

# Ars Magica Grogg



by Andersen, Cheng,  
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## Chapter One

# Introduction

Welcome to *Grog*! In this book you will find a wealth of information and character ideas to bring life to that most overlooked and underused of characters — the grog. The first half of the book is devoted to telling stories about grogs, whether they are at the covenant, adventuring alone, or involved in stories with magi and companion characters. There is also a chapter devoted to the quick creation and maintenance of grog characters so that a troupe can support a fair number without being burdened with their upkeep. The second half of the book consists of a large number of character concepts to bring life to your turb. Each is presented with a number of character options, including at least one new General or Supernatural Flaw to make grog characters more interesting. Every character concept has

a handful of story ideas, including at least one explaining why such a grog might join up with a covenant.

## What is a Grog?

Equating "grog" with "soldier" is an easy habit to fall into, since the principle use of a covenant's non-magus inhabitants is to defend the magi against mundane threats. However, grogs can be any kind of minor character that has a support role: craftsmen, scholars, and so forth. This book presents a large number of ideas and archetypes that address all varieties of grogs.

## The Term "Grog"

There are various origin stories for the term "grog," which seems to be a word coined by the Order of Hermes. The most commonly held opinion is that it has its origins at Arae Flaviae, the first multi-House covenant. At this covenant, the men and women who accompanied the magi when they journeyed from home were called *virī gregis* (meaning "men of the band," singular *vir gregis*). This became corrupted, so the story goes, by a hard-of-hearing captain and the non-Latin speaking covenfolk into "grog." The term was spread around the Order through the *liber gregis* (see insert). Other terms entered the Hermetic vernacular at the same time: turb, custos, and consors.

## TURB

The *turb* is a term used to refer to the fighting force of a covenant, the sum total of its warriors. Some put the origin of the word with the same captain that gave the Order "grog," who shortened the Latin *contubernium* (meaning a squad of eight legionaries who shared a tent and cooking fire). The word has become conflated with *turba*, meaning "mob;" and this has become the word most commonly used in the modern Order of Hermes to describe its soldiers.

## The Liber Gregis

The *liber gregis* is a collection of the wisdom of Beorhtric of Saxony, the grog captain at Arae Flaviae. When it became apparent that the doughty Beorhtric was getting on in years, the magi assigned a scribe to follow him around and make a record of his wisdom, in preparation for the day that he would need to be replaced. These notes were then compiled into a book by an unnamed scribe. How much of the book is actually derived from

Beorhtric and how much was added by the scribe is unknown. The book had no formal title, but it became known as the *liber gregis* as copies of it were made and widely circulated within the Order of Hermes.

Some of Beorhtric's wisdom can be found in the following pages. If you wish to include a copy of the book in a covenant's library, it can be considered to be a tractatus on Leadership of Quality 9.



## GREX

The word *grex* (plural *greges*), meaning "troop" or "company" (whence *vir gregis* is derived) is occasionally used in a contemptuous manner by magi, since it also means "herd" or "flock." Nevertheless, it is still used to describe the group of grogs that accompany magi on expeditions; it thereby has a meaning similar to unit or squad. A *grex* typically numbers up to six individuals, and a *turb* might be composed of several *greges* as permanent units who work well together, or each *grex* might be assembled anew, according to the demands of the task ahead of it.

## CUSTOS

A *custos* ("watchman" or "keeper," plural *custodes*) is a favored grog, usually one with skills that set him apart from his fellows, but a *custos* can also distinguish himself with great deeds or uncommon displays of loyalty. *Custodes* are often set apart from the rest of the covenfolk and awarded the privileges of a higher social rank, such as a better provision of food and wine, a few pence more each month in wages, or other minor benefits. In some covenants, grogs can be raised to the rank of *custos* at the whim of the magi, while others have a formal procedure for promotions. *Custodes* are usually equated to specialists when building a covenant (*ArM5*, page 71) and determining its finances (*Covenants*, page 63).



## COVENFOLK

The servants, specialists, and soldiers who live in a Hermetic covenant; generally synonymous with "groggs." The singular forms of "covenman" and "covenmaid" are rarely used.

## CONSORS

A *consors* (plural *consortes*) is literally a companion to the magi. From the very earliest days of the Order, magi have associated themselves with mundanes who have similar interests or background, or complemen-

tary skills. A *consors* is a Companion character, and beyond the scope of this book.

## AUTOCRAT

The autocrat is a mundane whom some covenants appoint to oversee the smooth running of the covenant. He or she is usually the most important of all the covenfolk, bar the magi themselves; the covenant of Arae Flaviae even permitted their autocrat to attend meetings of the wizards' council.

## Chapter Two

# Grogs in the Covenant

*"No-one is to be kept in your household if you have not reasonable belief that they are faithful, discreet, painstaking and honest, and of good manners ... if they are disloyal, unwise, filthy in person, unprofitable, gluttonous, quarrelsome, or drunken, they should be turned out."*

— Robert Grosseteste, *Rules*

The majority of grogs in service to magi live and work at the covenant, and spend most of their lives within its walls. This chapter discusses the life of a grog at a covenant: what their roles are and how they are organized and governed.

## Types of Grogs

The inhabitants of a covenant — excluding magi and companions — can be split into three broad cate-

gories. First are the servants, who contribute to the day-to-day operation of the covenant; next are the specialists, who are concerned with the personal demands of the magi; and finally the soldiers, who assist in its defense.

### Servants

A covenant's servants are those essential personnel who keep the covenant running. Much of the time, they go about their labors unremarked by the magi, but without them, meals would not be cooked, chambers would not be cleaned, and crops would go unharvested in the fields. The in-house servants are the cooks, bakers, maids, stablehands, errand boys, and so forth. Craftsmen also belong to the servant class: stone-masons and carpenters maintain the physical structure of the covenant;

blacksmiths, weavers, leatherworkers, and chandlers contribute to the consumables; armorers, weapon smiths and bowyers create and maintain the equipment of the soldiers; and glass-blowers, potters, parchment-makers, and binders support the laboratories and scriptoria of the magi.

In addition to the indoor servants, there are the outdoor servants: the farmhands, fishermen, hunters, and herders who provide food for the covenant; and the teamsters who procure and transport provisions and supplies.

In the *Covenants* supplement for *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*, the number of servants and teamsters required by a covenant is determined by the total number of inhabitants of the covenant (*Covenants*, page 64). Broadly speaking, in a Spring covenant, two servants and one teamster are needed to support two magi, three companions, or ten soldiers. Laborers and craftsmen are not essential, but without them, the covenant has to buy all its food and supplies. Laborers can reduce expenditure on Provisions, and craftsmen can reduce expenditure on a wide range of covenant costs (*Covenants*, page 66).

### PERSONAL SERVANTS

Many covenants assign a personal servant to every magus. Each magus may have preferences for the type of food he is served, when and how his sanctum is cleaned, how his clothes

### Story Seed: Understairs Rivalry

The serving folk have grown sick of the airs and graces put on by the personal servant of one of the magi, and feel she needs to be brought down a peg or two. They plot to cause her to look incompetent and foolish in front of her master by sabotaging her efforts. This might begin as simple teasing, but could easily progress into something dangerous without meaning to. For example, the serving folk might switch

the contents of two containers, not realizing what effect this will have on the magus's lab work. This might force a roll on the Experimentation Table, and if the season of work is wasted or ruined, the magus will want to know why.

The player characters could be the targeted servant and her friends, the saboteurs, or the characters trying to resolve the situation, such as the chamberlain and the turb captain.



are tailored, and so forth. Furthermore, this servant eventually grows used to her master's Gift (see Chapter 4). Some personal servants become specialists of some kind, or even laboratory assistants if they have sufficient intelligence. Other magi prefer their personal servants to be their agents outside of the covenant. Of course, the extreme example of such a servant is a companion character, although most magi have a personal servant as well as a companion. On the other hand, there are some magi who barely register the presence of a personal servant.

Despite having many similarities to specialists or even soldiers (see later), a personal servant is still very much responsible for day-to-day tasks around the magus's sanctum. He ensures that his meals are provided on time, and are to his liking, perhaps even preparing them himself. He lays out his clothes for each day, sees to mending any rips and tears, and assists in his bathing routine. He may assist in shaving, cutting hair, and trimming nails, and understands the importance of destroying any remnants in sight of his master. He has a daily routine of tidying the living quarters and possibly the laboratory, and is certainly apprised of what he may and may not touch, although if the magus has an apprentice, the cleaning of the laboratory may be part of the apprentice's duties rather than the manservant's. Performing all these services for a magus is the mark of the personal servant; if he is exempted from these in lieu of other duties, then he is probably a specialist rather than a servant.

Being the personal servant of a magus holds a certain cachet in the "understairs" hierarchy of the covenant, and personal servants form a privileged elite among the covenfolk. This might qualify them for the Custos Virtue, or the improved status might be more subtle than this. The personal servant

might hint at — or possess in reality — the ear of his master, and use this to secure better food or quarters for himself. He typically aggrandizes his master among the covenfolk (even if secretly he terrifies him), and the fortunes of a personal servant track the status of the magus within the covenant.

Personal servants make good grogs to play. Unlike companion characters, a personal servant can easily be run by the player of the magus he serves, but it is often more fun if a different player is involved to assist with the dialogue between the two. The Abilities of a personal servant should complement those of his magus; some concepts are given here:

TYPE OF MAGUS	PERSONAL SERVANTS
Aquam specialist	sailor
Astrologer	instrument-maker
Healer	nurse, apothecary
Herbam specialist	gardener
Holy magus	cantor, acolyte
House Flambeau	squire
House Guernicus	scribe, advocate
House Jerbiton	artist, model, muse
House Verditius	forge companion*
Monster hunter	tracker
Necromancer	grave robber
Theurgist	worshiper/cultist

\* See *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 113.





## THE CHAMBERLAIN

The chamberlain coordinates the activities of all the servants in a covenant. Every covenant has a chamberlain of sorts (although the position is not always officially recognized); without one, the day-to-day running of all but the smallest covenant would grind to a halt. In small covenants, a character can take on the role of chamberlain while performing other tasks for the covenant, but most medium-sized

covenants require a dedicated person in this role. Large covenants may grant the chamberlain a personal staff of officials: one in charge of the food, another in control of the clothing, another overseeing the craftsmen, and so forth (see "A Noble Household," later). Governing the servants of a covenant is covered by the Profession: Chamberlain Ability, and chamberlains are usually treated as specialists.

Although it is not absolutely necessary, most chamberlains can read

and write and know basic arithmetic (all covered by the Artes Liberales Ability); this permits them to keep the covenant accounts, and a schedule for planning the harvests and other seasonal events, and to learn from the covenant rolls (see insert).

A conscientious chamberlain can improve the overall attitude of the servants in the face of The Gift, by acting as an intermediary between the magi and the servants. The chamberlain mediates the effects of The Gift

## The Covenant Rolls

The covenant rolls are the records of the accounts from previous years, and are an invaluable aid to the chamberlain. He can consult the rolls of previous years to plan ahead for the coming season, and if they are of sufficient age, the rolls allow him to make predictions for the harvest.

The rolls serve as a summa for the Profession: Chamberlain Ability, typically with a Quality of 6. The Level starts at 2, but increases by 1 for every two decades of the covenant's existence. A character could, in theory, learn the whole job of a chamberlain from reading the rolls of an old covenant. The rolls are also usually a tractatus of Area Lore: Covenant, of Quality 6. However, if chamberlains have made a habit of using the rolls as a diary, these tractatus build into an encyclopedia of Area Lore: Covenant. Every decade, a new volume is added to the encyclopedia, and every five volumes comprise a new tractatus of Quality 6 (for more on encyclopedias, see *Art & Academe*, page 27). A chamberlain cannot learn from the material he has personally contributed to the covenant rolls, so gets no benefit from any level increases during his tenure.

If removed from the covenant, the rolls constitute an Arcane Con-

nection to the covenant lasting weeks (*ArM5*, page 84), and even when the connection has expired, they are a sympathetic connection to the covenant with a bonus to the Penetration Multiplier of +1. Like other encyclopedias, the rolls can be used to look up specific facts about the covenant: make an Intelligence + Area Lore: Covenant roll with an Ease Factor related to the obscurity of the information sought. The character need not have the Area Lore: Covenant Ability to make a research attempt, and receives a +1 bonus per tractatus in the rolls.

Of course, not all covenants have an unbroken series of rolls, and not all past chamberlains may have contributed material of equal value. There may be a gap where a chamberlain was not able to read or write, or scribed her records in a different language or in a cipher. Furthermore, some of the rolls of parchment may have become lost, damaged, or stolen. The storyguide should determine the effects that this has on the Level and Quality of the rolls; in general, rolls missing volumes have a lower Level, whereas damaged rolls have a lower Quality.

The rolls may also contain long-lost secrets about the covenant, as chamberlains occasionally use the

rolls as a personal diary as well as an accounts book. They are of potential interest to an enemy, since the rolls might have all sorts of details about the covenant that could be exploited, such as a record of the building of secret passages, locations of vis sources, and special requirements of the magi. It is quite possible that the magi are totally unaware of the existence of the covenant rolls, and may be horrified at the level of detail innocently added by chamberlains over the years.

### STORY SEED: UNDERCOVER ACCOUNTS

The covenant rolls go missing, and the chamberlain places the player characters in charge of finding them again. This must be done without the magi discovering what they are doing, since the rolls contain all sorts of embarrassing observations about the magi made by the former (or current) chamberlain, and perhaps even secrets about the covenant itself. The location of the missing rolls could be innocent (the parchment-maker has scraped them clean, not realizing their importance) or potentially damaging (an enemy agent has taken them).



and boosts the Prevailing Loyalty of the covenant (Covenants, page 38, and Chapter 4 of this book). However, the chamberlain could just as easily poison the minds of his staff against the magi, and can reduce the Prevailing Loyalty instead of increasing it. Magi are usually careful to choose a trustworthy individual as their chamberlain, and to keep him happy.

The chamberlain often has to contend with the personal servants of the magi, who seek to reserve particular resources or services for their masters that are needed elsewhere. These personal servants often treat the chamberlain as an equal rather than a superior, and in some covenants this is explicitly permitted. This is a very good way to alienate the chamberlain.

## Specialists

The specialists are those covenantfolk who do not contribute to the day-to-day running of the covenant, or to its defense. It is a catch-all category that covers a wide range of skills, from mundane professions such as scout, huntsman, and merchant; through skilled professions such as scribe, trainer, and translator; to exotic professions such as animal trainer, alchemist, and bard. Specialists are generally quite focused on a few key Abilities, and are retained by the covenant because they are good at their jobs. Individuals who are good all-rounders, or skilled in multiple areas of expertise, are usually companion characters. Because of the enhanced capacities they offer a covenant above and beyond its normal business, specialists are bought with covenant build points (ArM5, page 72).

Craftsmen often straddle the line between servants and specialists with respect to how they fit into the covenant's hierarchy. A smith who works for the covenant is considered a servant if his daily labor is to make tools for the covenant, sharpen agricultural tools,

and repair broken metal items. However, if he makes unique items for the magi, or crafts fine goods for sale, then he is classed as a specialist. Both are "craftsmen" according to Covenants, and may reduce the outgoings of the covenant, but the master craftsman claims the privileges of a specialist, whereas the more menial workers are paid and fed as servants. For example, a specialist craftsman is an artisan, a master of his craft, and is in charge of a workshop in which his journeymen and apprentices are the covenant's servants.

