxes, follower of Flambeau

By Niall Christie

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

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 87 (64), Hermetic age 62 yrs past Gauntlet.

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 6 (17)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Puissant Art (Perdo) (free Virtue); Flawless Magic; Affinity with Perdo, Enduring Constitution, Fast Caster, Hermetic Prestige, Premonitions, Second Sight, Strong-Willed; Blatant Gift, Driven (Hunt Enemies of the Order), Enemies (Renounced Magus and his Lackeys); Disfigured (Facial Burns)

**Personality Traits:** Brave +3, Dedicated to Cause +3, Efficient +3

**Reputations:** Dedicated Hoplite +3 (Hermetic magi)

**Combat:** Fist: Init +2, Atk +5, Def +6, Dam +2

Kick: Init +1, Atk +4, Def +4, Dam +5

Long Spear: Init +5, Atk +9, Def +8, Dam +9

**Soak:** +0

**Fatigue levels:** OK, 0, 0, -2, -4, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20) (\* accumulated wound penalties reduce by 1 for Enduring Constitution)

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 4 (Grammar), Athletics 2 (Running), Awareness 3 (Alertness), Bargain 2 (Books), Bavaria Lore 2 (Geography), Brawl 3 (Punching), Chirurgy 2 (Bind Wounds), Civil and Canon Law 1 (Local Customs), Code of Hermes 3 (Wizards' Marches), Concentration 3 (Spells), Dominion Lore 2 (Divine Creatures), Etiquette 2 (Merchants), Faerie Lore 2 (Faerie Forests), Finesse 4 (Precision), Folk Ken 2 (Peasants), German 5 (Merchant Slang), Great Weapon 4 (Long Spear), Guile 3 (Fast talk), Hunt 2 (Tracking), Infernal Lore 2 (Demons), Intrigue 3 (Plotting), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Leadership 3 (Intimidation), (Local Area) Lore 3 (Personalities), Magic Lore 2 (Creatures), Magic

Theory 5 (Inventing Spells), Order of Hermes Lore 4 (Criminals), Parma Magica 5 (Corpus), Penetration 6 (Perdo), Philosophiae 2 (Moral Philosophy), Premonitions 3 (Enemy Magi), Profession - Scribe 2 (Speed), Second Sight 3 (Invisibility), Stealth 2 (Shadowing), Survival 2 (Forests), Swim 2 (Rough Water)

**Arts:** Cr 10, In 6, Mu 4, Pe 18+3 (15), Re 9; An 5, Aq 6, Au 6, Co 15, He 6, Ig 6, Im 5, Me 6, Te 6 (4), Vi 8

**Twilight Scars:** The shadows in Darius' hood are unusually deep, hiding his face; Nearby, non-magical items decay when Darius uses magic (as the Warped Magic Flaw).

**Equipment:** Long Spear with haft enchanted as a talisman, instilled with the effect *The Wound that Weeps* (PeCo 15, penetration 0, 50 uses per day), attuned to a +4 bonus to spells that destroy at a distance, Longevity Ritual: Lab Total 35, +7 aging bonus

**Encumbrance:** 0 (4)

**Spells Known:**

*Cripple the Howling Wolf* (PeAn 25/+27\*), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Parching Wind* (PeAq 20/+28\*), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Curse of the Desert* (PeAq 25/+29\*), Mastery 2 (Penetration, Magic Resistance)

*The Surgeon's Healing Touch* (CrCo 20/+26), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Whispers through the Black Gate* (InCo (Me) 15/+13), Mastery 1 (Quiet Casting)

*The Inexorable Search* (InCo 20/+22), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*The Wound that Weeps* (PeCo 15/+37\*), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Grip of the Choking Hand* (PeCo 25/+37\*), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Incantation of the Milky Eyes* (PeCo 30/+37\*), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Twist of the Tongue* (PeCo 30/+37), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart* (PeCo 40/+38\*), Mastery 2 (Penetration, Magic Resistance)

*Gift of the Bear's Fortitude* (MuCo 25/+20), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Endurance of the Berserkers* (ReCo 15/+25), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Lifting the Dangling Puppet* (ReCo 15/+25), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Seven-League Stride* (ReCo 30/+25), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*The Leap of Homecoming* (ReCo 35/+25), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*The Great Rot* (PeHe 25/+28\*), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Soothe the Raging Flames* (PeIg 20/+28), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Ward Against Heat and Flames* (ReIg 25/+16), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Veil of Invisibility* (PeIm 20/+28), Mastery 2 (Quiet Casting x 2)

*Tip of the Tongue* (PeMe 5/+29), Mastery 2 (Fast Casting, Magic Resistance)

*Calm the Motion of the Heart* (PeMe 15/+28), Mastery 1 (Quiet Casting)

*Loss of But a Moment's Memory* (PeMe 15/+29\*), Mastery 3 (Quiet Casting x 2, Still Casting)

*Blessing of Childlike Bliss* (PeMe 25/+30), Mastery 3 (Quiet Casting x 2, Still Casting)

*Rusted Decay of Ten-Score Years* (PeTe 20\*, Target increased to Group/+28\*), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Demon's Eternal Oblivion* (PeVi 30/+30\*), Mastery 1 (Fast Casting)

*Wind of Mundane Silence* (PeVi 30/+30), Mastery 1 (Magic Resistance)

(\* if Darius is holding his Talisman, he has a +4 bonus to cast spells which "Destroy things at a distance")

**Appearance:** Darius is a frightening individual. A bony figure swathed in a black, all-encompassing robe and carrying a black-hafted spear, he is reminiscent of medieval perceptions of the physical embodiment of death. This image is further emphasized if his hood falls away from his face, for Darius is bald, with a mass of scar tissue for a face and no eyes.

Darius is content to cultivate his sinister image; he is a hoplite and an expert with Perdo magic, dedicated to the discovery and execution of traitors within the Order. However, it was not always thus; Uwe, the boy who would eventually become Darius, was born into a merchant family living in Bavaria. He enjoyed a comfortable life in a moderately prosperous household. However, shortly after Uwe reached puberty strange things began to happen. His books would fall apart, furniture he sat on would break, and the family cat died in his arms. His family became aware that there was something unsettling about the boy and were only too happy to see him taken away as an apprentice by the mysterious scholar who visited them soon after.

Thus Uwe became the apprentice of the hoplite Xerxes, who indoctrinated his filius to become a hunter of evils within the Order of Hermes. A lab accident early during apprenticeship burned away Uwe's eyes and the flesh on his head, but Xerxes restored Uwe's sight, although he refused to do anything about his filius' appearance. Fifteen years later Uwe became a magus of the Order of Hermes named Darius and joined the ranks of the hoplites, its guardians. He has continued to maintain contact with his (aging) pater, but they only see each other on rare occasions when they can share information; Xerxes is now too frail to take part in combat.