Many of the personal servants of the magi (see earlier) would also fall into the specialist role, if they did not apply their talents specifically in the service of a single magus. Nevertheless, a personal servant might command the same salary, food, and accommodation privileges as a specialist, and cost the same in terms of covenant finances (Covenants, page 63).

## AGENTS

Agents are specialists who, rather than working within the covenant itself or in its immediate vicinity, are to be found further afield. An agent could be as simple as a merchant or craftsman maintaining a business in a nearby city. However, most agents have been care-

## The Autocrat

Arae Flaviae combined the position of chamberlain and steward into a single role, called the autocrat. Many covenants since have followed their example. The role of autocrat is an important one; he is in command of all the non-military covenantfolk, and is therefore perhaps the most influential member of the covenant who is not a magus. Autocrats are occasionally permitted to attend meetings of the covenant's council, and asked to provide reports. Some

autocrats are even allowed to comment on matters brought before the council, although if the matter is inconsequential to the covenant's structure or inhabitants, their opinions might be ignored.

The *liber gregis* has a lot to say about the role of the autocrat, all of it positive. Rather than being Beorhtric's words, these sections are generally believed to derive from interpolations by the scribe, who reported directly to the autocrat.

fully placed to maximize their use to the covenant, as sources of information or remote assistance. A cautious covenant might have agents in the local bishop's palace, among the staff of an important nobleman, or even in a rival covenant. The steward (see later) is usually responsible for coordinating the agency of a covenant, although covenants with large agencies often employ a factor to manage their agents. The factor is usually placed under the direct command of the steward.

Agents still need to be bought with covenant build points like any other specialist, but they need not be included in the covenant roster when it comes to determining finances. Their salary is subsumed into the general budget of the covenant, unless the covenant maintains an unusual number of agents. Rules for recruiting and using agents are to be found in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*, pages 140–144.

## THE STEWARD

The steward is an appointed officer of the covenant charged with seeing to the needs of the specialists. This role differs from that of the chamberlain in that the steward is not normally in charge of the specialists, but he is ultimately responsible for ensuring that

they perform the job for which they are employed. The steward therefore makes sure that an artisan has the raw materials that he needs, that the animal trainer has sufficient cages, and that the forester has arrows made for him by the covenant's fletcher. He also arranges purchasers for the goods made

by specialist craftsmen. In most covenants, the role of steward is not subordinate to the specialists (although he himself may be treated as one); he must marshal the resources of the specialists so that they provide the services demanded by the magi, and he is responsible for discipline. The role of

steward is governed by the Profession: Steward Ability, and they often have the Leadership Ability in addition.

A good steward ameliorates the effects that The Gift has on the covenant's specialists by ensuring that the magi are aware of the contributions of their skilled covenfolk, and suggesting

## Troop Types

Those who perform military service, either as conscripts or as volunteers, are usually trained so that they can serve in certain military units, rather than given an overall education in many different weapons and Martial Abilities. The most common troop types in Mythic Europe are described in this insert.

### INFANTRY

**Archers:** The English longbowman is a comparatively new troop type and still used principally in a defensive configuration. Archer units armed with short bows are occasionally used in warfare, but the short bow is considered principally a hunting weapon. The Saracens have employed archer units since the first Crusades, and Western armies are beginning to copy them.

**Crossbowmen:** Lacking the accuracy and shooting rate of the longbow, but more powerful and requiring less training, crossbowmen are deployed with javeliners and archers, and also used to protect the command staff. The Genoese crossbowmen are famous as mercenaries throughout Mythic Europe. Rules for crossbows can be found in *Covenants* and *Lords of Men*.

**Heavy Infantry:** The basic foot-soldier, clad in the heaviest armor that can be afforded — usually

metal scale — and armed with long swords or maces, and round shields. The heavy infantry usually composes the greater part of an army; cavalry units can only be overcome with weight of numbers or with missile fire.

**Javeliners:** Where longbows are not employed, the javelin is the principle missile unit. Javeliners are occasionally skirmish units, but are usually combined with standard infantry.

**Mounted Infantry:** These are units that ride to battle and then dismount to fight; this tactic does not risk valuable horses, and lends superior mobility to the otherwise slow-maneuvering heavy infantry.

**Pikemen:** These troops employ the long spear in a "hedgehog" formation of densely-packed men. These troops are commonly urban militia or peasant levies, but the Scots, the Flemish, the Swabians, and the Bavarians specialize in this unit type. The length of the weapon prevents men-at-arms from engaging, and can effectively break up a cavalry charge.

**Skirmishers:** Light infantry armed with javelins, slings, short swords, or spears, and sometimes light shields. Skirmisher units are lightly armored to provide battlefield mobility, and are usually used to harry the enemy from the flanks or defend the heavy infantry.

### CAVALRY

**Heavy Cavalry:** The preeminent military force in the 13th century, knights are employed as shock troops at the beginning of combat. Lances are used for the initial charge, and the knights then switch to long swords, maces, or mace-and-chain. Chain mail is almost ubiquitous. Further from the heartland of Mythic Europe, conscripted heavy cavalry troops are employed in the Byzantine armies (the famed *kataphractoï*), and by the Bulgarians, Lithuanians, and Russians.

**Light Cavalry:** Deployed principally in scouting, communication, and reconnaissance roles, and to join battle with enemy reconnaissance units. Light cavalry use swift horses and light armor, and usually carry spears or long swords. Occasionally, they carry missile weapons.

**Lancers:** More lightly armored than the heavy cavalry, yet armed with long spears and used to support infantry in the absence of other cavalry units.

**Mounted Archers:** Employed in Roman times but since then have lost favor; however, mounted archers are common in the east of Mythic Europe.



occasional rewards or singling out particular individuals for praise (*Covenants*, page 38). Much like the chamberlain, a poorly-treated or overworked steward may have the reverse effect, causing the covenfolk's reaction to The Gift be heightened, and encourage disloyalty and rebellion.

Rivalry between the steward and the chamberlain is quite common. Some covenants explicitly place the chamberlain as a specialist under the command of the steward, whereas others make them equals. Both branches of the covenant's covenfolk perform important functions, but each branch chief elevates the importance of his staff over that of the other branch. This rivalry can seethe beneath the surface for many generations of covenfolk, while the magi remain blissfully ignorant of it, since it rarely impinges on their sphere of interest. The "Organization" section later in this chapter presents some ideas as to how such rivalries can generate stories. Many covenants avoid this potential rivalry through an autocrat who plays both roles (see insert).

## Soldiers

The soldiers are those grogs whose duty is to defend the covenant and its members from physical threats. Combat-capable companions are rarely considered to be soldiers; they are more likely to act as heroes and champions than as common foot-soldiers. Furthermore, soldiers need to train together and have roughly equal Combat Totals to fight effectively as a trained group; companion characters are either too busy to attend drill practice or too skilled (or both) to take part. It is unusual for a covenant to have no soldiers — Mythic Europe is a sufficiently dangerous place that even the most pacifistic magi need protection.

Due to the restrictions of the Code

of Hermes, magi are not permitted to provide feudal service to local lords in terms of manpower; and yet it cannot have escaped the attention of the local nobility that the "scholars" on the hill have a standing army. They might interpret this as a threat or an opportunity to fulfill their own feudal obligations to their liege without risking their own men in a war. Indeed, some covenants may even hire out their soldiers to the nobility as a source of income. Every saga needs to consider the attitude of the mundane powers toward magi employing soldiers; some ideas for this interaction can be found in *Lords of Men*.

### THE TURB CAPTAIN

The turb captain is the leader of all the soldiers at a covenant. Only covenants with very unusual organization structures do not have a single leader for all their warriors, since an

army cannot be effectively lead by a committee. Of the three executive officers of a covenant (chamberlain, steward, and captain), the turb captain is the most likely to be a companion character. Even though the captain may be too skilled with his weapon to fight in a trained group with his men, his leadership and tactical knowledge are invaluable. A turb captain is provisioned as a specialist at least, and may be treated as a companion character even if he is designed as a grog, in recognition of his importance to the covenant.

### UNIT SERGEANTS

The captain often selects sergeants to command smaller units of the turb. This is particularly important if the soldiers consist of specialized troops, such as cavalry, archers, or infantry. In these cases, one sergeant is placed



## Accelerated Group Training

Any group can learn to fight together by spending a season practicing together. A good leader can shorten this training time, either in an emergency (to prepare for an upcoming adventure or battle), or in order to train more than one group in a single season. These rules were first printed in *Lords of Men*, Chapter 9.

### SHORTEN TRAINING TIME:

**Stress die + Communication  
+ Leadership**

The Ease Factor depends on the amount of training time available. If the roll fails, then the group cannot become a trained group until the end of the season. If it botches, then the season's training is wasted. Some

Virtues, such as Inspirational, may provide a bonus if the storyguide sees fit; the Difficult Underlings Flaw most likely provides a penalty.

TRAINING TIME	EASE FACTOR
Two Months	6
Six Weeks	9
One Month	12
Fortnight	15
One Week	18

The characters being trained gain experience only at the end of the season; there is no experience point bonus for participating in this accelerated training. When the training period is complete, they can function as a trained group (see *ArM5*, page 173).

in charge of each unit of troops. Sergeants are usually selected based on their demonstrated loyalty and dedication to the covenant, in addition to having the Leadership Ability. Sergeants are rewarded by being treated as specialists with respect to wages, food, and accommodation.

### THE DRILL SERGEANT

In addition to unit sergeants, most covenants also have a drill sergeant, whose principal role is to train the grogs to fight as a trained group. This involves providing a season of teaching in a Martial Ability (usually Single Weapon) over the course of each year. The drill sergeant is also responsible for maintaining order in the turb, and administering punishments as warranted. He may be responsible for inflicting punishment on other covenant folk, such as servants, specialists, or even apprentices. Drill sergeants follow a more regular duty pattern than most other soldiers (see "Duty," later);

their duty watches are through the day when they can train the off-duty soldiers. A drill sergeant is only asked to be on duty during the night to fill in a gap in the schedule.

Most drill sergeants are older grogs, those who have substantial experience in battle. Their prime Abilities other than Martial Abilities are Leadership and, particularly, Teaching. Leadership is useful to accelerate the group's training (see insert) and to maintain discipline. Drill sergeants benefit from good Communication, and their Martial Abilities need to be higher than those of the soldiers they are teaching. Like other sergeants, the drill sergeant is accounted as a specialist, although he remains under the command of the turb captain.

### OTHER MILITARY RANKS

Medium-sized turbs do not usually need any other ranks beyond the captain and his sergeants, at least with respect to organization. However, cov-

enants often reward their particularly loyal or heroic soldiers with an intermediate rank between the common soldiers and the sergeants, roughly equivalent to corporal. The name used varies from covenant to covenant; the *liber gregis* suggests "decurio" or "decurion," the leader of 10 men in the Roman army. This rank is represented by the Custos Social Status Virtue. The Custos is usually offered a double ration of wine or ale each day, and an improved pension when he retires from the covenant's service; in addition, custodes are often promoted to sergeant before their military career ends. Large turbs usually require a rigid hierarchy to maintain discipline; see "Military Hierarchy," later.

Depending on their organization, soldiers may retain the temporary ranks and roles granted on missions (see Chapter 4), although it is more usual that these roles are kept fluid, and are for expeditions only. Nevertheless, a decurio often fulfills the Optio role, and a sergeant is often chosen for the Dux role, making these ranks semi-permanent.

## Organization of Covenant Groggs

The organization of grogs in a covenant may have been arranged when the covenant was founded and reorganized deliberately as the covenant grew in size, or it may have developed organically over its history. This section presents a few concepts around which a covenant organization can be built. Naturally it is possible to mix-and-match; for example, a covenant's soldiers might be organized in a hierarchical fashion, but its servants and specialists might be divided into nations. The manner in which the grogs are organized can be an impor-



tant determiner of the mood and feel of a covenant, and the troupe should put a bit of thought into which system they prefer.

## Hierarchy

A hierarchical organization of a covenant's grogs is perhaps the most commonly found. It is the least work for the magi, as they have a small number of officials reporting to them, who then marshal their subordinates to complete the tasks at hand. The two most significant hierarchical models adopted are those of the noble household and the military.

### A NOBLE HOUSEHOLD

Covenants who employ a large number of servants and specialists often adopt an organizational structure that mimics that of the noble household. This is a natural model to adopt, since examples of how well it functions can be found throughout Mythic Europe. However, the level of complexity is only really needed if the covenant is a large one, or is masquerading as a lord of the manor. At its most basic level this organization approximates the norm for covenants — perhaps due to the influence of the *liber gregis* — since the three chief officials in a noble household are the steward, the chamberlain, and the marshal.

The **steward** (or seneschal) is in control of the lord's lands and the keep, and is often a knight. The steward sometimes has an under-steward called the steward of the household, or fills this role himself in smaller households. Any miscellaneous specialists, such as craftsmen employed directly by the household, fall under the steward's purview.

- The **bailiff** is in control of the lord's manors. He has a subordi-

nate **reeve** in each village, who is responsible for the direct oversight of the daily work of the villeins.

- The **verderer**, or forest warden, maintains the hunting preserve of the household. He is often in control of the **huntsmen**.
- The **chief buyer** is responsible for acquiring goods and services needed by the household.
- The **auditor** keeps the accounts relating to the income of the land.
- The **cook** is in charge of preparing and cooking all food for the household. Under him are the **saucier**, the **baker**, the **poulterer**, and any number of other kitchen menials.
- The **butler** is the wine steward, and responsible for supplying the household with food. Under him are the **pantrymen** and **brewers**.

The **chamberlain** (or treasurer, or wardrobe) is the chief clerical officer, and is occasionally a subordinate of the steward. The wardrobe is a special room where valuables are kept, and serves as the noble's treasury.

- The **clerk of the offices** is the chamberlain's deputy, and the chief scribe.
- The **chaplain** is the household's personal priest. His first duty is to the household's master, but he occasionally hears confession for the servants as well.
- The **almoner** is responsible for dis-

tributing wealth to the poor, and hiring temporary staff.

- The **usher** is in charge of the master's chamber. Under him are the **porter**, who keeps the keys to the household, the **servants of the chamber**, the **laundresses**, and the **barber**.

The **marshal** is the leader of the household knights or men-at-arms. He is also in charge of the horses and needs of the stables. In some households, he is considered subordinate to the steward, but in most covenants using this model, this is not true.

- The **mesnie** are the household knights of the lord, who form his bodyguard. These knights are responsible for training the **squires** and **pages**.
- The **men-at-arms** are the lord's personal fighting force, and are the equivalent of the **turb**.
- The **smith**, **farriers**, and **ostlers** care for the horses of the household.
- The **carters** also fall under the purview of the marshal, since he is responsible for all the household's horses.
- **Messengers** may be hired on at a daily rate, or else employed directly.

Underneath these servants with named jobs is a great mass of scullions, grooms, boy attendants, and helpers. More information on the disposition

### Story Seed: Tough at the Top

A grog character has recently been promoted to a higher rank, and he is still finding his feet. His biggest problem is not the new responsibilities, but instead his friends — now part of his command — and his rival for the position. The latter is eaten with jealousy toward the player character, and

in a moment of weakness turned to a witch to secure his revenge. The grog is now under a curse which, whether real or imagined, is blamed for the misfortune that dogs every step he makes. The grog may need his friends to help him get the curse lifted and expose the malfeasance of his rival.

of a noble household is given in *Lords of Men*.

## MILITARY HIERARCHY

Rather than dividing the covenfolk by role, a covenant can take a more military approach. In this organizational system, the covenfolk are divided into squads, each of which consists of soldiers and their auxiliary staff. An army in Mythic Europe is largely free of intermediate ranks. The marshal is in charge of his lord's household troops, including the knights and men-at-arms. If his lord goes to war, the marshal takes charge of the men-at-arms, while the lord commands the knights; otherwise, he leads the knights himself (in lieu of the tenant-in-chief, thus the later rank "lieutenant") and appoints a captain to command the men-at-arms.

This model is appropriate for military-minded covenants, but not necessarily only them. In a similar way to dividing covenfolk into nations (see later), this structure can fill a role where, for example, the covenant is divided over several geographically separate sites. The difference to the system of nations is that, in a military hierarchy, each squad is not independent of each other.

*Exempli gratia:* Traditional covenants like to follow the early Roman model, where the manus ("hand," singular and plural), comprised of a squad of four men plus their leader

(the *quincurion*), is the basic unit. A decuria is made of two manus, with the leader of one manus, the decurion, superior to the other. Up to 10 decuriae make up the centuria, commanded by a centurion.

## Nations

Another method of organizing grogs is by nation. A nation of grogs consists of servants, specialists, and soldiers — possibly even companions and magi. The identifying feature of a nation is that it cuts across roles. One's nation may be determined by a number of methods. Sometimes new members are assigned at random, either by lot or in order to fill gaps in the ranks. Otherwise, a recruit might join the nation of the person (magus or otherwise) who inducted him into covenant life. Alternatively, the nations themselves might decide, holding an auction or contest whenever new recruits join the covenant, perhaps having recruits be members of no nation until sufficient numbers of unplaced grogs are accrued. Finally, recruits could be born to a nation, either as the child of a grog, or a member of a specific ethnic group.

Nation-level organizations are common in covenants where magi are relatively independent of each other. Each nation might be dedicated to the service of a single magus, or led by a companion instead. Members of nations often have a Loyalty Personality

Trait specific to the nation as well as to the covenant.

## FAMILY GROUPS

The most natural nations form around familial bonds. Old covenants, in particular, have covenfolk who were born in the covenant and have served the magi all their lives. These families can stretch back generations, each one tracing its ancestry back to one of the original servants of the covenant, or even one of the magi. Alternatively, a covenant might, at its foundation, have incorporated folk from the local area who were already strongly divided along family lines. It is usual for a woman to join her husband's family when they marry, but this is not always the case: in Irish clan structures, for example, the man may join the woman's family.

Family-based nations usually have a clear leader, who is often the eldest living member of that family, although some have a council of elders, or an elected head, or a clear line of succession. Families often share distinctive physical features or character traits, and may even inherit particular patterns of warping.

*Exempli gratia:* When founded, a covenant employed four brothers, who all went on to have prodigiously-sized families. Three of these families still persist (the fourth has since perished), called Rufus, Flavus, and Fuscus, since the families tend to be red-headed, blond, and brown-haired, respectively.

## Story Seed: Family Business

At the deathbed of a family member, the grog characters discover that their family hides a dark secret. One of their ancestors pledged his soul to a demon, along with one soul from every subsequent generation. The player grogs are among the eligible members for

the demon's appetites, but to secure help from the rest of the covenant, they must betray the darkest secret of their family, condemning them to unbearable shame and dishonor. And how will the magi react if they discover that they have diabolic covenfolk?

## ETHNIC GROUPS

The student bodies of some universities in Mythic Europe are divided into nations, with each nation responsible for the conduct and protection of each of its members (*Art & Academe*, page 94). These nations are usually loose geographical groups; the closest ethnic groups are well represented,



whereas more distant students are lumped into much wider categories. Some covenants, particularly ones that straddle borders or have been formed from the merging of two or more turbs with distinct racial identities, use this structure.

*Exempli gratia:* A covenant on the border between France and Spain might have the nations of Castellan, Occitan, Francian, and German, based on the native language of the members. The German nation takes anyone who doesn't speak Spanish, Occitan, or French.

*Exempli gratia:* A covenant in the Holy Land might have been founded as a joint venture between Hermetic magi and non-Hermetic wizards. It therefore has two nations: Occidens, consisting of the Western covenfolk who accompanied the Hermetic magi; and al-Mashriq, consisting of the Arabic covenfolk who serve their eastern masters.

## DIVIDED BY LOCATION

Nations may also form where a covenant is split over several geographically separated sites, or has deliberate spatial separation of its turb. There may be some separation of function in these nations; the nation that lives offshore probably has more sailors and fishermen than the nation that occupies the nearby hills, but both nations need their own specialists, soldiers, and servants.

*Exempli gratia:* A covenant occupying an isolated fort high on a mountain has the nations of Castellum, Moenia, Montes, and Silva. The Castellum grogs live in and defend the fort, the Moenia nation guards the outer walls, the Montes patrol the tundra above the treeline, and the Silva grogs hunt in the woods below the treeline. Each nation consists of servants, specialists, and soldiers with skills appropriate to the habitat in which they dwell.

*Exempli gratia:* A covenant occupies a number of small islands on a lake. None of the islands is big enough to support sancta for all of the magi, so each island is home to a single magus, and the staff he needs form indepen-

The leader of a soldiers' guild is either incompetent or corrupt, and as a result, the guild has insufficient funds to subcontract other covenfolk for the basic needs of his guild, such as repairing clothes and armor. The soldiers begin to look shabby, and their equipment is of substandard quality. Keen to hide his mis-

takes, the guild leader is open to "outside contractors," and when approached by a mysterious stranger who seems to ask for very little in return, he is eager to employ him. This stranger could be a faerie, demon, or spy from another covenant seeking to worm his way in to the covenant.

dent nations, governed as their master dictates. There is also a nation answerable only to the council of magi, which provides, supports, and protects the ferry service linking the islands.

(Covenants, page 19) can be bought if this situation is desirable.

## Guilds

An alternative to nations is guilds; that is, organizing the grogs by their function. Many covenants simply divide their covenants into servants, specialists, and soldiers, and consider these three "guilds" sufficient — and often they are. However, the larger covenants get, the more need there is to divide the grogs into smaller guilds with more defined functions. A covenant that has more than one source of income often institutes guilds as a means to organize collecting the revenue and conducting the necessary business that keeps the income sources operational.

There is also a tendency for grogs to self-organize. If there are a lot of craftsmen, then they tend to band together to mimic the guild structure of the outer world. If the covenant uses light cavalry as an elite unit, then these individuals may not want to fraternize with common foot soldiers.

Note that the division of grogs into guilds does not necessarily mean literal guilds; that is, a political unit that can arrange simultaneous withdrawal of services in order to coerce better conditions for their masters. However, the Guild Covenant Hook

## PROFESSIONAL GUILDS

Clearly a good model for covenant organization is the craft guilds, service guilds, and merchant guilds that are becoming more widespread in Mythic Europe in the 13th century. Once confined to big cities, guilds can now be found almost anywhere, at least in the West, and they regulate the quality of the goods produced by their members. A guild consists of all craftsmen that use the same or a group of closely allied Craft or Profession Abilities. However, at a covenant, a guild might exist for each Martial Ability, or perhaps even for select groups of Arcane or Supernatural Abilities. The guild provides incomes for the destitute and disabled, pays for the funeral services of deceased members, holds its own religious ceremonies, and sometimes even provides schooling for their members' children.

At the head of a guild is the **dean**, elected by the guild members from among their number. The dean is supported by the **aldermen** (guild officials), who police the guild, ensure the quality of the work, and enforce the guild rules. Below the aldermen are the **senior masters** and **masters**. A master has sufficient skill to run his own shop, and has the right to attend meetings at the guildhall and have a say in the run-



ning of the guild. Senior masters have been masters for ten or more years, and may run more than one workshop, which can prove very lucrative. Each master might have one or two **journeymen** and several **apprentices**, who form the lowest rungs of the guild ladder. More information about guilds can be found in Chapter 3 of *City & Guild*.

The difference between a professional guild and other forms of governance is that the guild exists because its members want it. They have an expectation of advancement through the guild's ranks, and to one day have a say in how it is run. A guild might be a more familiar system for players who are used to concepts of social mobility and providing benefits for the hard workers, although this is an anachronism for much of Mythic Europe outside of the professional guilds.

*Exempli gratia:* A covenant has three guilds of soldiers: the Red Lions, the Golden Hawks, and the Green Horses. The Red Lions

### Story Seed: The Guild Contest

Every three years, the guilds of a covenant hold a contest that determines the precedence of the guilds. The leader of the winning guild becomes the steward for the next three years, and his guild is accorded many petty privileges: they are seated first for dinner and receive better bread and cleaner salt; they have first pick of new tools; they get the quarters farthest from the pig-sties; and so forth. Suffice to say, it is a serious business.

The contest consists of a series

of physical and mental trials set by the magi, and for as long as anyone can remember, one particular guild has won. This year, however, another guild has a chance, thanks to a secret weapon — the player grogs. They have either acquired some magical item that will assist the guild in winning, or else have good relations with the magi who might be persuaded to help. Naturally, the incumbent guild does not sit idly and permit their rivals to gain the upper hand and break their hegemony.

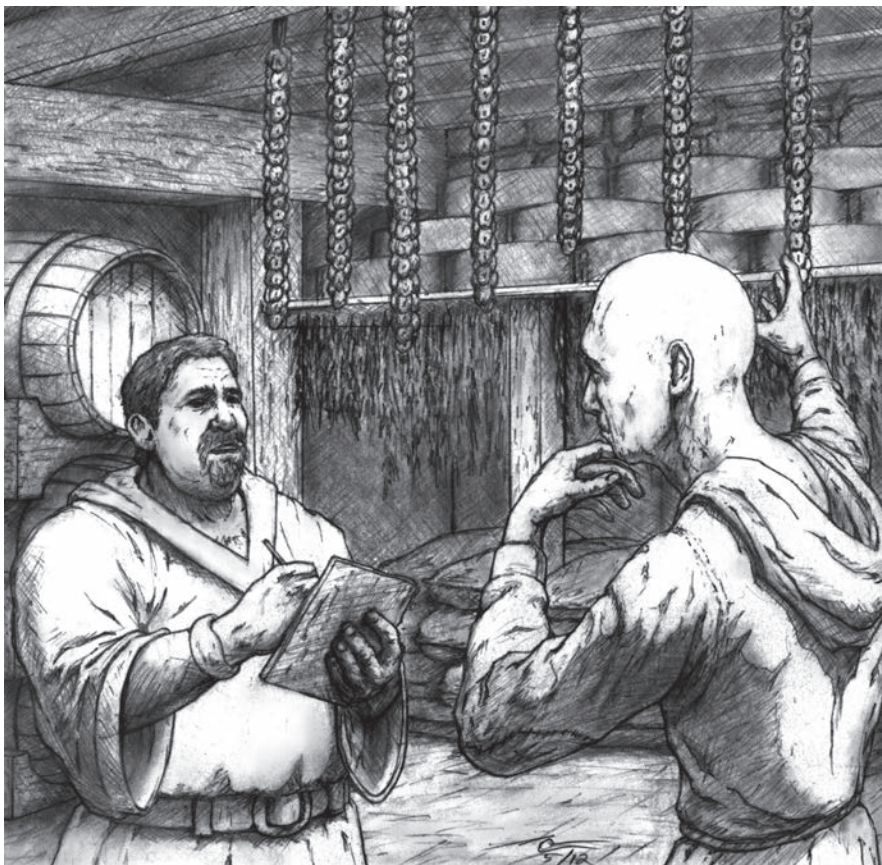
provide the infantry, and are also responsible for guarding the residences of the magi. The Golden Hawks are archers, and man the gate and walls of the covenant. The Green Horses are a cavalry unit, and maintain all the covenant's stables, not just their own. These guilds are permitted to train their own junior war-

riors, and select their own sergeants and captains. The covenant grants the captain a lump sum each year, which is distributed among the soldiers as wages, with some kept in reserve for funeral expenses, rewards, and so forth. Each captain is in charge of the discipline of its own men. Each guild must subcontract the covenfolk for any services, such as care of the sick and injured, or repair of armor or weapons.

*Exempli gratia:* A large covenant has seven guilds named after their patron saints. The Guild of St. Peter consists of the bakers, cobblers, and masons of the covenant; the Guild of St. Luke consists of the glassmakers, physicians, and bookbinders; and the Guild of St. Matthew contains the personal guards of the magi, their servants, and the senior staff. The Guild of St. James supports the cavalry, laborers, and tanners; the Guild of St. Michael contains the soldiers, sailors, and merchants; and the Guild of St. George contains the archers, armorers, and farmers. Finally, the Guild of St. Andrew cares for the fishermen and all the unmarried women (once they marry, they join their husband's guild; if they are widowed, they return to St. Andrew's patronage).

## MONASTERY

A monastery is designed along a guild structure. Unlike the clear hierarchy of the noble household, the abbot of a monastery designates officials





to manage each aspect of the daily life of the monastery. These officials are then responsible for meeting the monastery's needs in their department, and can requisition manpower and finances as needed. This is a good model for a small covenant, where staff need not be permanently designated as a cook or a chambermaid, but instead take on such roles as requested.

The **abbot** is the secular and spiritual leader of a monastery. He appoints various senior obedientaries to care for different departments, so the **terrar** is in charge of the estate, the **cellarer** in charge of food, the **bursar** in charge of money, and so forth. Rather than having a staff or workforce assigned to each, these positions permit their holder to request the assistance of the other monks in the completion of their tasks. For more information on the internal structure of monasteries, see *The Church*, Chapter 4.

*Exempli gratia:* The covenfolk of a small covenant have been divided into four "guilds," one serving each of the four magi (the magistri). The prefect works for the magister militaris, and is tasked with maintaining the covenant's soldiers in a battle-ready state. The cellarer works for the magister aedificius and is in charge of the covenant's mundane resources: its money, food, and consumables. The sacrist works for the magister flaminis and is responsible for the magical resources of the covenant: the laboratories, the library and scriptorium, and gathering the vis. The herald works for the magister legatus, and deals with all outside relations with other covenants and with the local dignitaries. None of the grogs are permanently assigned to any of the four magi, but if vis needs to be collected, the sacrist pulls together a team of the most appropriate grogs and sends them off on a mission. At harvest time, the cellarer gathers most of the available personnel to bring in the wheat.

## No Formal Structure

Some covenants have never instituted any sort of structure at all

among their covenfolk. This is usually only possible for very small numbers of covenfolk; without some sort of organization, important tasks are likely to be forgotten or neglected. In fact, if left to their own devices with no formal organization imposed upon them, covenfolk usually seek some sort of structure by themselves; it is natural for humans to seek social order.

If the covenfolk form a strong cohesive group, they can all work together toward the common good without needing a formal social structure. This is not to say that everyone does not know who is in charge, but there are fewer differences between servant, soldier, and specialist since everyone lends a hand in each task.

*Exempli gratia:* Members of a single family supply nine-tenths of a covenant's workforce. The MacKars are an ancient clan with

a strong leader, and while they might have rivalries with other clans in the region, they also have several alliances. Every member of the covenant knows his place, and is trained in the roles to which he is best suited by an older relative. The clan has even produced one Gifted child, of whom they are inordinately fond, and who is now apprenticed to one of the masters.

## The Life of a Grog

Living at a covenant usually offers better prospects than most peasants or townfolk can otherwise expect. They have a job for life, so long as they prove useful. Food is provided communally, and the buildings are

### Rivalries and Tension

Any sort of social structure can lead to rivalries among the covenfolk. One nation may have deep-seated prejudices against another (perhaps arising from racial or cultural incompatibilities), or a guild might consider its tasks more important than those of the other guilds, and seek an improved status for its members.