Darius travelled to the covenant to establish a base from which he could seek out and destroy its enemies. He pursued this vocation with an enthusiasm that impressed his colleagues, and when the previous leader of the covenant recently passed into Final Twilight he accepted the position of head, seeing in this an opportunity to instill his values into the new, younger members swelling its ranks. Darius has been too busy to train an apprentice, but now he feels the need to pass on his legacy soon, as he suspects that he may have encountered his bane; he recently fought a powerful Renounced magus and his followers and was nearly killed, only "escaping" when a magical maelstrom sent him physically into Twilight. The traitor is still at large; Darius intends to kill him in the next confrontation and is even prepared to sacrifice himself to achieve this aim.

## Spells

Darius knows a lot of spells. You do not need to be familiar with all of them when play starts (obviously), and it is fine to read over the list while Darius isn't doing very much.

### Cripple the Howling Wolf

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

When casting this spell, you commonly make an abrupt snapping motion with your hands. One of the target's legs breaks cleanly. The animal cannot walk on that leg, but the damage heals as a Medium Wound. Note that the target need not be a wolf, and that you cannot choose which leg.

### Parching Wind

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Part

Removes most of the water from any object, including plants (with a Herbam requisite), possibly making the object brittle and fragile. With a Corpus or Animal requisite, the spell can affect humans or animals. This causes +10 damage, against which armor is no defense, and makes the target extremely thirsty.

### Curse of the Desert

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Part

Removes virtually all the fluid from the target's body, doing +15 damage, which armor does not protect against. The target must drink within a few minutes of being struck with this spell, or it dies. Casting requisites are Animal for beasts, and Corpus for humans.

#### The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind, Ritual

This spell heals a single Light Wound suffered by the person touched. This spell does not heal damage from poison or disease.

#### Whispers Through the Black Gate

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind

Requisites: Mentem

You can speak through the barrier-the figurative "gate"-that stands between the dead and the living, to one corpse that has not yet decayed into a skeleton. The corpse cannot have been buried in Church burial, nor have belonged to a spirit that went straight to Heaven (for example, a saint or a crusader). The spirit that you speak with is not compelled to tell the truth; you can, of course, find ways to coerce or trick it into doing so. All those around you can hear the voice of the corpse.

#### The Inexorable Search

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Ind

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. A similar spell allows you to search for a dead body (*Tracing the Trail of Death's Stench*).

#### The Wound that Weeps

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

When casting this spell, you point at the victim and a large wound opens on his or her body. The wound is not a deep one, but it bleeds profusely. This is only a Light Wound, but it looks bad.

#### Grip of the Choking Hand

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind

The target feels an invisible, strangling hand on the throat. Each round, the target loses a Fatigue level. Once the target falls unconscious, the spell has no further effect. The spell works by seriously constricting the target's windpipe, hence the feeling. This constriction is not quite enough to kill, however.

#### Incantation of the Milky Eyes

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

Blinds a target, leaving the eyes milky with cataracts. This heals as a Heavy Wound.

#### Twist of the Tongue

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Part

Twists the target's tongue into a spiral, completely destroying the ability to speak. A grave offense to a magus. The damage heals as a Medium Wound.

#### Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

When casting this spell, you make a clenching motion with your hand. The victim doubles over and dies at once.

#### Gift of the Bear's Fortitude

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Your flesh becomes resistant to physical damage. You get +3 to your Soak. Your flesh is tough and insensitive;

any rolls that involve a sensitive touch (such as for picking a lock) are at -1.

#### Endurance of the Berserkers

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind

Your body acts as though it were unwounded and unfatigued for as long as you concentrate. Keep track of the actual Fatigue levels that the body loses while "berserk," because as soon as the spell wears off, you lose those levels. If you run out of Fatigue levels, the spell terminates immediately and you fall unconscious.

A character under the influence of this spell does risk worsening wounds, but he may not notice.

Consecutive castings delay the end of the spell-that is, put off the time when accumulated wounds take effect-but a body can only take a number of consecutive castings equal to its Size + 2. Further castings have no effect.

#### Lifting the Dangling Puppet

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind

Lifts a person of Size +1 or less vertically into the air. Generally, you can make the target rise or descend as fast as smoke rises, but a heavier person rises more slowly and falls more quickly.

#### Seven-League Stride

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind

Transports you to any place within seven leagues either that you can see or that you have an Arcane Connection with. If you fail an Intelligence + Finesse stress roll of 9+, your arrival goes slightly awry. For instance, you might fall when you appear, or just be facing the wrong way. A botch means you appear in the wrong place, perhaps even in a wall.

Praefactus of Bonisagus's version of this spell always allows him to appear in a safe, unembarrassing place (assuming he doesn't fail his Finesse roll). All Praefactus's spells make him seem as dignified as possible-manifesting his wizard's sigil.

#### The Leap of Homecoming

R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind

Transports you to any place to which you have an Arcane Connection. Most magi use this to return to their laboratories.

#### The Great Rot

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Group

Rots and destroys a large amount of dead wood, up to the amount found in a wooden house or small inn. Wooden structures creak and groan mightily for about a minute before collapsing.

#### Soothe the Raging Flames

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

Eradicates the heat of a bonfire, which, however, continues to burn until the fuel already covered in flame is consumed. The flames do not spread, or harm anything beyond what they were already burning. If the fire is extinguished and relit, it will burn hot again, as it is now a different fire.

#### Ward Against Heat and Flames

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

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 molten iron. The target gets a +15 Soak against all fire-related damage. Any fire doing less than +15 damage per round doesn't penetrate the ward. Such fires simply dim at the protected person's passing and flare back up after he or she is gone.

#### Veil of Invisibility

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

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

#### Tip of the Tongue

R: Eye, D: Diam, T: Ind

Causes the target to forget one word of your choosing. The target cannot remember that word for the spell's duration, but afterwards he can come up with the word without assistance by making an Intelligence + Concentration stress roll of 9+. If the target fails he may try again, but each additional roll adds +1 to the difficulty.

Calm the Motion of the Heart

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

Removes one emotion from the target until it appears again naturally. An angry person stops being angry, and a curious one stops being inquisitive. Many a magus finds this spell useful for keeping his apprentice's nose out of his immediate business.