In addition to tension between groups of covenfolk, there can also be tension between prominent individuals. If the covenfolk are split into families, there may be a long-standing feud between the leaders of two families; or there could be a power struggle within the turb over who deserves to be captain, once the present incumbent has retired. A common rivalry occurs between the steward and the chamberlain over precedence; many stewards believe that they should be the superior of the chamberlain. The turb captain need not be excluded from such ri-

valries; it is common for the captain to think himself more important than either, and he uses the armed men under his control to enforce this point.

### MINOR RESIDENTS HOOK: WARRING COVENFOLK

The covenfolk are divided into at least two factions, who cannot see eye-to-eye, and this rivalry has gone beyond petty annoyances to a situation where it can occasionally interrupt the smooth running of the covenant. The magi are either unwilling or unable to resolve whatever started the conflict, although their attempts might also lead to stories. This is not the same as either the Divided Loyalty or Rebelious Covenfolk Hooks (*Covenants*, page 19); the different factions of covenfolk can be equally loyal (or disloyal!) to the magi.

## Watch Patterns

It is sometimes necessary to know what patrols certain members of the turb are assigned to at any one time. The following charts should help; randomly determine what patrol (night or day) and watch (first to fourth) a character is in, then cross-reference the time to determine the type of duty. You may instead wish to divide all soldiers into watches ahead of time, so that when an event occurs, you can randomly determine which of the watches is on duty, letting you know which grogs have to deal with that event first.

### SINGLE DUTY

The grogs are divided into four watches. The day and night patrols vary as to when they take their off-duty and free shifts. One-quarter of the covenant's fighting force is combat ready at any time, and another three-eighths can be mobilized quickly; the rest are asleep.

SHIFT	1ST WATCH (NIGHT/DAY)	2ND WATCH (NIGHT/DAY)	3RD WATCH (NIGHT/DAY)	4TH WATCH (NIGHT/DAY)
Eventide	Duty	Off / Free	Off / Free	Off / Free
Nighttide	Off / Free	Duty	Off / Free	Off / Free
Midnight	Off / Free	Off / Free	Duty	Off / Free
Foredawn	Off / Free	Off / Free	Off / Free	Duty
Morntide	Duty	Free / Off	Free / Off	Free / Off
Forenoon	Free / Off	Duty	Free / Off	Free / Off
Afternoon	Free / Off	Free / Off	Duty	Free / Off
Foredusk	Free / Off	Free / Off	Free / Off	Duty

### DOUBLE DUTY

The grogs are divided into two double-watches; as before, the day and night patrols have different assignments when not on duty. One half of the covenant's grogs is combat ready, and another quarter can quickly support them; the remaining quarter is asleep.

SHIFT	1ST AND 2ND WATCHES (NIGHT/DAY)	3RD AND 4TH WATCHES (NIGHT/DAY)
Eventide	Duty	Off / Free
Nighttide	Duty	Off / Free
Midnight	Off / Free	Duty
Foredawn	Off / Free	Duty
Morntide	Duty	Free / Off
Forenoon	Duty	Free / Off
Afternoon	Free / Off	Duty
Foredusk	Free / Off	Duty

maintained at the covenant's expense. Covenfolk can expect the soldiers and masters of a covenant to protect them from the usual perils of life, such as bandits, marauding armies, plague and pestilence, and natural disasters such as flood and fire. Furthermore, it is likely that one's children will also have a job for life, should they want it, and a pension is provided in one's dotage. The biggest downside is living in close proximity to magi, not only because of their dubious reputation, but also due to all the bizarre phenomena that they tend to attract. This section deals with some of the day-to-day issues faced by grogs at a covenant.

The section on duties applies mostly to soldiers, rather than servants or specialists. However, the serving staff tend to follow similar watch patterns to the soldiers, since they must provide food for the soldiers when their watches are complete, and they must arrange their cleaning schedules around their duties. The remaining part of this section applies equally to all grogs — what they do on their free time, how they are rewarded and punished, and what the covenant provides for them in terms of accommodation and pension.

## Duties

A soldier's time is divided into three periods: duty (or watch duty), off-duty, and free time. He actively guards the covenant when on duty, does other jobs around the covenant when off duty, and has self-governed time to himself (usually reserved for sleeping) when free. The turb is usually divided into two patrols (the day and night patrols), of roughly equal size. Both patrols pull a duty during the day and the night, but the day patrol has its off-duty during the day and sleeps at night, whereas the night patrol sleeps during the day and has its off-duty during the night. The two



patrols swap duties periodically, so that the day patrol becomes the night patrol and vice versa. This typically occurs every one to three months.

A patrol may be split further into different areas of the covenant, so that each patrol might consist of a wall patrol, a gate patrol, a keep patrol, and so forth. However, an individual might not perform the same service in each of his duties: on one duty, he might be on wall guard, and on his next duty, he may be patrolling the tower or the forest. The *liber gregis* suggests that a minimum of two grogs constitute each sub-patrol if possible.

The turb captain is responsible for keeping track of the duties and patrols, but a sergeant usually issues orders and assignments to the men. The grog's mess hall usually has a peg board, letting a grog know where and when, and with whom, he is on duty. Each column on the board indicates a different patrol, and a grog finds his mark on the side of the board and reads across to discover what patrol he's been assigned.

## THE WATCHES

The *liber gregis* sets out the expected pattern of sentry duty, both on expedition and while stationed at the covenant, and the system it adopts is broadly based on the Roman model. The 24 hours of the day are divided into eight watches of three hours each: four day watches and four night watches.

WATCH	COMMENCES
Eventide, 1st night watch	6 pm
Nighttide, 2nd night watch	9 pm
Midnight, 3rd night watch	Midnight
Fore dawn, 4th night watch	3 am
Morntide, 1st day watch	6 am
Forenoon, 2nd day watch	9 am
Afternoon, 3rd day watch	Noon
Fore dusk, 4th day watch	3 pm

Times of watches are approximate, based on the height of the sun during the day, and the rising of the moon or stars at night. On overcast nights, watch durations are even more approximate, and are usually estimated from the time it takes for a log the diameter of a man's arm to burn: approximately one hour. During the day, the sergeant on watch is responsible for determining shift changes; at night, this is left to the grogs on duty.

Each patrol is divided into four watches. In normal **sentry duty**, a patrol spends one watch on duty, then three watches off-duty. It then spends another watch on duty, and the next three watches are free time. The first watch of each patrol is assigned the eventide watch as their duty watch, followed by three watches free (if the day patrol) or three watches off-duty (if the night patrol). The two second watches take the nighttide watch as their duty watch, the third watches commence with the midnight watch, and the fourth watches commence with the fore dawn watch. The pattern then repeats itself starting at the morntide watch. In **double duty**, a patrol spends two watches on duty, then two off-duty, then two on duty, then has two free watches. The first and second watches of both patrols start duty with the eventide watch, then are relieved by the third and fourth watches at midnight.

## Sentry Duty

One of the most important and most onerous duties of a soldier is to stand guard over the covenant. This duty generally consists of standing out in the elements, trying to remain alert while absolutely nothing happens. This tedium is punctuated every few months or years by brief moments of excitement and violence. While on sentry duty, a grog's patrol is assigned an area — the gate, a section of the

wall, the bailey, and so forth — and he must be aware of anything unusual that he sees or hears. Of course, at a covenant, "unusual" has a different connotation than it does elsewhere; he may be on the lookout for a faerie infiltration, invisible thieves creeping in, anything up to and including a full-on assault by a dragon!

A grog on watch duty is not permitted to eat, or drink undiluted wine or ale. He is usually permitted a small fire, unless ordered otherwise. He must remain in his armor at all times, and must keep at least one hand on his weapon. His purpose is to remain alert and aware of any potential dangers, and, depending on his station, to patrol across his designated area. If he hears or sees anything suspicious, he should first alert the other grogs of his duty, then the duty sergeant. Obviously, he should raise the alarm for any immediate threats.

Characters can regain Short-Term Fatigue while on duty or off-duty. Normal sentry duties do not incur the loss of Long-Term Fatigue, as long as they are maintained in a regular fashion. If a grog's sleeping time is interrupted, or he chooses to spend it carousing or gambling with his comrades, then he loses a Long-Term Fatigue level which can be regained from normal sleep when he is next permitted.

It may be important to determine whether a grog can remain awake during his duty watches. This involves a Stamina + Concentration roll; failure indicates that the character is dozing or asleep. It is not necessary to roll for every grog on every duty — only if something happens during a shift is this absolutely necessary — but the storyguide should ask for occasional rolls anyway, to keep the players on their toes! Characters who are asleep have a -9 penalty to any Awareness rolls. A character who is woken up suddenly, in addition to still suffering from any Fatigue loss, has a -1 penalty

to all actions for a number of rounds equal to (6 – Stamina).

**REMAIN AWAKE ON DUTY:**  
Stamina + Concentration  
+ simple die

**EASE FACTOR:** 3 (single duty);  
6 (double duty); +3 for night time

**PENALTY TO AWARENESS**  
FOR BEING ASLEEP: –9

**TIME TO RECOVER FROM**  
BEING WOKEN UP:  
6 – Stamina rounds

## DOUBLE DUTY

Double duty is ordered when trouble is expected; grogs work longer shifts, and more of them are active at a time. When on double duty, the turb is divided into two duties, and a grog is on watch for two watches, with two watches off-duty. As before, sleep is permitted after two active duties. If possible, it is arranged so that half of each duty is asleep and half is resting. So, if four grogs are on sentry duty, two take the first duty while one sleeps and the other is off-duty. After two watches, the duties switch; one of those who has just been on duty sleeps, while the other remains awake. In this pattern, there are always three-quarters of the grogs awake at any one time, and half of them are alert, armed, and ready for trouble.

Double duty is tiring, and cannot be maintained for extended periods. At dusk, make Fatigue rolls for every grog. The Ease Factor is three, but increases by one for every double duty watch endured since the character's last normal duty (thus it increases by two every day). Failure results in the loss of one Long Term Fatigue level. Characters on double duty cannot regain Long-Term Fatigue levels until they change to a normal shift pattern,

or they sleep uninterrupted for at least ten hours.

**DOUBLE DUTY FATIGUE ROLLS:**  
Stamina + simple die  
versus Ease Factor 3  
+ number of double duties

## DUTIES FOR SPECIALISTS AND SERVANTS

The working day of most specialists in the covenant is from forenoon until eventide (approximately 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.). If they are entitled to food provided by the covenant, they eat after the soldiers at dawn and dusk, and with them at noon. Other than that, they toil under their own recognition, or under the command of their workshop master or the steward.

Servants need to fit their duties around the other inhabitants of the covenant, but tend to keep similar hours to the specialists. Kitchen staff rise earlier since breakfast needs to be cooked and bread prepared for the whole day. There is usually someone in the kitchen at all times, even if it is just a scullion stoking the fires under the ovens and guarding the stores against hungry soldiers coming off a watch. Chambermaids must often be opportunistic about when they can gain access to the magi's quarters to clean, and become experts at slipping in and out without being noticed.

## Off Duty

A grog off-duty is not necessarily free to do what he wishes, it just means he does not have to patrol the covenant. Off-duty time is usually welcomed by the grogs as a relief from the tedium of being on watch. Off-duty grogs may divest themselves of their armor if it restricts them in their tasks, but are encouraged to wear at

least their under-armor padding if possible. For some tasks, like drilling, wearing armor is mandatory.

In common with most of Mythic Europe, two hot meals are provided each day: dinner is the larger meal and is served midway through the forenoon watch, and supper is served at the end of the foredusk watch. Grogs on off-duty gather in the mess hall after taking bowls of food to those on duty. At other times, the ability for a grog to get hot food depends very much on their personal relationship with the servants. However, a daily ration of bread, cheese, and ale is provided to each grog.

If a grog is off-duty during the daylight hours, then he is usually occupied on the drill ground with the other off-duty shifts. The drill sergeant puts them through their paces, improving their general fitness and providing Teaching in Martial Abilities. Grogs must drill together regularly if they are to be able to fight as a trained group.

Not all of a character's off-duty time is occupied with drills, however. A soldier is expected to take care of his arms, armor, and kit. He must clean the armor and make repairs, sharpen any edged weapons, and smooth out nicks and dents. Any repairs he cannot perform himself must be seen to by the covenant's weapon-smith. Grogs may also be assigned to work crews: assisting the teamsters in unloading provisions; cleaning the latrines; and, during the autumn, helping with the harvest. Furthermore, if a magus needs an errand boy or a test subject, the sergeant assigns an off-duty grog. If he gets time to himself with all this going on, a grog can put in some Practice with a particular Ability.

A grog whose off-duty watch is during the night has an easier time of it. He is usually left to catch up with some sleep (as long as he remains in minimal armor), and may be able to entice his buddies into an illicit dice



game, as long as the sergeant doesn't catch them.

To specialists and servants, off-duty is much the same as free time. Servants work a particularly long day, and tend to sleep when not on duty; specialists usually have more energy to join the soldiers in their leisure pursuits.

## Free Time

Free time is precious to all grogg; it is when they sleep. A grogg's daily routine is physically and mentally demanding, and, as mentioned earlier, a grogg who does not sleep in his free time suffers a Long Term Fatigue level until he manages to sleep for at least two continuous watches. Strictly speaking, grogg are not permitted to sleep at any other time, but many manage to sneak a nap, at the risk of getting caught by the sergeant.

Grogg do not have to sleep in their free time; they may choose to spend it how they like. If they want to drink their wine or ale ration rather than save it for the meals, they may do so in their free time, but only in the watch immediately after they come off duty. Being drunk on duty is grounds for punishment. Grogg often gamble with each other during their free time, either on dice or coin games, on tests of skill such as quoits, or on dog fights or cock fights. Finally, a grogg assigned punishment duties (see later) must perform them in his free time.

## Rewards

A grogg's life might seem a hard one, but he is recompensed with food, accommodation, and a promise of a pension in his old age. Compared to the life of a serf, grogg have it easy. Nevertheless, it is good for morale if the covenant is seen to reward skill,



good behavior, initiative, and uncommon bravery. A maga who commends a grogg to the turb captain, steward, or chamberlain does not usually concern herself with the nature of the reward, and rarely bestows it herself. Instead, the official himself determines an appropriate remuneration, and announces the reward in front of the rest of the turb. However, magi do not always recognize the importance to turb discipline of maintaining a chain of command, and sometimes hand out *ad hoc* rewards.

best bread available), fresh meat, or a double ration of wine or ale. This improvement in rations might last a day, a month, a season, or a year, depending on the magnitude of the rewarded behavior. A grogg spending a year on improved rations receives a -1 improvement to his Living Conditions Modifier when making aging rolls. A grogg receiving one of the other rewards listed here often also receives improved rations as well.

### PAY AND A HALF

Monetary rewards to grogg are not that useful; they have little opportunity to spend hard coin. Nevertheless, grogg sometimes hoard what coin they can with a particular purpose in mind: perhaps a favor for his love, or a superior weapon. Pay and a Half can last for a season or more, or it might be permanent.

### IMPROVED RATIONS

The fare of a grogg is usually pretty plain, so a simple and effective way of rewarding a grogg for a well-done job is to give him a one-off or temporary elevation in his provender. Typical improvements in rations include a private cellar of salt, wastel bread (the

## IMPROVED EQUIPMENT

Covenants often gather superior arms and armor, either scavenged from the battlefield, received as gifts, or left behind by former companions or grogs. They might also acquire tools of superior quality from former covenfolk or from outside the covenant. This equipment is often given out as rewards. This is a little backhanded, since the covenant is rewarding a grog by making him more efficient at what they pay him to do, but most grogs do not complain. This equipment might be Expensive rather than Standard cost, or it might be particularly well-crafted and provide actual bonuses (see *City & Guild*, pages 67–71). In rare circumstances, a grog might be granted a lesser enchantment or even an invested item, although this usually requires great heroism to provoke such a gift. All gifts are permanent, but a grog who is demoted as a punishment must usually surrender any such equipment in addition to any other punishment.