Loss of But a Moment's Memory

R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind

Removes up to five continuous minutes from a target's memory, leaving a blank. You target the loss of memory to a specific event or time. With an Intelligence stress roll of 9+, the target realizes that memories of a certain period are missing. This Ease Factor can change, depending on how important the missing memory is and what sort of circumstances surrounded the event. Careful introspection over a period of time can allow reconstruction of much of memory, but some details are lost for ever.

Blessing of Childlike Bliss

R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind

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.

Rusted Decay of Ten-Score Years

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

After the spell is cast, the metal of the target becomes so thoroughly rusted that it breaks if used in any demanding way (for example, used to strike a blow with in combat or to pry open a door). It also loses any sharpness it might once have had.

Demon's Eternal Oblivion

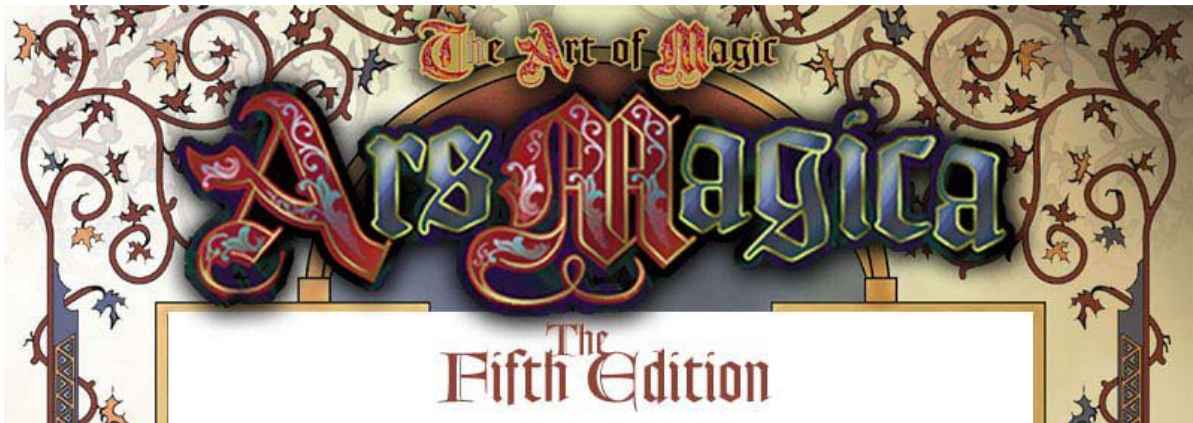
R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

Weakens and possibly destroys a demon. If the spell penetrates the demon's Magic Resistance, the demon loses Might equal to the spell's level.

Wind of Mundane Silence

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Room

You raise a metaphorical "breeze" that blows the magic away from an area, canceling the effects of any spell there. You can cancel the effects of any spell if, with this spell, you can double the level of the spell on a stress die + the level of your spell. The spell must penetrate to affect effects on a creature with Magic Resistance, including Parma Magica. If the spell penetrates, and its level + the stress die is double Parma Magica x 5, then this spell dispels the Parma Magica. *Wind of Mundane Silence* does not affect spells of Momentary duration. Magical things near the area of the Wind wave slightly from the "breeze."



# Isabelle the Beautiful

by Matt Ryan

Isabelle is the most beautiful woman in the world. Her hair is as blonde as a copper basin. Her eyes are blue-gray, like a falcon's, and the space between them is wide. Her face is well proportioned and her nose is well-made and straight. Her mouth is small and a little dimple dots her chin. Her neck is straight and long, without pimples or sores; it is well proportioned, soft and smooth to the touch. Her bosom is as white as new-fallen snow upon a birch branch. Her body is well-made and svelte. From here to Jerusalem no woman is more beautiful than Dame Isabelle.

Isabelle is the living embodiment of beauty. Her physical attractiveness, poise, and elegance reflect her true nature of inner peace, tranquility, and personal religious devotion. She is gracious without a fault, virtuous without a blemish, and as pious as a monk. Conservatively dressed in a modest gown and whimple, Isabelle is charming and pleasant. While her beauty is certainly distracting, it is never overbearing or pervasive.

She is the archetypical damsel in distress, a ubiquitous role in many legends of the Middle Ages. Through the idle whims of fate and the dire machinations of fell powers, Isabelle has been unwillingly thrust into this role since young adulthood. She has weathered it surprisingly well, somehow never fearing that any of her abductors' wicked desires will manifest. Her faith in God is paramount, and past abductions have increased her personal devotion and belief in the loving and protective powers of God. Despite the outward appearance of any situation, she faithfully believes that everything will turn out exactly right.



# Background

Isabelle is the youngest daughter of a landed knight, a lesser noble and vassal to the barons of Champagne, cousins to the king of France. Her father's kingdom is situated nearby the city of Troyes, whose annual fairs bring wealth and culture to the city. Isabelle enjoyed the fairs, strolling the twisting streets and crowded merchant stalls with her elder sisters. As she grew older, her natural beauty bloomed beyond compare.

So thought Sir Florent, her first abductor, who snatched her from her father's castle with a clatter of iron-shod hooves and a rattle of shining chainmail. Poor Isabelle, only eighteen years-of-age, was forced by this despicable knight to marry him. Luckily, the marriage ceremony was interrupted when the priest tripped on his vestments and fell against the altar, breaking his arm. Florent assigned the girl to his highest tower, locked behind an iron door, to await a new priest. While she was waiting, her second abductor appeared on the scene.

Dafydd was a faerie prince. He had spotted Isabelle as she was led to the altar and immediately desired her. Using his faerie glamour to become invisible, Dafydd tripped the priest and interrupt the wedding. That night he mounted a large crow and flew to the top of Sir Florent's tower where he snatched the girl up in the thorny claws of the bird. Laughing, Dafydd flew away as Sir Florent futilely shook his mailed fists from far below.

Dafydd's lascivious dreams were dashed upon the rocks of love unrequited when, as he flew his cacophonous mount over the realm of the knight Sir Dorigen, that bold and intrepid knight shot down the crow. Dropping his crossbow in time to catch the falling girl, Dorigen fell instantly in love with the damsel he had inadvertently saved. Dangling from a tree branch, Dafydd cursed the knight, who rode back to his feasting hall with the semi-conscious girl.

Dorigen planned an elaborate wedding, but it was not to be, and through circumstance and the whims of Lady Fortune, Isabelle was taken from him. So went the next several years of the lady's life, stolen from one ill-willed abductor by the next, until finally, through no choice of her own, she was brought to Semita Errabunda. The companions and magi had destroyed her last abductor, a lusting demon. Now, with no where else to go - and resigned to the fact that she is most likely just waiting for her next abductor - Isabelle makes her home at the covenant.