## PROMOTION IN RANK

The highest reward offered by most covenants is a promotion. A standard grog can be promoted to custos, and a custos may be promoted to sergeant, or the equivalent for servants and specialists. They may even aspire to be captain, chamberlain, or steward one day. Increased rank has several privileges — better food, better accommodation, better pay, and often a better pension.

## Punishments

The *liber gregis* devotes a whole chapter to punishments, but it is clear that Beorhtric was a just captain and only used these punishments when warranted. Without punishments, discipline cannot be maintained. It

is also important that the covenfolk know that the covenant is prepared to inflict these punishments, so they are handed out in public before the rest of the covenant. These punishments are applied to all covenfolk, not just the soldiers, although it is rare for one of the servants to have the opportunity to commit an offense that warrants a severe penalty. One individual, often the drill sergeant, is usually responsible for inflicting the punishments on all of the covenfolk. This presents the covenant as a coherent body of law to its inhabitants.

Corporal punishments are normally reserved for poor discipline. A grog who is insolent, disobedient, or insubordinate is subjected to physical punishment appropriate to the crime. These sorts of punishments are short, sharp shocks that are over with as soon as the wounds heal. Punishments involving the withholding of privileges are usually applied for failure in a duty, and the degree of failure determines the severity of the punishment. This does not mean that, every time a mission fails, the grogs are punished; only if it fails because of their actions or inactions is discipline applied. These punitive measures are usually long term, or even permanent. The two types of punishment are often combined: for example, if insubordination leads to failure in a mission.

Punishment, if inflicted in an appropriate manner for clear reasons, does not usually result in a loss of Prevailing Loyalty (see *Covenants*, page 36, and Chapter 4), even if the majority of the covenfolk do not agree with the punishment. Naturally, it is appropriate for the punished individual to suffer a reduction in personal Loyalty, but this may only be temporary, and if the punishment is correctly applied, then the overall effect may actually be an increase in loyalty. However, if punishment is frequent, inconsistent, or disproportionate to the infraction, then the magi can expect the coven-

folk to become more hostile toward them. Punishment is not usually inflicted by a magus, and using magic is specifically advised against due to the danger of alienating the covenfolk.

The punishments of the *liber gregis* are listed later, in order of severity. The crimes for which they are inflicted have been purposefully omitted; every covenant places different importance on infractions, and it is impossible to generalize. Most covenants do not have a definitive list of crimes and their associated punishments (although some do); those with access to the *liber gregis* assigns punitive action based on the type of crime and its severity.

## CASTIGATION

This is the lowest level of punishment, consisting of a single blow to the face, hand, or thigh with a rod. The drill sergeant usually carries such a rod specifically for this purpose (traditionally made from the virile organ of a bull), and the punishment is usually applied immediately.

## RELEGATION TO INFERIOR DUTIES

Every covenant has duties that are considered to be the most unpleasant of all; these are usually drawn by lot, but are occasionally assigned as punishment. Typically, emptying the latrine pits is the worst of all jobs, but at a covenant, worse jobs can doubtless be found — feeding Master Hygwald's familiar, removing the rotting corpses from Master Lucas's laboratory, or accompanying Master Orsinio on a mission to the Black Bog of Doom.

## REDUCTION OF RATIONS

Grogg usually receive basic but nutritious fare of good grain, occa-



sional meat or fish, and a daily ration of ale or wine. The threat of being reduced to barley (rather than wheat), having the meat ration removed, and/or the ale exchanged for small beer (or worse, milk!) for a month is a good incentive to avoid bad behavior. A character who spends one or more seasons a year on reduced rations suffers a +1 penalty to his Living Conditions Modifier; if he is on reduced rations for three or four seasons, the penalty is +2.

### FLOGGING

This punishment usually takes place in front of the entire covenant; the offender takes one, five, or ten blows to the back from a strap. 1, 2, or 3 Light Wounds are inflicted by this punishment, and the offender takes 1, 3, or 5 long term Fatigue levels as well.

### REDUCTION IN RANK

Rank has its privileges: the wages are higher, the ration of food is better, and the accommodation is superior. Furthermore, rank has implications for one's pension once one is too old to serve the covenant (see later). Reduction in rank is permanent; all grogs have the capacity to re-earn the rank they once held, but a captain will be reluctant to promote someone who has lost his rank through punishment.

### WHIPPING

Much more brutal than simple flogging, miscreants are sentenced to a number of lashes (usually a multiple of 10), made with either the long whip or the short whip, with the latter being the more severe punishment. 10 lashes inflicts a Light Wound, 30 lashes a Medium Wound, and 50 lashes

a Heavy Wound. If the short whip is used, 2 wounds of each type are inflicted. The punished grog is permitted just one week to recover from his lashes (just one day if ten or fewer are inflicted); if he cannot work after this time has elapsed (which is likely if he received more than ten lashes), then his pay is docked for the time he takes to recover.

### DISMISSAL

Being dismissed from the service of a covenant is a step rarely taken lightly. Covenants value their privacy, and dismissing a grog from a steady job is likely to leave that individual harboring a great deal of resentment that could be used against the covenant. Of course, magi have ways of securing silence, from simple threats and sham curses, to more direct magical measures, such as mutilation of the tongue and modification of the memory.

### FUSTUARIUM

The most extreme punishment suggested by the *liber gregis* is for the malefactor to be beaten to death with clubs or stones. This form of justice is often meted out by the rest of the turb, who wear blindfolds. This is so that the character who inflicts the death blow cannot be identified, absolving him from any personal responsibility, and instead leaving the whole group accountable for the death sentence. Very few covenants actually have the legal right to order the death of their men, so this group responsibility can be important if the death becomes known in the wider community. However, since many grogs are misfits or outcasts, their death often goes unnoticed and unremarked. Beorhtic writes that he has only ever heard of this punishment being applied once, and never ordered it himself.

## Accommodation

Grogg usually have a section of the covenant set aside for them. This is usually divided into servants' quarters, soldiers' quarters, and specialists' quarters, more for practical reasons than anything else. Soldiers in particular, with irregular watch duties, can easily disturb the sleep of others. These quarters usually consist of a large room; each grog is assigned a bunk and a chest in which to keep personal belongings. Custodes and higher ranks occasionally have private rooms, or at least bunks further from the drafts and closer to the fire. Married covenfolk often have a separate room.

There is usually a single mess hall set aside for all grogs to eat together, but because of watch patterns not everyone eats at the same time.

## Families

It would be a very unusual covenant that didn't actively encourage its covenfolk to get married. It is the duty of all Christian men to marry, and have children; and it is certainly useful to the covenant to raise the next generation of covenfolk. After all, being exposed to The Gift at an early age means that, by the time adolescence is reached, the child will have grown accustomed to the adverse effects of the magi's presence.

Because of a general reluctance to bring outsiders into the closed community of a covenant, matches between the covenfolk are encouraged. Describing the courtship and eventual marriage of a favored grog is an excellent way to add depth to these characters, and have the players invest deeply in the sense of community that their covenant should engender.

### RETIREMENT

As a grog gets old, and decrepitude sinks its inescapable claws into him, there might come a time when the troop decides to retire him. Old grogs are valued by magi because they are usually exceptionally competent and less likely to react badly to The Gift, and yet as a character ages, he may be inclined toward lighter duties. The decision to retire often comes suddenly, after a serious aging crisis that leaves the character crippled or weakened.

Assuming that a covenant cares for its retired members, the grog is still counted as a member of the covenant as far as its finances go. Some

covenants move retired grogs to a secondary location where they can live out their final years in peace, but others prefer to keep them around to act as babysitters, sources of information or training, and perhaps to still ply a trade if it does not impose strenuous demands.

### PENSIONS

A grog's pension is one of the enticements that keeps a grog at the covenant. Few professions allow their members to continue to draw a wage after their working life has ended, but ever since Rome, this has been

the prerogative of the professional soldier, and many covenants have extended this right to all of their grogs. Pensions are usually half to three-quarters of their former pay. Covenants occasionally charge rent for the accommodation of their retired members (and thus avoid having to pay them any pension), but still provide food free of charge.

A widow is normally granted the pension that would have been owed her deceased husband. In any case, the widow of a grog is usually cared for by the other grogs who worked with her husband.



## Chapter Three

# Grogs Alone

Troupe styles vary greatly. Some may use grogs purely as supporting cast, and focus the action only on the magi and companions. Other sagas detail the background and life of each grog in detail, and their personalities are as complex as those of any other character. Most troupes tend to fall somewhere between these two extremes. Whatever the style of play, stories that only involve grog characters can be very rewarding.

This chapter is all about grog-only stories. First, it presents some ideas for why grog-only stories might be desirable, with some story seeds illustrating this type of adventure. Next, it discusses the planning of grog stories, with some typical genres that one might employ, and some consideration of important elements of such stories — why the magi are not around, designing your antagonist for non-magical opponents, and so forth. Finally, it describes some saga concepts that involve only grog characters.

## Themes for Grog Stories

This section describes some themes that illustrate why you might want to run some all-grog stories rather than more standard stories for *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* involving magi and companions. These stories can be woven into a normal saga, or played out as part of a grog-only saga.

### Switching Storyguides

Grog stories are perfect opportunities to introduce guest storyguides, or give a beta storyguide a turn in the chair (*ArM5*, page 220). Since grog adventures by their very nature do not involve magi, they cannot usually inter-

fere with the alpha storyguide's plots or make major alterations to the covenant. In the case of a beta storyguide, grog stories could form a series of interconnected stories running parallel to the alpha storyguide's schemes.

### Showcasing

Grog stories are an excellent way to introduce features of medieval life to a troupe. When magi are involved,

they often concentrate on where the action is. They are important people, after all, and have little time to get involved in the minutiae of peasant life. In any case, there are many de-



## Story Seeds: Showcasing

### INNOCENT OR GUILTY?

A grog is accused of a crime by a freeman. He could be innocent but framed, or he could be inadvertently guilty — while soldiers might not think twice about killing those who molest their masters, this is still a crime. The grog is ordered to attend court to answer for his crimes, and should probably consult a lawyer. He must then cope with the intricacies of Mythic Europe's legal system, which is often less about proving guilt or innocence, and more about testing the justice of a law. Depending on the saga's location and the

nature of the crime, trial by ordeal might be ordered.

### A NOBLE HUNT

A noble friend of the magi invites them on a hunt, and they bring their grogs along for the event. Hunting in Mythic Europe is a popular past time filled with ritual and tradition. Hunts are organized by the nobility, but the common man takes part, as trackers, huntsmen, and so forth. Of course, when the hounds pick up the scent of the Great White Stag, the hunt can become a lot more interesting ...

mands on the time of the magus: he must prepare a case for the next tribunal; attend a meeting of the covenant's council, where the business of the count will be debated; review the work that the illuminator did on his new summa; and that fool apprentice cannot be relied upon to keep the contents of the copper cauldron on a rolling boil ...

In grog-only adventures, the story can be taken at a more leisurely pace. A grog might actually be interested in judging the prize cow at the county fair, acting as a juror (or witness) at a local trial, or attending the May Day celebrations at his home village. When a storyguide has been doing some research into a facet of the day-to-day life of the Middle Ages and wants to share it with the troupe, a grog adventure is a great way of doing this.

## Routine Duties

Many standard stories in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* involve the magi discovering a new vis source,

making alliances with supernatural entities, and so forth. However, once the initial adventure has been had, the process of harvesting the vis source, or exchanging favors with the dragon, or whatever, tends to fade into the mundane routine of the covenant. It falls to the grogs to fulfill these duties. Occasionally it is worth reminding the players what is involved in such "routine duties" by

staging a grog adventure. Naturally, the object of the story is the duty itself, but this time out the mission does not go smoothly, and the grogs are forced to adapt to the changing circumstances.

## Plot Staging, Development, and Exposition

Related to the previous two concepts, a grog story is a good way to feed information to the players in a subtle manner. Rather than tell them that they hear rumors of a bandit group in the region, the storyguide can have the grogs encounter them on the way back from a routine duty. The leader of these bandits may prove to be significant in a later story, but the grogs already have a past history with some of the bandits, which enriches the experience for all.

In addition to using grogs to set up a future story, they can also be used to advance a current plot. If the magi need some research done, they need not do it themselves — send out the grogs to canvass the town for rumors, or search the library for clues. Any

## Story Seeds: Routine Duties

### LOST SHEEP

The grogs sent to gather vis are confronted by a horde of angry peasants. It seems that the last couple of times that the grogs have passed this way, sheep have gone missing immediately after; this time the villagers have been expecting the strangers, and have lain in wait for them. It seems that, on each visit to the vis source, the grogs disturb some sort of supernatural creature, which goes on a

rampage right after they have left the region.

### STOLEN VIS

The grogs have traveled a great distance to gather the vis from a distant source, only to discover that it has already been harvested. There are signs that the perpetrators of the theft might still be in the area, so the loyal grogs are tempted to investigate rather than return empty handed.



time that the magi entrust a task to their subordinates, making this into a story has greater potential than simply reporting back the information that is learned. The characters learn the information, but also get an appreciation of what is needed to gain that information.

## Light Relief

After several sessions of intense action, a grog adventure that bears no relation to the current story can provide valuable light relief for a troupe. In such stories, the players need not usually worry about the politics of the Order, the correct magical approach, or even (in some cases) the consequences of their actions.

Light relief stories need not be comical, but comedy can play an important role in a saga. Those players who don't want to trivialize their magus or companion can have great fun using their grog in a humorous encounter with Freddie the Fart Faerie. Be aware that this might not be to everyone's tastes, however! The important feature of a light relief story is not cheap laughs, but a lack

### FLASHBACK

The magi have been plagued by a major foe, such as a dragon, and after several incidents decide to do something about it. They need to know where the dragon lives, which might occasion an (Area) Lore roll from one of the grogs who grew up in the region. Instead of simply telling the players that information, the storyguide instead runs a short "flashback" story to a time before the grog joined the covenant. He was exploring the woods with some of his boyhood friends (some of the other grogs) when one of them fell into a sinkhole. It becomes clear over the course of this story that this was the entrance to the dragon's lair, although the grogs saw no evidence of the beast at the time. Not only do the magi get the information

of consequences. Light relief should not be part of a continuing story, or deliver important information to the characters, but instead should be self-contained.

they need, but they can also plan their approach using the grogs' personal experience of the region. The grogs may have even accidentally discovered the dragon's weakness, although they didn't recognize it as such at the time.

### FORESHADOWING

The grogs are tasked with finding someone in the local town who can make gold jewelry. While they search for such an individual, they come across an old woman who is worried because her grandson has gone missing. This event is entirely tangential to finding a goldsmith, but the grandson is an important seed for a later story; by introducing him to the characters now, they are more likely to get involved in the later story.

## Story Seeds: Light Relief

### A FAERIE TRICK

A faerie decides to play a trick on a village, and everyone wakes up one morning looking like Simon the Basket-Weaver. While they struggle with the confusion this brings, several enterprising villagers decide to perform petty acts of mischief and revenge on one another, since this is a day without consequence — no one can be sure who did what. The grogs might be passing through and be affected by the curse, or they might be left to

try to disentangle who is responsible for stealing their goods.