## Role-Playing Isabelle

Isabelle is much more than she seems, and she will contribute more to the covenant than just a pretty face. She is a stoic resource of calm, especially during the most turbulent times. God has created Isabelle for a purpose, and while Isabelle doesn't know what that purpose is, she resolutely accepts her part in God's ineffable plan. It is her faith that allows her to remain unflustered.

Her heavenly trust makes her more receptive to the lessons available in her past experiences. For example, she has been abducted by faeries so many times that she is well-versed in faerie lore, even though she never had a proper teacher. Her peacefulness is so inspiring that it can affect others, helping to calm them in tense situations. During times of strife Isabelle will provide a serene locus for frightened covenant folk.

## Isabelle

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

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 23 (Apparent Age 23)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3 points)

**True Faith:** 1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Gentlewoman; True Faith; Educated, Great Presence, Inspirational, Student of Faerie; Curse of Venus, Optimistic; Noncombatant, Poor Quickness

**Personality Traits:** Accepting +3, Hopeful +3, Serene +2

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:** Fist: Init -4, Attack -1, Defense -4, Damage -1

**Soak:** -1

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

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

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 2 (lap dogs), Artes Liberales 2 (grammar), Awareness 3 (rescuers), Champagne Lore 2 (noble landlords), Charm 3 (rescuers), Craft: Weaving 2 (spinning), Etiquette 3 (formal dancing), Faerie Lore 4 (satyrs), Folk Ken 3 (women), Latin 4 (reading missals), Profession: Scribe 1 (strong penmanship), Speak English 3 (criminals), Speak French 5 (upper class jargon), Speak German 3 (common folk), Teach 1 (children), Swim 2 (bathing),

**Equipment:** Gentlewoman's clothes and distaff.

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Appearance:** Isabelle is a beautiful woman, as described in the text, but she is much more than just that. Her appearance reflects her inner peace, her poise and self-assurance. She is tall, standing straight and true, with her head tipped slightly back. She dresses in simple clothing appropriate with her station, made from good material and cleaner than others of her class but not ostentatious or lavish in any way.



# Jarvis, Master Huntsman

By Mark Shirley

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

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 32

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Ways of the Forest, Wealthy; Animal Ken, Mercenary, Wilderness Sense; Dark Secret (pagan), Dependent; Magical Animal Companion, Reclusive, Vow (see text)

**Personality Traits:** Brave +2, Dour +2, Diligent +1

**Reputations:** Unbeatable tracker 1 (local)

**Combat:** Long Spear: Init +3, Attack +9, Defense +6, Damage +8

Short Bow: Init -1, Attack +11, Defense +6, Damage +6

Fist: Init 0, Attack +5, Defense +3, Damage +1

**Soak:** +6

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

**Wounds:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20)

**Abilities:** Animal Ken 3 (dogs), Area Lore 3 (forests), Athletics 3 (chasing), Awareness 3 (tracks), Bows 5 (shortbow), Brawl 2 (punches), Chirurgy 2 (animals), Great Weapon 4 (long spear), Hunt 6 (boar), Leadership 2 (huntsmen), Own Language 5 (orders), Profession: Master of Kennels 4 (dogs), Ride 2 (while hawking), Stealth 5 (ambush), Survival 3 (winter), Swim 1 (rivers), Wilderness Sense 3 (woodland)

**Equipment:** Full, scale leather armor, long bow, long spear

**Encumbrance:** 3 (Burden 10)

**Appearance:** In his early thirties, Jarvis is a tall, stocky man with sandy-brown hair and a beard. His crumpled and mud-stained clothes are actually of very fine quality, likewise his leather armor is dyed in forest greens and deep russet browns, and has stitched details. He carries an expensive hunting horn made from an ibex's horn and chased with silver. He is never seen without his dog Wulther, a large, mastiff-like dog, with a tan coat, a white belly and black muzzle, and large liquid brown eyes.

Jarvis currently holds the position of Master of Kennels and Mews at the covenant. Some of the magi enjoy the chase, but his skills are particularly bought into play in two pursuits - the hunting of vis-rich beasts that dwell in the local woodland, and in the breeding of falcons to raise mundane funds for the covenant. He has hunted all manner of beasts, from the mundane to the fabulous. Jarvis is a man who is proud of his achievements, and this shows in his demeanor. At first glance he appears to be a shy, somewhat scruffy woodsman, but his self-confidence shows through in a quiet, understated way.

Early in his career as an apprentice berner, he longed to become a huntsman, but could not distinguish himself from the competition. However, an encounter at dawn when harbouring a stag changed things completely. In a deserted glade he came across a tall figure wearing a cloak of leaves and a horned helm. He'd heard tales of the Wild Hunt, and its leader Herne, but never dreamed that he would ever meet the once-god. Herne offered him a deal - in return for sacrifice and prayers, he would have his ambitions fulfilled. Jarvis agreed, and received three gifts from his new god - an instinctive knowledge of woodcraft, a superlative tracking hound and a natural facility with animals. Herne asks for little in return - a sacrifice of the numbles of every beast killed, and a few prayers and rites, and these Jarvis gives willingly. Even his wife is unaware of his patronage. The sole point of contention between Jarvis and Herne (who is a powerful faerie being) is Jarvis' monogamy - Herne represents fertility, and all sorts of women find themselves unaccountably attracted to the quiet master of hounds, who so far has remained largely faithful to his wife.

In the worship of Herne, Jarvis has become a superlative huntsman. He made his name with the nobility, and owns many expensive gifts from his former employers. He has collected a team of a dozen staff who respect him greatly, even although he is basically a loner. Wulther, his chien baut (the best dog of the pack) is a large dog of uncertain breed, but bears most resemblance to a mastiff. Wulther has the magical ability to pick up the scent of virtually any beast, and track it to its source. In this way, Jarvis and his huntsmen find vis for the covenant.



# Moratamis, follower of Guernicus

by Erik Dahl

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

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 44 (30)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 2 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 2 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** The Gift; Hermetic Magus; Skilled Parens, Hermetic Prestige (free Virtue), Mastered Spells, Quiet Magic (x2), Subtle Magic; Educated, Famous, Piercing Gaze, Self-Confident; Driven (justice); Binding Sigil, Creative Block, Deleterious Circumstances (target unaware); Visions; Weakness (women)

**Personality Traits:** Careful +3, Just +3, Indulgent +1

**Reputations:** Fair 4 (Hermetic), Knowledgeable Quaesitor 3 (Hermetic)

**Soak:** +1

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

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

**Abilities:** Artes Liberales 4 (logic), Awareness 6 (searching), Charm 2 (pleasantries), Civil and Canon Law 3 (French), Code of Hermes 6 (relations), Concentration 3 (spell concentration), Etiquette 4 (the Order), Faerie Lore 1 (customs), Finesse 2 (Mentem), Folk Ken 3 (women), Guile 1, Intrigue 3 (alliances), Magic Theory 4 (inventing spells), Norman Lore 2 (personalities), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (personalities), Parma Magica 5 (Corpus), Penetration 3 (Mentem), Profession: Scribe 2 (legal documents), Speak Latin 5 (academic usage), Speak Langue d'Oc 5 (written), Speak Langue d'Oil 2 (official documents)

**Arts:** Cr 1, In 12, Mu 1, Pe 7, Re 8; An 5, Aq 0, Au 0, Co 5, He 0, Ig 0, Im 10, Me 13, Te 0, Vi 5

**Spells Known:**

*Opening the Tome of the Animal's Mind* (InAn25/+18)

*Prying Eyes* (InIm5/+23)

*The Ear for Distant Voices* (InIm20/+23)

*Summoning the Distant Image* (InIm25/+23)

*Invisibility of the Standing Wizard* (PeIm15/+20), Mastery 2 (Fast Casting, Multiple Casting)

*Veil of Invisibility* (PeIm20/+20)

*Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie* (InMe20/+28), Mastery 2 (Penetration, Magic Resistance)

*Posing the Silent Question* (InMe20/+29), Mastery 3 (Fast Casting, Magic Resistance, Penetration)

*Loss of But a Moment's Memory* (PeMe15/+24), Mastery 2 (Magic Resistance, Multiple Casting)

*The Call to Slumber* (ReMe10/+24), Mastery 2 (Penetration, Multiple Casting)

*Aura of Rightful Authority* (ReMe20/+23), Mastery 1 (Penetration)

*Piercing the Faerie Veil* (InVi20/+18)

**Appearance:** Moratamis is a tall, handsome woman apparently in her early thirties. She has dark hair that hangs below her waist and is typically plaited with ribbons or held back in a long veil parted over her shoulders, worn under a copper circlet inscribed with the symbol of House Guernicus. She favors blue gowns and skirts with flared voluminous lower sleeves of finely pleated fabric, tied with a double belt and a sash in the French style. While she rarely needs to keep her hands free, instead letting them hang comfortably and decorously at her sides, she ensures that her face is always uncovered. Her eyes are quick and piercing, and while her look may be friendly and welcoming, there is clearly steel beneath her gaze, and she misses little.

Moratamis is a Quaesitor, a follower of House Guernicus, and as such she represents the Order of Hermes in everything she does. Because of this, she is mindful of her actions at all times, and careful to do nothing that would bring embarrassment upon her, her covenant, or her House. She is a great student of lore and etiquette, and believes that by observing the graces that make others comfortable, she better understands the motivations of those around her. While driven to bring about justice for all, as part of this she is interested in bringing about equality between mundane men and women, in as much as rights and status are concerned. However, she recognizes the inherent good in the traditional system, and does not generally rebel against it as an institution.

Moratamis never knew her parents, for she was born out of wedlock and left to the abbey of Fontrevault in 1125. She was later apprenticed to a wandering maga named Empistula, who had close ties to the nunnery, and completed most of her magical training under her tutelage. Before they finished, her mistress died under suspicious circumstances, and Moratamis was left to make her way across France alone. At some point on her journey she became lost, and found shelter in a faerie palace. She spent forty days there, during which time she copied strange legal documents for the faerie lord to pay her keep. Armed with his directions, she left the regio and eventually reached the largest covenant in the tribunal, where she learned her journey had somehow taken her forty years, though to her it seemed less than a year. The presiding quaesitor recognized her, and a wizard of House Bonisagus agreed to help her complete the few years of apprenticeship still remaining to her. She was allowed to swear the Oath as a follower of House Guernicus and Empistula's filia.

Now, twenty years later, she maintains correspondence with many friends and associates throughout the Order of Hermes, and often gives advice to those who write to her with legal questions or questions of custom and tradition. When interpreting the Code, Moratamis is a Traditionalist, meaning that she tends to rule by precedent rather than by circumstances. Her special interest is in the Order's relations with others; she believes magi should strive to observe but not interfere with mundanes, faeries and other groups. In her opinion, the best way to achieve this is through the mind; by studying or removing memories she makes sure that only those with need know the truth about the Order.

Her Wizard's Sigil is a sense of propriety, which manifests in her target or those who interact with her target. For example, if she were to cause a man to forget his conversation with her, he might retain the satisfaction of a job well done, though he might not recall what it was that caused him this feeling. Because of her Binding Sigil, that man would remain an arcane connection to Moratamis for a period of time, perhaps as long as he could recall the feeling of her spell.

She usually performs her magic by looking people in the eye, and in fact has grown dependent on this method since she does not use her voice or gestures unless she is casting spells of great range. Her magic is weaker when her targets are not aware of her, and so while she may cast spells to hide herself from danger, she doesn't use her Arts to spy on others without very good reason. She has learned to follow her hunches, though, as she often has a

strange sense for trouble (Visions).

Moratamis is a stern judge, but she does have a soft spot for luxurious living. She enjoys good food and good wine, and does her best to ensure that the covenant has access to such amenities. She also sympathizes with women, especially young women in trouble, and may go out of her way to offer them her assistance. Otherwise, everyone who knows her is aware that she does not think highly of trickery and deceit, and will not hesitate to see those who bend the rules brought to justice.

## Spells

Moratamis knows a substantial number of spells, and it is not necessary to become familiar with all of them before you start playing the adventure. Looking over the list when Moratamis isn't doing much is fine, though.

### Opening the Tome of the Animal's Mind

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Ind

You touch the head of the animal in question and read its memories of the past day. The further the animal is from human, the harder it is to read its memories accurately. If you simply scan the beast's memories, not looking for anything special, you get the memories the beast thinks are most important. If you are trying to get a specific fact, you need a Perception + Finesse stress roll of 6+, or 12+ if the fact is obscure. Since normal animals are sensitive to magic, they resist your touch and try to shy away from you both when the spell is cast and while the spell continues to function. This can be quite a problem with larger animals.

### Prying Eyes

R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Room

You can see inside a room, as long as you can touch one of its walls. If the room is unlit or poorly lit, you can only see as much as you could if you were inside, but magical enhancements of your senses do apply. You may change your viewpoint within the room throughout the duration of the spell.

### The Ear for Distant Voices

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Room

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.

### Summoning the Distant Image

R: Arc, D: Conc, T: Room

You can see and hear what is happening in a distant place if you have some sort of Arcane Connection to either the location or a person there.