### OVERINDULGENCE

The grogs attend a May Day celebration at the local village, which involves a great deal of food and drink. When they wake up, they are stranded far from the village, and someone has stolen their clothes. They must find their way back to the covenant, and avoid being seen by the village priest who is calling everyone to church.

## History Intervenes

Bound as they are by the Code of Hermes, magi remain passive observers to most events of mundane history. However, such events need not go unremarked in a saga. Grog adventures can provide a historical backdrop, and allow players to experience history directly. Perhaps grogs are concerned about rescuing their families from the path of an advancing army. Maybe they are in a city on a routine mission when a food riot starts. For a more hands-on approach, grogs could make — or even alter — history. Many historical figures die in mishaps, riots, or mysterious circumstances, and an inventive storyguide can find a way to involve the grogs. Still more notables escape death through the deft work of a physician, through sheer luck, or through the beneficence of strangers; once again, grogs could play a role here without implicating the covenant

through their actions.

If you permit your players close proximity with real history, you must be prepared for things to not go the way you anticipate. You should come to a decision whether you want the player characters to be able to make major changes to history, and whether the significant events of Mythic Europe need to match those of the real world. Some troupes are comfortable with the fact that, while the history of Mythic Europe has paralleled that of historical Europe at least as far as the 13th century, it may not necessarily continue in that vein. Other troupes prefer to retain history as a backdrop rather than a story element. Make sure you know where your players' opinions lay before messing with the river of time. In any case, allowing grog

stories to intersect with history will probably result in less disruption than stories involving magi, so grog-only stories may be the safest kind.

## Epic Battles

The Order of Hermes is specifically forbidden from interfering with

vençal barons. The reconquista is ongoing on the Spanish peninsula, and there is still an Arabic state in Sicily. As well as these large-scale wars, there are numerous smaller conflicts between kings and their vassals.

the affairs of mundanes. Nevertheless, a covenant can easily find itself caught up in local politics; Mythic Europe in the 13th century is a time of political upheaval, and military clashes between neighboring powers are frequent (if not actually common). Furthermore, most covenants have a force of fighting men, which has probably come to the notice of the local nobility, who prefer to maintain a monopoly over professional soldiers.

Even if a covenant avoids being caught up in wars among mundanes, they may still find themselves involved in mass warfare, with themselves as either the victim or the aggressor. Once the magi have prepared the ground, using their magic to fortify their men, spy on the enemy, and snipe at the opposing forces, most of the hard work is still done with sword and shield. Magi can have a quite limited role to play once battle is joined, and the larger the force, the less impact they have.

A grog story revolving around the covenant's actions in a battle is a good way of summarizing the course of the war as a whole. The role of grogs in these stories should be limited to small-scale vignettes that highlight the specifics of the battle, and perhaps can change its course; *Lords of Men* devotes a chapter to the involvement of player characters in mass warfare, by focusing on the actions of small squads of men as microcosms of the day's fighting.

## Story Seeds: History

### LONG LIVE THE KING?

In 1223, King Louis VIII is crowned King of France. He had formerly been crowned King of England after he invaded on the death of King John; after eighteen months of fighting he was driven out, and the Treaty of Lambeth forced him to agree that he was never a legitimate king of England. Understandably, Louis VIII was unpopular in English circles, and throughout his reign he harassed Angevin territories in France, fought with the Count of Champagne, arranged the excommunication of the Count of Toulouse and declared a crusade against the southern barons. He dies in 1226, apparently of dysentery. There is a lot of potential to get grogs bound up in the short reign of this king. If the covenant is pro-French then they might receive word of plots against the crown. An anti-French covenant might be conspirators in (or instigators of) these

plots. All this could occur without the knowledge of the magi.

### THE FIFTH CRUSADE

The Fifth Crusade is in full swing in 1220. As an opening to a saga, this Crusade presents a dramatic backdrop to life as a grog. The two-year siege of Damietta has just ended, and the crusaders are now fighting over secular and religious authority in the port. Francis of Assisi arrived late last year, and has been preaching to the sultan; it is thought that he is now visiting Palestine but his whereabouts are unknown. The Crusade is about to march on Cairo. The players could begin with grog characters who are men-at-arms in the crusading force. They could meet up with the magi after a few battles; perhaps they are trying to smuggle ancient artifacts from the Egyptian tombs before the crusaders arrive, or maybe the magi are providing support to the crusaders.



## Personal Stories

Last but not least, grog stories can feature the achievement of an individual's or group's personal goals. This can be as prosaic as detailing a grog's courtship of his true love, or as melodramatic as a quest by a blood brotherhood to exact revenge on the monster that slew their beloved leader. Personal stories occasionally result in changes to the character, in the form of transformation (see Chapter 5), but this should always be the focus of the story, rather than incidental.

## Planning Grog Stories

In some cases, a grog story can afford to be simpler in structure than a story involving magi. The sheer versatility of a Hermetic magus, and the inventive uses to which magic can be put can occasionally leave a storyguide stumped as to how to pitch a challenge correctly. However, things are much more straightforward with a group of grogs, who have a much more predictable skill set. This need not make the stories any less exciting, though. This section offers some general advice for planning grog stories once the theme has been chosen. Picking a genre is often a good start. Where is the focus of the story? Are the grogs solving mysteries, or fighting their way out of trouble? This section goes on to discuss the simple structure of a story, and the elements that should be considered at each stage. *Realms of Power: Faerie* has a whole chapter devoted to the telling of faerie stories, and it is full of good advice for constructing folkloric tales in general, in addition to stories that specifically feature faeries.



### Story Seeds: Personal Stories

#### A FALLEN COMRADE

The turb of grogs is determined to retrieve the body of a comrade slain on a distant task, because of the constraints of the mission, they were forced to bury him far from home. They have sought and received permission from the magi, and set out. After overcoming various obstacles to get to the burial site, they discover that the makeshift grave is empty, so they must seek out the graverobbers. On the way home, they could easily slip on to a faerie trod (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 17), since these are commonly roads of the dead.

#### CLAIM JUMPERS

A grog's father arrives at the covenant and asks for help. His father is a freeman who has a farm some villages over, but has been driven from his holding by an aggressive family that seems to have a legitimate deed over the land. The reeve refuses to get involved, as far as he's concerned, as long as the rent is paid, he has little interest in who pays it. The grog character must restore ownership and occupation of his family farm, but first has to prove that the interlopers have no right — and expose the reeve as being in their pocket.



## Story Genres

There are seven genres that lend themselves well to grog stories: Action/Adventure, Comedy, Creature Feature, Drama, Exploration, Horror, and Mystery. However, one should note that these broad genres are not mutually exclusive, and a story can always switch genres midway through to help keep the players on their toes.

### ACTION/ADVENTURE

This is the type of story with which most grogs feel at home. Action/Adventures usually feature combat quite heavily, but this should not be all they contain. Chases, physical challenges, and a well-chosen "bad guy" who employs unusual tactics all add to the fun. Stories based around disasters can also make good grog stories. Action stories are usually heavy on the doing and light on the thinking; don't get too bound up in complex plots.

Examples include:

- A bandit moves into an area near the family of one of the grogs. He is holding the children hostage to ensure the villagers' compliance, and to make them steal from their neighbors to line his pockets.
- Grogg track down a villainous lord who tortured and killed their captain in a previous story. The magi were unable to punish him because of the Code, but they might provide surreptitious help to the vengeful grogs.
- A fire in a town spreads quickly. The grogs must do their best to preserve their favorite establishments, and help those trapped in burning houses. But who started the fire, and how?

### COMEDY

Comedy has an incidental role in many stories, but it can also be an intentional element. Humor can be very individual and idiosyncratic, and a storyguide has a duty toward his players to pitch a comedic story appropriately so that it is enjoyed equally by the players and the storyguide. Not everyone appreciates the sophomoric character of slapstick or toilet humor, whereas others have difficulty with subtly crafted irony.

Not all stories of the Comedy genre need to be Light Relief. Comedy can highlight odd medieval customs, deal with plot development, or cover personal developments in the lives of grogs, just as straight stories can. Furthermore, comedy can be dark as well as light, and stories of this genre can have serious or even fatal consequences.

Don't be tempted to use faeries simply because you are planning a comedy story. This has been an over-used trope in previous editions of *Ars Magica*, but the current edition has redefined the nature of faerie, and whimsy is less of a feature of these creatures now. Nevertheless, there are faeries who derive vitality from human laughter, although the faerie itself is never laughing with the characters — it is laughing at them, or it is being laughed at by them.

Examples include:

- The grogs are asked by a friend to help him woo his lady love. He has an over-elaborate plan to elevate himself above his rivals for her affections. The lady herself is selfish with an overbearing and disapproving mother, and her sister — a better match for the besotted grog — is deeply and hopelessly in love with him. Add the jealous suitors into the mix, and you have all the elements of a classic farce.

- Many parts of Mythic Europe have a tradition similar to the French *poisson d'avril* (literally, "April fish,"). An individual is chosen by lot — the methods vary by locale and class — and that person becomes the *de facto* ruler for a time. All men must obey the poisson's dictates, no matter how silly. The poisson may rule for a single day, or for longer (such as the 12 nights between Christmas and Epiphany). A child — or worse, a faerie — elected poisson can wreak havoc, and the characters might be in charge of damage limitation, or else caught up in the caprices of the "king for a day."
- A group of grogs are transformed into animals through an unknown agency, and they must make their way back to the covenant to have the enchantment undone. On the way, they experience the communities and social structures of other animals, and come to realize that they are a parody of human society as a whole.

### CREATURE FEATURE

Usually a subgenre of Action/Adventure, this type of story focuses on a specific opponent. The set-up of the story is usually specifically geared to give the antagonist the most advantages possible.

Examples include:

- A basilisk has taken up residence right on top of one of the covenant's vis sources. This horrible creature can only be defeated by an Eagle of Virtue — but the grogs must convince the noble bird to nullify the basilisk's deadly power so that they can defeat it on more equal terms.
- A werewolf is terrorizing a village. Everyone suspects the reclu-



sive woodsman, but the grogs can provide him with a perfect alibi. The lycanthrope must instead be one of the villagers, and the characters have to trick him into revealing himself before he kills them all.

- A hedge witch has taken a particular dislike to one of the grogs — for real or imagined reasons. Whenever he leaves the covenant he risks being harried by her, so he decides to drum up a few friends and sort her out. However, she is well-protected. She uses the local animals as her eyes and ears, and has trapped the land around her home with mundane and magical traps. She may have ensorcelled one or more warriors to act as a bodyguard, or have more overtly supernatural assistance.

## DRAMA

Situations fraught with tension rather than action are the hallmark of a good dramatic story, and the cut-and-thrust of politics can be every bit as exciting as battle for the right grog. Drama-based stories usually need a good plot to hold them together, since the players don't have so many combats to distract them.

Examples include:

- A wedding attended by the grogs is crashed by a band of courtly faeries. The grogs must negotiate their way through the obscure rules of etiquette to find out why these faeries believe they have a claim on the bridegroom.
- A war has destroyed many families in the local area, and the grogs are approached to help bring some of the refugees to safety. What the grogs may not know when they agree is that the refugees are Jews (or another

denigrated minority), leaving the grogs to struggle with their own prejudices, as well as those of the world around them.

- A grog meets and falls in love with an unattainable individual. Perhaps she is the daughter of a nobleman, and he just a stable boy. Or maybe he is a magus, and she is a soldier. The grog must contend with the possibility that his beloved has ulterior motives for returning his affections. This drama could span several months or years until the two finally resolve their star-crossed love.

## EXPLORATION

These stories feature new experiences or take place in exotic locales, and may be combined with action or with drama.

Examples include:

- A grog was forced to leave his father's sword in the body of a faerie on a recent adventure; he wants it back. However, the faerie has become something else now and the sword has become integral to that change. The grog and his comrades must succeed in the challenges posed by the faerie to regain the sword.
- The grogs are shipwrecked on a mysterious island, and the magi are nowhere to be found. The secret to escaping from this regio must be somewhere on the island, but can they find it alone?
- The grogs are required to deliver a magical item to the king of the monkeys. When they step across the borders of his land, they find themselves transformed into monkeys themselves. To complete their mission, they must foil a plot of the monkeys' enemies, the serpent people.

## HORROR

**Ars Magica Fifth Edition** is a good setting for horror stories. Mythic Europe is rich in suitable opponents — ghosts, demons, werewolves, vampires — and abounds with suitably creepy locations, such as haunted forests, abandoned castles, and fog-shrouded moors. In addition to maintaining the atmosphere, the storyguide should build tension through inconclusive encounters until the final confrontation. Horror stories make extensive use of Personality Traits (particularly the Brave Trait), and madness can be represented by the temporary imposition of Personality Traits at high values that govern the character's reactions to certain stimuli. Stories that are all about fighting a monster rather than running from it are creature features, rather than horror.

Examples include:

- An abandoned farmhouse has been occupied by a particularly unpleasant faerie. It has become a test of manhood to spend a night in the farmhouse and return with an item from inside to prove it.
- The grogs are at the covenant, but virtually everyone else is absent, including the magi. Strange things start to happen, including disappearances or even deaths. It soon becomes apparent that a demon is loose in the covenant. But how did it get through the *Aegis of the Hearth*?
- The grogs are hunting (perhaps illegally), but they slowly realize that instead they are the ones being hunted. They never see their pursuer clearly, but are herded toward the creature's lair where it is best able to dispatch them — or so it hopes.

## MYSTERY

Mystery adventures rely less on combat and more on quick-wittedness and sharp eyes. These stories can be more fun without magi, who can often easily solve mysteries with magic. Be careful not to allow a mystery adventure to devolve into a set of Perception + Awareness rolls to spot clues.

Examples include:

- A disease is afflicting the grogs, but it has no apparent cause and the physicians are baffled. Clues point toward a grog who died recently, but why would he have had a grudge against the covenant?
- The oblates at a local monastery are going missing. They've been trying to cover it up, but eventually a boy connected to one of the covenfolk becomes a victim. Where are they going, and is the monastery involved?
- The agent of the covenant's merchant contact is found hanged in a warehouse. He is discovered to have been involved in the sale of stolen relics. But who murdered him — the thieves, a rival, or a disgruntled buyer?

a Story Flaw. The storyguide can usually be sure that a certain set of companion or magi characters will take part in any given adventure because it plays on one of their Story Flaws. Since grogs cannot have Story Flaws, the storyguide must use other methods for getting the characters involved in the stories.

The most common method is simply handing down orders to the grogs. They are, after all, the employees of a covenant, which they rely on for wages, homes, and food. However, it soon becomes a clichéd way to start an adventure. Here are a few alternate ideas. Furthermore, some of the story themes mentioned earlier lend themselves to particular story seeds, as the characters react to events imposed upon them.

Example include:

- A mysterious lady dressed all in green asks the grogs for help.
- A character known to one of the grogs calls in a favor he is owed.
- The grog characters are ambushed on their way to a nearby town.
- The grog characters are tricked into getting involved by a cunning priest.

getting involved. Some types of story are of more intrinsic interest to magi, or involve the Story Flaws of the "main cast," but conventional stories in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* are not intended to feature grogs exclusively. The storyguide sometimes needs to provide some pretext as to why the magi and companions are unavailable for these stories.

Example include:

- The magi are absent from the covenant: perhaps they are at tribunal, or visiting an ally, or fighting a dragon with the rest of the turb.
- The magi are at the covenant, but unable or unwilling to be distracted. The grog story might be related to the circumstance that prevents the magi from taking part. For example, the casting of the *Aegis of the Hearth* leaves a window every year in which all the magi are occupied for an hour or two.
- The grogs are accompanying one or more of the covenant's apprentices on their first adventure beyond the covenant gates.
- The story initially presents itself as business normally assigned to grogs, such as vis collection.
- The story is the personal business of one or more grogs.
- The grogs specifically want to exclude the magi, knowing that they won't approve or consent to the story. This could be a minor act of rebellion (visiting a bordello) or a major one (disobeying orders not to return for the dragon's treasure).
- The grogs are given the assignment by the magi. Perhaps the journey is too long for them to bother with, or too boring (apparently) to pique their interest.
- Sometimes the magi choose not to come along when they really should have. On occasion, a storyguide presents a story seed too subtly for his players, and they assign a group of grogs to check

## The Beginning

The beginning of any grog story lacks a key ingredient that many stories for *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* have:

## WHERE ARE THE MAGI?

An important question to ask when planning a grog adventure is why the magi or companions aren't

## Sources of Inspiration

A storyguide should not be frightened of borrowing from modern films and TV series to construct stories. Such sources are usually pretty good for grog stories, since their protagonists do not rely on magic to get them out of a hole either (although sufficiently-advanced

technology can substitute indistinguishably for magic). Inspiration can derive from all sorts of shows and films. Just make sure that your players are not too familiar with your sources, or they might spot the plot even after you have reframed it in a Mythic European setting!



out the issue. This might end in tragedy for the grogs if they are outmatched against a supernatural opponent.

- The grogs could be traitors to the covenant, and actually working against it. This works best with grogs who have not yet been played — they were always traitors, but only now has the opportunity for treachery presented itself. However, known grogs could be enchanted by hostile powers to betray their masters.
- The magi accompany the grogs, but are separated from them in the early phase of the story. The grogs might be sent away by the magi — to get help, to explore, and so forth — or the separation might be due to misadventure.
- The magi cannot get involved because of the dictates of the Code of Hermes. By sending grogs with no magical aid, they hope to bypass the tribunal's wrath.

## The Middle

The middle of any story should have a gradual increase in tension or action, or both, as the characters build toward the climax that happens in the finale. The three basic ways of building tension in the middle phase of a story are antagonists, clues, and obstacles.

### ANTAGONISTS

Most stories have an antagonist, which may be an event, a person or creature, or a place. It is the source of most of the significant obstacles that the grogs will face, and many stories revolve around overcoming or defeating the antagonist. This need not be the case for all stories: the antagonist might be so vast that it must simply be weathered rather than defeated, or so



powerful that it is not possible for the grogs to defeat it.

Events as antagonists usually fall into the "undefeatable" category. A plague or an outbreak of war could be an antagonist, as could a natural disaster such as an avalanche or forest fire. In such cases, merely surviving might be enough to satisfy the goals of the story, but minimizing the loss of life or rescuing valuable artifacts could be the source of drama instead.

Antagonists that are personified in an individual are more familiar to most troupes. Stories designed for servants and specialists rather than soldiers often have antagonists who attempt to outwit, outmaneuver, or escape the characters while simultaneously pursuing their nefarious schemes.

Physical threats are not generally an issue in a grog adventure; fighting is what most grogs have been trained for, and even if the magi had been present, they would not be involved in this part of the story anyhow. On the other hand, even weak supernatural creatures can pose a major threat. Grogg have no Magic Resistance at all, and are almost certain to fall under the influence of any powers or spells that are thrown against them. For instance, take the *Terrifying Howl* power of the *Magical Wolf* (ArM5, page 193). This power has a Penetration Total of zero, meaning that magi are only affected in very unusual circumstances. However, few grogs are going to be able to achieve the Brave roll of Ease Factor 12 to throw off its effects, and only

a quarter of even the bravest grogs in the band are likely to stay and fight if the power is brought to bear. This makes creatures like the magical wolf a very different challenge to an all-grog group. When grogs enter into fights, a trained group can be devastatingly effective against even a tough foe, and they should not be given the opportunity to kill the antagonist before the finale. Instead, a clever antagonist sends minions against a well-armed group, to wear them down and make them less of an opponent when the showdown inevitably occurs.

Locations can also be antagonists, if they are the source of the character's obstacles. A challenging environment such as a desert or an ice floe can be as deadly as a dragon even for hardy adventurer-types. Alternatively finding a long-lost Roman fort, or the location of a mythical island, can provide challenges for all sorts of grog characters.

## CLUES

With all-grog groups, there is no need to worry about magi plucking answers from another's mind, or bringing other varieties of "plot-solving" magics to bear. Instead, a grog group is going to be far more reliant on their Characteristics and Abilities to pick up on clues, and this stresses the importance of a varied group of characters for grog-only adventures (see "Picking Your Team," Chapter 4).

A good piece of advice that applies particularly to mystery stories, but also to stories in general — make sure that there are *at least* three ways in which the characters can obtain any vital piece of information. It is too easy to stump players if they miss a clue, and with two back-ups, the chances are good that they will not miss it altogether. Make sure there are plenty of different ways of getting the information. It is too easy to allow Awareness to become a "Find Clue"

Ability. Perception can be combined with other Abilities equally easily: with Folk Ken to spot lies; with Living Language to pick up the traces of an odd accent; and with Ride to spot which horse has been lathered from a long ride. Information can be gained directly from storyguide characters by using various Social Abilities, from the character's own learning, or from hunches supplied by Supernatural Abilities such as Premonitions.

## OBSTACLES

Clues advance a plot, whereas obstacles hinder it. This catch-all category consists of all the barriers that the characters must overcome. These might be literal obstacles in the form of a mountain to be scaled, a river to be crossed, or a fortress to be breached, or metaphorical barriers such as earning the trust of the village, or finding the right person to bribe. In general, obstacles should become greater challenges to the characters as the story approaches its climax.

## The End

Stories can end in one of two ways: a happy ending or a disastrous ending — the original meanings of comedy and tragedy, respectively. Some stories are specifically intended to end well or end poorly, regardless of the actions of the grog characters. This may seem harsh, but if used sparingly, it reinforces the idea that grogs are support characters, rather than the main cast.

## THE SHOWDOWN

The final showdown is what all the preceding parts of the story have been leading to. In many situations, this is where they finally confront their antagonist despite his best efforts to

avoid them, and they must now overcome him to win the day. A cunning antagonist chooses the location for the final showdown, and ensures that everything is in his favor; wise characters attempt to do the same. The result is usually a compromise between both sides' favored location, and allows the storyguide to tune the final showdown according to how well that characters have performed until that point. For example, if they have failed to uncover the dragon's weak spot, then they might be given the upper hand in picking the location of the finale, allowing them to prepare the ground with traps and snares that even the score somewhat.

## MAGUS EX MACHINA

Sometimes, a story will end with the magi sweeping in and saving the day. This might have been the point of the adventure — the grogs do all the hard work setting up the finale to give the magi the best chance of success — or it may be entirely accidental or unexpected. This sort of end is a manner by which a happy ending can be almost guaranteed, regardless of how poorly the grog characters have done, but it also robs them of a sense of achievement, and so should be used rarely, unless the players really enjoy being the ones to ride to the rescue when all seemed lost.

## ROCKS FALL, EVERYONE DIES

An extreme form of tragedy, in this resolution, all the grogs die at the end of the adventure. Perhaps they have been sent up against a hopelessly powerful opponent, or maybe it was always a suicide mission. When the grogs fail to return, the magi and companions may be sufficiently motivated to investigate themselves.

This end to an adventure generates



a lot of pathos, and can be a shocking and unexpected end to a story. It is certainly not a tactic that should be overused, and it is a brave storyguide who uses it against a group of favored grogs. However, this ending is an excellent way to enforce the idea that the life of a grog can be brutal and short.

## REWARDS

Grogs earn experience points at the same rate as any other character, but rarely benefit from other rewards of stories such as vis, hidden knowledge, or magical items. A slap on the back and a "well done" from a magus is little reward for putting one's life on the line, and the storyguide should consider other less traditional forms of reward. For a start, grogs who are successful gradually come to be recognized as dependable, competent, and even heroic, both at the covenant and further afield. When a mission is successfully completed, a grog character should earn experience points in a Reputation (*ArM5*, page 167) that represents the recognition of a task well done by the magi. This Reputation should serve as a reflection of the status of the character within the covenfolk, and may translate directly into better quarters, higher wages or pension, or a position of responsibility. As the score in this Reputation rises, the character becomes a local celebrity, as grogs gossip about his deeds to non-covenfolk. Related to fame and fortune gained through Reputation are less tangible rewards, such as the grace and favor of important locals or supernatural entities. A grog character might be able to call in favors, receive one-off mentoring, or develop an agency among the wider world (*Houses of Hermes: Societies*, page 140).

Another form of reward is personalized equipment. A grog can find unique weapons, armor, or other kinds of equipment while adventur-

ing, or else be rewarded with them as a mark of the magi's favor. This equipment might be simply unusual, or it might be exceptionally well-crafted, or even magical. *City & Guild*, page 69, has some simple rules for the game effects of particularly well-made pieces of equipment.

## All-Grog Sagas

Troupes may be hesitant at running sagas that only involve grogs, since the main focus of *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* is the Order of Hermes and the magic it practices. However, Mythic Europe is interesting enough on its own without having to involve the Order. The interplay between supernatural powers and mundane history is a compelling one, and some troupes are overwhelmed by the complexities of Hermetic magic or politics, or are simply more interested in history than fantasy. This section has ideas to suit such palates. You

will note that the Order of Hermes is not entirely absent from many of these saga ideas. This is only to be expected; the Order is as much a part of Mythic Europe as the Church, the nobility, and the freemen and peasants. However, it is not intended in these saga ideas that the players have magus characters; instead, the magi are storyguide characters with whom the player characters interact.

The ideas presented here need not be exclusive of more traditional game play. Two sagas could easily be run simultaneously, perhaps using alternative storyguides as described earlier. One saga deals with the actions of the magi, the other the consequences that those actions have on the turb, the nearby town, village, or monastery, or so forth. Likewise, the reactions of the grog part of the saga may have repercussions on the magi, and so on, back and forth between the two story lines.

## A Town Saga

Towns and cities need not simply be places that the characters pass through on the way to somewhere

### A Town-based Saga: Toulouse

In the Languedoc region of France, Toulouse is famous (or perhaps infamous) for its liberal attitudes and its love of art, both in its performing and productive forms. The Languedoc region is known to be the home to the heretical Albigensian (or Cathar) sect, and it is rumored that Toulouse is steeped in their beliefs and its residents have abandoned the Church in droves. The pope has responded by creating the Friars Preacher — the Order of St. Dominic — who are specifically trained to debate theology and counter heresy. Should the Dominicans discover that Catharism is prominent at all levels

of society in Languedoc, it is likely that the pope will order a crusade against the region.

Quite apart from the religious pressure, there are also political issues in the region. The eastern region of the Languedoc, around Narbonne and Perpignan, is claimed by the King of Aragon and Catalonia. The area directly to the northwest of Languedoc is owned by the King of England. Both royal houses have designs on the region, and with the Count of Toulouse showing signs of dissatisfaction with the King of France, it promises to be an interesting few decades for the region.

interesting. They can be hotbeds of political intrigue, bastions of civilization in a sea of wilderness, places to see exotic visitors from distant lands, and even the battlegrounds for the hearts of men. Just because a town is a bastion of humanity and the native environment of the Dominion aura, this does not mean that there is no place for the supernatural. Household faeries are rarely bothered by the Dominion, and magical creatures can lurk in isolated pockets aligned to the Magic realm. At night, when the Dominion aura declines and the Infernal aura rises, demons can come out to tempt the souls of mankind.

Characters who are permanently resident in towns are likely to have been trained in a particular profession, even if they do not currently follow that trade. In bigger cities, craftsmen are likely to be members of a guild, and the politicking among guilds for greater prominence in the city's affairs could be a source of many stories. Characters could also be members of the clergy, part of the town's administration staff, prominent figures in the watch, or employees of the local lord.

*City & Guild* is an excellent resource for a saga based in a town. It has several featured towns, details of regular

fairs, concepts for craftsmen and merchant characters, and many story ideas based around cities.

## An Academic Saga

The 13th century is the age of the university: there are currently ten universities in Italy, Spain, France and England, and this number is set to greatly expand over the coming years. Some universities are hotbeds of heresy, others enjoy freedom from temporal authority, and at least one harbors a secret tradition of hedge wizards (see *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 96).

Characters might be students, masters of the school, or members of its associated staff. A student character might be a simple student still studying for his first degree; a baccalaureus who has passed his exams; a master-student studying for his magisterial degree; or a specialist student who is working toward his doctorate. The masters must have achieved at least the magister in artibus degree, and are probably doctors of their faculty. In addition to these two obvious roles, universities also have places for non-academically inclined characters, employed either by the faculties or the student nations; such roles include the lupus, who imposes discipline on the students; the messengers, employed to run messages to the students' families; and the beadles, who arrange the ceremonial duties of the university. Furthermore, universities require many of the same gamut of servants and specialists as any other institution — cooks, scullions, bookbinders, ink-grinders, parchment-makers, and so forth.

*Art & Academe* has plenty of advice for running sagas which concentrate on life at a university or school, from earning a place at university to sitting exams, and the daily life of both students and masters.





## An Academic Saga: The Hidden Coven

The player characters are grogs who hold influential positions at a university, probably one of the larger institutions like those at Paris or Bologna. While contending with the usual challenges of academic life — heresy, rowdy students, antagonism of the locals, and so forth — they also become gradually aware of an insidious secret society among the masters and students of the school. It becomes clear that this cabal is attempting to discover some dark mystery hidden in the bowels of the university, and that

the player characters must race to discover it first.

The nature of the secret society is up to the storyguide. It could be a cult of diabolists trying to uncover some rite to raise a demon, or a group of churchmen trying to keep the very same hidden. The society might consist of faeries, or even a hidden covenant of magi. When the players discover the secret, they may have to re-evaluate their preconceptions about their antagonists, and may even find themselves working with them.

is, those who live according to a rule).

Monks are contemplative, living separated from the mundanities of the world to attain purity of thought and action.

Friars are active; their principle role is to go out among the community and do good works. They distribute food to the poor, tend to the sick, and bring the Word of God to the common man.

The third basic type of regular clergy are the canons, who are supplicative. Canons staff cathedrals, making the sacred space a fit place to worship God, and providing the choir as well as altar attendants.

In addition to these three basic types, there are two other important sectors of regular clergy: nuns (who are in effect female monks or, much more rarely, friars), and the militant orders (of which the Hospitallers, Templars, Teutonic Knights, and Order of Santiago are the principle ones).

Once you have decided the type of clergy that your saga is going to feature, you should create grog characters to fit. Unlike the other saga concepts mentioned in this chapter, most of the grog characters in a mo-

## A Monastic Saga

While monks are supposed to be cloistered away from the rest of humanity and spend their lives in contemplation of God, many monasteries are either inside or near to towns, and cannot help but be involved in local politics. Monasteries are seen as a place of learning and rationality, and are often asked to mediate disputes, offer advice on spiritual and secu-

lar matters, and provide protection against the unknown and supernatural. Because of the dedication of their lives to God, monks may find themselves the specific target of demons, and the corruption of a monastic order is a joy for the Infernal powers to behold; if the populace can see that not even monks can stay pure, what hope does the common man have?