### Invisibility of the Standing Wizard

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

The target becomes invisible, but the spell is broken if the target moves (aside from breathing and shifting slightly in place). He still casts a shadow.

### Veil of Invisibility

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

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

### Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie

R: Eye, D: Conc, T: Ind

For as long as you maintain this spell, the target exhales a misty breath with each spoken lie. Small bits of ice form on the person's lips if the lie is particularly severe. In winter, when breath is visible anyway, lies produce a greater than normal amount of mist (the mist actually billows out). A target who makes a Communication + Guile stress roll of 15+ can determine whether any given statement will be taken by the spell as a lie. The spell can be defeated through extensive and judicious application of Creo Auram and Perdo Auram spells, and a demon is able to manipulate it in any way it wishes, as demons are the embodiment of deception and are never caught in a lie if they do not wish to be.

House Guernicus brought the Order this spell, and it is a very poor Quaesitor who is without it.

### Posing the Silent Question

R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind

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 or she makes a Magic Resistance roll.

### Loss of But a Moment's Memory

R: Eye, D: Mom, T: Ind

Removes up to five continuous minutes from a target's memory, leaving a blank. You target the loss of memory to a specific event or time. With an Intelligence stress roll of 9+, the target realizes that memories of a certain period are missing. This Ease Factor can change, depending on how important the missing memory is and what sort of circumstances surrounded the event. Careful introspection over a period of time can allow reconstruction of much of memory, but some details are lost for ever.

### The Call to Slumber

R: Voice D: Mom, T: Ind

The target becomes sleepy and falls asleep within a few seconds.

### Aura of Rightful Authority

R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind

The target of the spell is strongly inclined to obey you, as if you were his natural superior.

### Piercing the Faerie Veil

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Vision.

This spell allows the caster to see through the boundaries of regiones, and therefore divine the path to the next level (more details about regiones are given on page @@). There are separate but related spells for Divine, Magical and Infernal regiones, but Moratamis does not know them.





# Victor of Mercere

by Neil Taylor

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

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 24

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Redcap; Ways of the Woods; Social Contacts (Nobles), Well-Traveled (Free Virtue), Wilderness Sense; Overconfident; Carefree, Compulsion (Hunting), Magical Animal Companion (horse), Poor Student, Weak Characteristics

**Personality Traits:** Cheerful +3, Ambitious +2, Gregarious +1

**Combat:** Long bow: Init -4, Attack +11, Defense +4, Damage +10

Long sword: Init +0, Attack +11, Defense +5, Damage +8

Long sword & round shield: Init +0, Attack +10, Defense +6, Damage +8

Lance (as long spear): Init +1, Attack +7, Defense +3, Damage +9

Dagger: Init -2, Attack +8, Defense +3, Damage +5

Fist: Init -2, Attack +5, Defense +2, Damage +2

Long sword (mounted): Init +0, Attack +14, Defense +8, Damage +8

Long sword & round shield (mounted): Init +0, Attack +13, Defense +9, Damage +8

Lance (mounted): Init +0, Attack +13, Defense +6, Damage +7

Lance & round shield (mounted): Init +0, Attack +13, Defense +8, Damage +7

*Note: Ways of the Woods grants a further +3 to all rolls when fighting in Woods.*

*Note also "The Invisible Shield" bracelet.*

**Soak:** +6 (partial chainmail); +2 (partial heavy leather, while hunting), +0 unarmored.

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

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

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 1 (hounds), Artes Liberales 2 (logic), Athletics 2 (run), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 1 (strangers), Bows 3 (long bow), Brawl 2 (dagger), Carouse 2 (wild tales), Chirurgy 2 (first aid), Code of Hermes 1 (tribunal procedures), Concentration 3 (memory), Covenant Lore 2 (people), Etiquette 2 (hunting), Folk Ken 1 (magi), Great Weapon 1 (long spear), Hunt 3 (noble game), Latin 4 (hermetic use), Leadership 2 (hunters), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (covenants), Own Language 5 (fluency), Philosophiae 1 (natural philosophy), Ride 3 (in the hunt), Single Weapon 3 (long sword), Stealth 1 (stalking), Survival 2 (woods), Tribunal Lore 3 (geography), Wilderness Sense 2 (resources)

**Equipment:** partial chainmail, long sword, round shield, lance, dagger; carried on his horse Aeolus are a pack with travel clothes & camping gear, a fine harness, saddle and blankets.

**The Traveler's Finest Cook-pot:** an iron cook-pot which transforms food placed in it into the banquet of the user's desire. It does not alter the quantity, nor the nutritive nature – but does make even unpalatable foods delicious. (It also saves on preparation time!). [MuAn(He) 11: GL 3, +3m for Touch/Sun, +1L for 2 uses daily]

**The Traveler's Excellent Tent:** a miniature leather tent, with guy ropes and pegs. On command it enlarges to the requested size – up to that of a tent capable of sleeping 4 spaciouly (or cramming in 10 men) or of sheltering a man and his horse. On a second command it shrinks back to miniature form, ending the magical effect. [MuAn(He) 9: GL 3, the guy-ropes are cosmetic so no cost (they could be bone & sinew), +1m Conc, +5L maintains conc., 1 use per day.]

**The Invisible Shield:** an arm bracelet, apparently of cheap metal and unassuming decoration. When you make the triggering gesture, it briefly Wards the wielder from metal – effectively blocking all metal weapons. [ReTe 10: GL 2, +2m metal, +1m Touch, +5L 24 uses daily]

To trigger it, cross your fingers for luck and make a bold parrying gesture, bringing your arm up and across in front of your chest as if parrying with a shield.

Metal tipped wooden weapons like spears and arrows are affected, but wooden weapons with small amounts of metal (such as a spiked club) are less affected – you get a +5 Defense bonus but the weapon may still strike. Plain wooden weapons are unaffected.

**Aeolus' Amulet:** a leather charm woven into the mane of Aeolus. When one speaks the command word, the charm grants the horse it touches the power to ride across water, mud or any other surface. [ReAn 15, based on ReCo 4, +2m Touch/Conc, +1m Size. 1 use daily]. Aeolus wanted a charm that would let him gallop through the skies, but Victor's budget would not stretch that far. This may be the first item Victor requests when he finds enough Vis to pay a magus...] *Note that Aeolus is a talking horse, and is generally the one to decide whether the charm is used or not.*

**The Eye of the Cat:** an enchanted Cat's Eye stone, which grants the wielder the ability to see in the dark like a cat. [MuCo(An) 5 – same as Eyes of the Cat. 1 use daily.]

**Encumbrance:** 2 (Burden 4)

**Vis:** none yet, but he's looking for any he can find...

**Appearance:** a tall blond man, with long hair (usually held back by a cord), strong but very agile. His appearance varies as he travels, from an unassuming cloaked traveler on a nag, to a warrior in shining mail on a handsome charger.

If Victor were asked to pose, he would chose to portray himself as a great hunter (on a fine charger, with lance couched in pursuit of a deer); or perhaps a bare-headed warrior in chain mail shirt, fighting off several bandits simultaneously (ostentatiously deflecting their every blow with a small gesture, as he cuts them down with his broad-sword.)

Victor is the sort of Redcap who gets on well with Flambeau magi. He loves to ride and hunt (to the point of distraction), and often passes himself off as a visiting noble to join the hunts of mundane lords. He has a range of contacts among nobles he has hunted with, and will introduce himself to other nobles as “a friend of ...” in order to join a chanced-upon hunt. It seems likely that this passion may get him in trouble with the Quaesitors.

He is irrepressibly cheerful, and ever confident of his own abilities – largely borne out (it must be admitted) by his successes so far... It must be admitted, however, that if he is to attain the extended lifetime that he plans, then he may need to rein in his self-confidence and

good cheer, lest either he dive into some trouble he cannot handle, or find himself pushed into the same by some exasperated companion. In the meantime, he continues to seek out good food and good companions, to listen to his wild tales over foaming ale.

His closest companion is his horse, Aeolus, a free-willed, talking, magical being which shares his mad passion for the chase and the hunt, but is vain and proud of his superior nature. He has a Might of 8 (Size +2) and has a minor ability to vary his appearance from “unassuming nag” to “fine charger”. Aeolus will generally go along with Victor’s needs in this, as he understands the role the two play as a Redcap team, but he is also vain, and may choose to show off his fine looks at inopportune moments. (He is also an intact stallion, and there is no way Aeolus will consider being gelded!)

Victor takes as his sigil a hunting horn carried in the claws of a great eagle.

Although he is a non-magus he is said to bear many enchanted devices. As well as those provided by House Mercere to aid its members, he hopes to gain many personal devices. He plans to actively seek out Vis sources on his travels, trying to keep them secret. He then plans to make future messenger trips to pass by his sources and claim their Vis. This Vis he will then trades with other, Gifted, magi: mostly for enchanted devices, but also for other favours. For example, Aeolus has plans for his own set of magical devices; and both would like a device for silent communication.

Even without his magics, he is a powerful person and great hunter: he is physically strong, with keen senses, and as he devotes much of his spare time to physical pursuits, is highly skilled, most especially in the woods and forests of Mythic Europe, where he has an almost mystical attunement to the environment. As he grows, with the extended lifetime granted by a longevity potion, he will become an heroic hunter, or even an heroic warrior (were he to come into battle). With his out-going nature and taste for dangerous activities, he is likely to extend the repertoire of the bards and troubadours with his exploits, and enter the annals of Mythic Europe!

## Victor's Request

Victor returns to the covenant with bleeding gums, loose hair, and a general feeling of tiredness. He has, in game terms, lost his Fresh Fatigue level, and will not get it back until the curse is lifted. The affliction started suddenly, and Victor is sure that it is a curse of some sort. Thus, he appeals for help getting it lifted.

Aeolus has not been affected by the curse. Neither he nor Victor knows why.

All of the player characters know each other, but Victor going around, with Aeolus, his talking horse, is a good opportunity for each player to introduce his or her character. Victor is encouraged to actually persuade each character to come along. Victor has good reasons for approaching all the characters he chooses. Isabelle is probably the best communicator in the covenant. Jarvis is easily the best woodsman, even better than Victor himself. Moratamis is the best magical investigator, and Darius is the most powerful magus. The characters also have good reason to help Victor: he's their friend and lifting a curse on one of your friends is a worthy goal, after all.



## Wulther

**Magic Might:** 11 (Animal)

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

**Size:** -1

**Age:** 3 (Human Age 21)

**Decrepitude:** none

**Warping Score:** 0 (0)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Keen Sense of Smell (like Keen Vision), Long Winded, Tough; Ability Block (Martial Abilities), Feral Upbringing, Simple Minded.

**Personality Traits:** Loyal +6, Staunch +5, Brave +4

**Reputations:** none

**Combat:**

Bite: Init -2, Attack +8, Defense +2, Damage +3

**Soak:** +4

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

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16)

**Abilities:** Awareness 4 (tracking), Athletics 3 (running), Brawl 3 (bite), Hunt 5 (boar), Leadership 3 (hounds), Living Language\* 1 (hunting terms) Local Area Lore 3 (game), Nearest Woodland Lore 4 (game), Stealth 3 (alone), Survival 2 (woods), Swim 2 (strong currents)

\*This is the dominant language of the huntsmen, and is understanding only; Wulther cannot speak, except to Jarvis (see below)

**Powers:**

*The Inexorable Hunter*, 2 points, Init +0, Animal: Once Wulther has been put onto the scent of a creature, he can follow it flawlessly, for as long as is needed to locate it. He is not fooled by the various ruses of his prey, such as heading through water or doubling back. If the prey has Magic Resistance, this effect has to Penetrate in the usual fashion.

**Vis:** 2 Intellego, in nose.

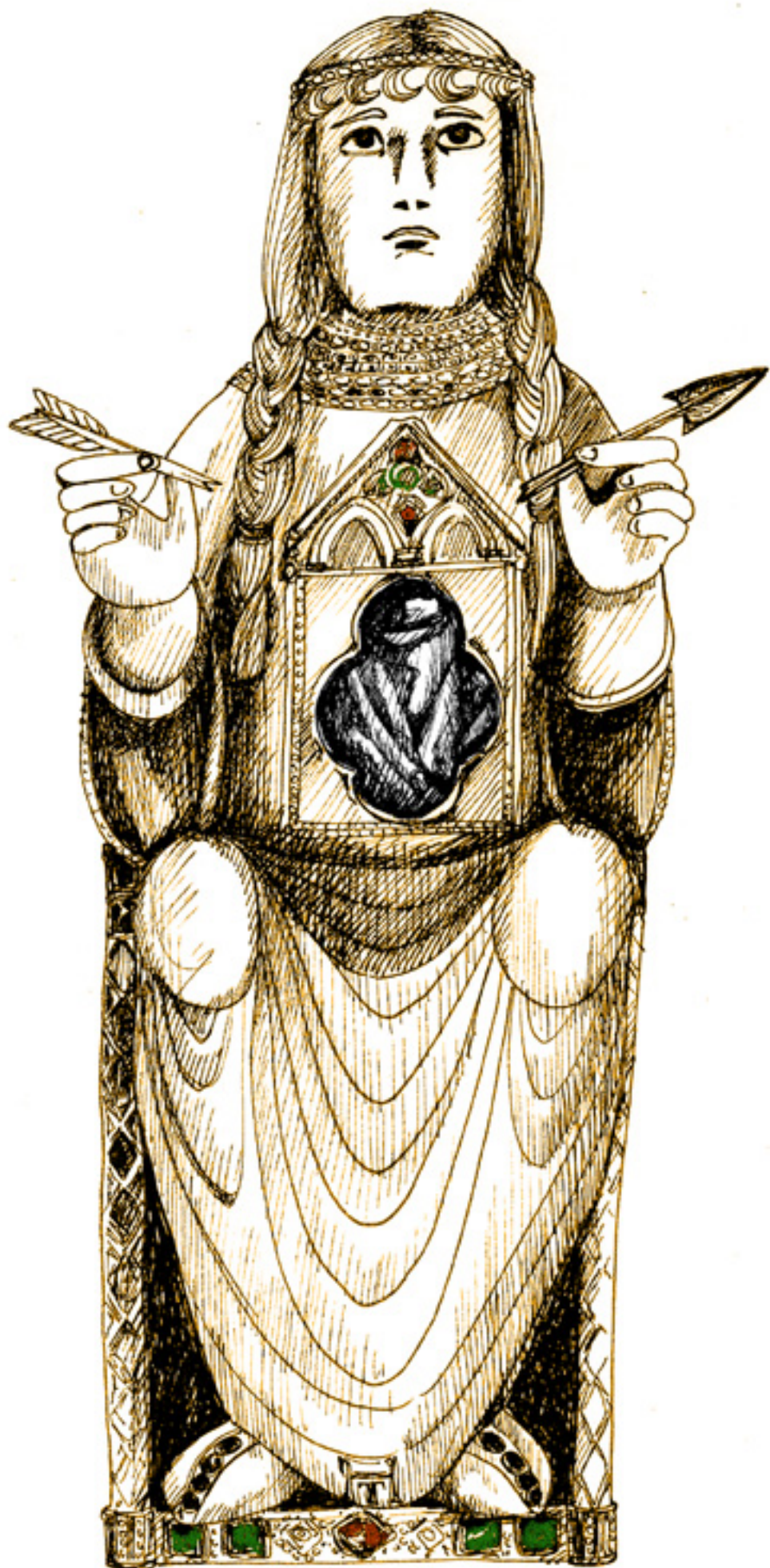
**Appearance:** Wulther is a large dog of uncertain breed, but bears most resemblance to a mastiff (more bulky than the modern boxer, but taller than the modern bulldog). His coat is tan, with a white belly and black muzzle, and large liquid brown eyes. He is the *chien baut*, the best dog of the pack.

The original Wulther has been bred with many types of hunting hounds, but only one dog per generation inherits the magical abilities of the original Wulther. The original dog is ancient, having spent over 10 years as a working dog, he is now happy for younger Wulthers to take his place at Jarvis' side.

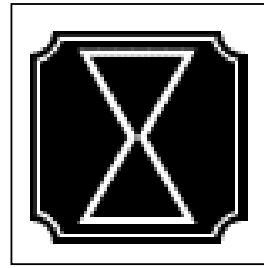
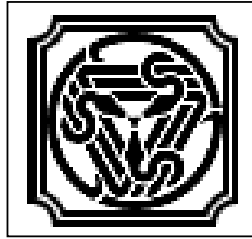
The current Wulther is the grandson of the original. His father was killed by a bear before Jarvis had a chance to properly train a successor, but this Wulther has now come of age, and he is every bit as good a scent-hound as his predecessors. He has an uncanny intelligence, but tends to be very single-minded and stubborn. Wulther is utterly loyal to his master and friend Jarvis, who, like anyone with Animal Ken, can speak with and understand Wulther. Jarvis and his dog have a relationship which is more like close friends than master and servant.

Notes: Wulther is the equivalent of a standard grog. He ages seven 'dog years' for every calendar year, and makes seven ageing rolls each year once he reaches the age of 5 - one in Spring, Summer and Autumn, and four in Winter. He receives experience according to the calendar year, not his age. Wulther can co-ordinate the hunting dogs in his pack to attack as a Trained Group, with himself as the leader.

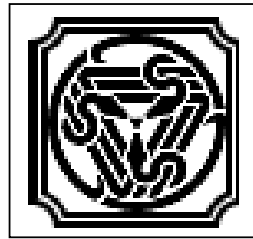




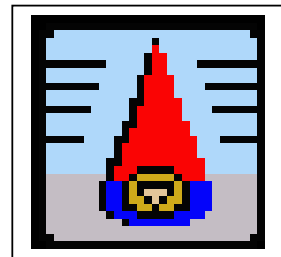
Darius



Moratamis



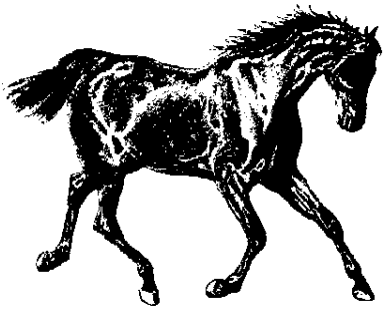
Victor



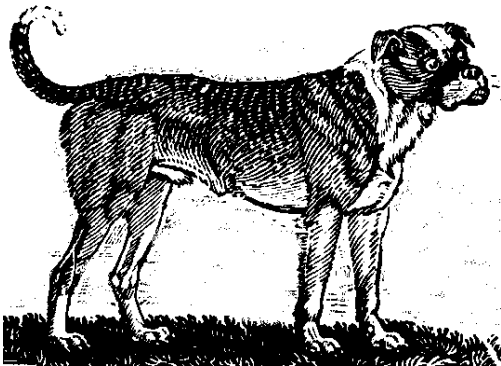
Isabelle



Jarvis



Aeolus



Wulther



# Ars Magica

## The Fifth Edition

### Subtle & Quick to Anger

Victor, the Redcap of Semita Errabandi, returns to the covenant with bleeding gums, loose hair, and a general feeling of tiredness. The affliction started suddenly, and Victor is sure that it is a curse of some sort. Thus, he appeals for help getting it lifted...

Pregenerated characters are provided. The adventure provides an introduction to Ars Magica 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, for both those new to the game, and those familiar with earlier editions.

Time:

Place:

1-----

2-----

3-----

4-----

5-----

6-----

Reserve-----