Mythic Europe has a number of different types of regular clergy (that

## A Monastic Saga: The Priory of St. Nerius

Nerius is often considered to be the patron saint of the Order of Hermes although he has not yet been canonized. His story can be found in *Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 91, and the Holy Societas of magi that follow him are described on page 94 of the same source. The Neriusians have a decidedly unorthodox approach to the liturgy that might cause friction with the clergy, should they be discovered. Naturally, they teach that magic and morality need not be incompatible, but there is a need to contemplate the nature and purpose of the spells one casts. Neriusians promote tolerance for magical

beasts and faeries, which they maintain have a rational soul, and teach that the Faerie Realm is the Garden of Eden where humanity was born.

So far, the followers of St. Nerius have been guided by a modified Benedictine rule, but they are beginning to switch to a Franciscan model, allowing them to travel and dwell among other magi. Combined with this shift in praxis, the Neriusians might also accept non-magi into their ranks. The message of St. Nerius is too important to be confined to just magi, and if unGifted brothers can bring his word to mundane communities, there is a greater chance

of the acceptance of the Order as a whole. The player characters are grogs who are missionaries for the Priory of St. Nerius, trying to convince people that magi are not evil, and convince magi that the Dominion need not be antithetical to magic. Naturally, it requires brave and intrepid souls to walk into a covenant and start preaching! In a Neriusian saga, the grog characters may be a little unusual; they are likely to have Supernatural Abilities or powers tied to the Divine Realm, and may be accompanied or mentored by a magus or companion character who is also a Neriusian.

## Military Units in the 13th Century

The following describes some typical military units and mercenary companies in Mythic Europe. Mercenary units are often referred to by their nationality, as if they were a single organized force. Occasionally this is true, and a count or duke hires out his countrymen to nations; more usually there are a number of individual bands, each with their own company leader.

**Aragonese and Navarrese:** Two groups of mercenaries deriving from the Iberian peninsula, the Aragonese and Navarrese are light cavalry.

**Biscayans:** The Biscayans (also called Basques) hail from the Pyrenees between France and Spain, and are skirmish units specialized in the use of slings.

**Brabançons:** A notoriously brutal band of mercenaries from Flan-

ders, the Brabançons are mostly heavy infantry. They are known for looting and brigandage, and have even massacred entire towns in an attempt to get ransom money. See *The Lion and the Lily*, page 77, for more details.

**Capuchonnés:** Originally a civil defense force raised in direct response to the pillaging of the Brabançons, the Capuchonnés of Aquitaine, Gascony, Languedoc, and Provence have become a mercenary force in their own right, in distinctive white capes with pointed hoods. See *The Lion and the Lily*, page 77, for more details.

**Coterells:** French infantry units named after the broad-bladed knives that they carry; principally Poitevins and Gascons.

**Flemish Geldon:** A famed mercenary force that employs long

spears in densely-packed formation to foil the charges of heavy cavalry, and provide cover for javeliners.

**Genoese Crossbowmen** (*balestrieri genovesi*): Trained and organized in Genoa and armed by one of its professional guilds, the *balestrieri* not only defend Liguria, but are also hired out to armies across Mythic Europe for both land and naval battles. Each crossbowman is accompanied by a groom who holds up a large shield while the crossbow is being reloaded.

**German Falchonniers:** From the Holy Roman Empire, heavy cavalry and mounted heavy infantry. The Holy Roman Emperor employs a 3,000 strong force of Germans as his personal troops. They are noted for their heavy slashing swords and plate breastplates.

nastic saga will have the same Social Status, and be relatively unspecialized in their skill sets. This means that the players have to work harder to distinguish their characters from one another, using interesting backgrounds before the character took the tonsure, and through Personality Flaws or Traits to represent particular strengths or weaknesses in the character's virtue.

It is quite possible that among the various orders there are several members of Holy Traditions, such as Ascetics or Cantores (*Realms of Power: The Divine*, pages 47 and 93, respectively), and True Faith might be more prevalent; the assumption of these powers represents a possible means for the characters to become transformed into companion characters (see Chapter 5).

More information on monasteries and convents can be found in *The*

*Church*, Chapter 4, including details on the monastic routine, the various rules, and the internal organization and politics of a monastery.

## A Mercenary Saga

*"Satan's minions, ministers of the devil... murderers, blooded with human slaughter, night-prowlers, arsonists, the sons of Belial."*

— Matthew Paris, describing the mercenaries of King John of England

The 13th century is the time that mercenaries really come into their own, although they will gain prominence — some would say dominance — over the next couple of centuries. Commonly known as *routiers*, mercenary soldiers are of humble origin and yet form a warrior-elite; as they cross

the social divide preserved by the nobility, mercenaries are pariahs and cast in the worst possible light.

The supply of mercenaries can be an income stream for a covenant that does not mind skirting the Code of Hermes, and a company supported by covert Hermetic magic can quickly become a force to be reckoned with, and, what's more, highly sought after. Mercenaries in medieval Europe often traveled great distances to make war in the service of their employers, and a mercenary saga is a good opportunity for characters to visit exotic locales far from their homeland. They may find themselves taking part in the reconquista of al-Andalus, fighting pagans around the Baltic coast, or becoming embroiled in the Crusades.

In sagas focused around a mercenary theme, the most common sort of character is naturally a soldier. There are characteristic forces for many re-



gions of Mythic Europe, but a successful mercenary band is one that can offer something different to its employer, either in the form of specialist troops or as a mixed bag with different skills. Not every grog needs to be a soldier however; mercenary bands still need cooks, surgeons, camp-followers, and characters who can repair and manufacture weapons and armor. They may have a permanent base, or be constantly wandering from place to place, looking for hire. If the company is of the latter sort, some thought should be put into the logistics of their operation: they probably have a baggage train for the more slow-moving parts of their company, consisting of pack animals and perhaps wagons. They may have a set route, or else track down rumors of conflict and offer themselves to either side.

## A Noble Saga

A noble household is perhaps the closest model of a "typical" covenant, and a saga based around a nobleman and his entourage is essentially *Ars Magica* with the magi removed. Apart from those stories which relate direct-

## A Mercenary-Based Saga: The Monjoie Company

Until 70 years ago, the Monjoie Company was just a normal mercenary band, with moderate local fame and a relatively steady employment. Then, in 1153, they were hired by a magus of House Guernicus, whose grogs had all been slain and who needed warriors quickly before his quarry escaped him. The Monjoie Company was successful in catching the renegade magus, and the satisfied *quaesitor* hired them again. Their fame soon spread throughout the Order of Hermes, and the Monjoie Company now works exclusively for Hermetic clients, and has grown to number more than 150 men.

The Monjoie Company has several contact houses covering most of the western tribunals. They do not ever learn the true names of their employers, but instead refer to their clients by the names of one of Charlemagne's Twelve Paladins — the founder of the company, now dead, had a bit of a thing for the Song of Roland — so a magus might be known as Roland, Ogier,

Ganelon, Turpin, and so forth. The conditions of hire imposed by the Company are that they are always accompanied by a magus, and that there is full disclosure on the nature of the mission. The local captains retain the right to refuse a commission, but the work is sufficiently lucrative to make this rare. They accept payment in coin and vis; the latter is traded with the *venditores* of House Verditius in exchange for enchanted items.

The player characters constitute a regional band of the company, under the control of a captain. These bands usually number around 20 men, and each player takes on one or more of the grogs. The player characters might find themselves fighting hordes of revenants with a Donator *Requietis Aeternae* (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 115), and then next season cornering a dragon with a member of House Tremere, followed a year later by tracking down diabolist magi with a Flambeau. It is certainly likely to be an action-packed saga!

## A Noble Saga: A Quiet Place in the Country

A baron with an excess of children places his third son in charge of one of his villas. The son gains a small manor house and a nearby village from this, and is expected to oversee the labors of the peasants attached to the vill, and ensure that the various sources of income from the vill are gathered on time. What the baron didn't tell his son is that the vill has a history of trouble: two reeves placed over the vill have disappeared without a trace, and the most recent one is now under the care of the local monastery, his

mind shattered.

The player characters can run the baron's son, his friends (and perhaps wife), as well as certain notables in the village, although these themselves are probably new to the manor as well. The villagers are harboring a terrible secret, one which most of the time they can keep under control with appropriate proprietary sacrifices, but it occasionally runs free and does all sorts of damage. The form of this secret varies — it could be an imprisoned demon, a courtly faerie, or a lycan-

thrope. In addition to this secret, a village is rife with petty rivalries, superstition, and day-to-day problems associated with the production of food. The characters might get much more involved in peasant life: chasing off faeries who steal the milk; settling arguments over a girl; finding lost cows; and uncovering a witch. Over time, the baron's son might expect to transform into a Companion character (see Chapter 5), and his entourage might develop with him.





ly to the internal politics of the Order of Hermes, most of the stories that apply to standard sagas can apply to a saga based around a noble household, but without having recourse to Hermetic magic.

The same soldiers, servants, and specialists found at a covenant have a place in a noble household, with the exception of those grogs who specifically support the magical activities of the covenant. In a typical baron's household, the baron himself — and perhaps his wife and a few select staff — are companion characters, and everyone else comprises grog characters. Even the baron's sons who have reached their majority could be considered grog characters, since they are not yet powerful enough to attract Story Flaws. As a result, they would be suitable player characters in a grog-only saga, particularly second and subsequent sons.

*Lords of Men* has plenty of good information and ideas for sagas based

around a noble's household. Rules for leisure time and for war are given, along with details of the lands owned

by a nobleman, both those in his immediate vicinity (the castle and associated lands) and in the rest of his demesne (including village life). Advancement of one's reputation among one's vassals and superiors is also developed in detail.

## A Redcap Saga

Redcaps are the support structure of the Order of Hermes, and are a presence that is often neglected in a traditional saga, as simply the means by which news is brought to the magi. However, redcaps provide so much more than a messenger service for the Order. They are heralds, who store information about magi and covenants in a tribunal. They are bankers and merchants, exchanging and lending vis, pawning magical items, and speculating on potentially risky expeditions and ventures. They can provide a bodyguard service for traveling magi, and occasionally keep trade routes clear of supernatural menaces. Redcaps are wanderers and trailblazers, extend-

### A Redcap Saga: The Hermetic Agency

Taking its lead from the genres of spy and detective fiction, the player characters are agents of the Order of Hermes. They may be attached to one of the Tribunal's Mercer Houses, have a dedicated headquarters, or work from a covenant. Rather than completing the usual tasks of redcaps, they are charged with a host of tasks involved with the interface between the Order of Hermes and mundane society. Their role could be to gather evidence that a magus has been meddling in mundane politics, to cover up such involvement while the Tribunal sees that the Code-breaker is duly punished, or else to subtly manipulate matters in a manner dictated by

their superiors, so that the Order of Hermes cannot be held responsible for their actions.

The characters might work for an individual covenant or for the Tribunal as a whole, but they probably have a single contact who gives them their orders (this may or may not be a magus). A common trope in this sort of story is for the characters to gradually discover that they do not work for whom they thought they did. This saga does not require that any of the characters are necessarily redcaps — it works equally well with standard grogs — but making the characters redcaps gives them a certain amount of authority in the pursuit of their investigations.



ing the knowledge and boundaries of the Order by pressing into unknown regions. Finally, in some tribunals at least, the redcaps are bureaucrats and administrators, ensuring that tribunal proceedings run smoothly and assisting the quaesitores.

Redcap characters are companion characters, because the Redcap Virtue (*ArM5*, page 48) is a Major Social Status Virtue and is therefore nor-

mally unavailable to grog characters. There are two ways to deal with this; either allow the Redcap Virtue as a free Virtue (much like Hermetic Magus is a free Virtue), so that all characters may take it and benefit from the additional experience points and magical items. This tends to lead to a slightly higher-powered campaign than most grog-only sagas, but since everyone will be equal, this should

not interfere. Alternatively, the player characters work for the redcaps rather than being redcaps themselves; they might still be apprenticed to a senior redcap, or else serve as skilled specialists in another capacity.

Chapter Three of *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages* describes House Mercere and its non-magical members, including various societates to which they may belong.

## Chapter Four

# Grogs in Stories

Ars Magica Fifth Edition is a game about magi first and foremost, with companions also being important in generating and contributing to stories. Grogs are usually an insignificant third in the order of importance. This chapter is concerned with getting grogs more involved in stories, and with making them more than just a bunch of Combat Totals.

## Putting Together Your Team

A good grog captain knows that it is not sufficient to pick your best warriors when heading out on an expedition with the magi. While the

grog might be most called-upon for fighting, it is important to have a full complement of skills to best support the mission. Having the right team provides the grogs with roles in which they can be of more use to the magi. The *liber gregis* identifies five basic roles that should be fulfilled in any group leaving the covenant. This is not to say that every group of grogs should consist of five individuals; one grog could easily possess the essential skills of two or more of these roles. Furthermore, the team can be supplemented with standard warriors who fulfill no special role within the team.

The limit to the size of any group is determined by the designated leader. An individual can only lead a band of grogs as a trained group equal in size to his score in the Leadership Ability. Another important consideration is the choosing of a vanguard. The

temptation is to pick the turb's best warrior, but this might exclude other essential members from the trained group, since there can be no more than a 5 point difference between any of the Combat Totals (Initiative, Attack, Defense, Damage, and Soak) of the best and the worst warriors in a trained group (ArM5, page 172). It is common practice for the drill sergeant of a turb to ensure that all his soldiers are trained to an equal level.

The names used for each of the five roles described later derive from the *liber gregis*; different covenants might have specific job titles for certain grogs, bands of grogs who are trained to fill specific roles, or else have no official recognition of the difference, yet still choose an adventuring party based on the needs of the magi. Some magi never even bother to learn the names of the grogs with whom they adventure, but instead simply use their titles.

## Commanding Larger Groups

A leader can usually only have a number of men under his command equal to his Leadership score. However, larger groups can be handled through having the leader include subordinates in his command, who each command their own men. For example, a Dux with a Leadership of 4 commands 3 soldiers and an Optio. The Optio has a Leadership of 3, and he therefore commands another 3 soldiers. The effective size

of the trained group is 8. There are disadvantages behind indirect command. Firstly, any Leadership rolls made by the overall leader to affect the entire group (such as those under Advanced Group Combat, later) have Ease Factors 3 higher than normal. Secondly, issuing commands that affect the whole group takes up the leader's whole action, although the subordinates can relay the commands as a "free" action.

## Dux, the Leader

The leader is the individual who has been trained to coordinate a band of soldiers in combat, and an essential feature is a good score in the Leadership Ability. A leader is also often selected by the magi based on his intelligence, his loyalty, and his ability to speak Latin — or at least, have a language in common with most of the magi present. In addition to commanding the grogs in combat, the leader is often in charge



## Sounds Familiar?

The team structure suggested here is a common trope in modern literature and visual media, called the Five Man Band (the Hero, the Lancer, the Tough Guy, the Smart Guy, and the Chick). This time-tested formula gives a spread of skills to a relatively small group of individuals. It is also a use-

ful shortcut for your players who might subconsciously recognize the trope even if they are not consciously aware of it. Admittedly, the Five Man Band is a cliché, but clichés are appropriate for grogs, who are supposed to fill a support role rather than be the main figures in the action.

of the day-to-day running of an expedition: coordinating the purchase or gathering of food; organizing the stops on the way; and maybe even planning the route. Perhaps most important is the role of liaison with the magi; all orders to the grex come via the leader.

## Optio, the Second in Command

The optio is the right-hand man of the dux. His principle role is to ensure that the orders of the leader are carried out, and to assume that role if the leader is incapacitated or killed. The optio should have the second-best Leadership score in the unit. With respect to his other abilities, the optio is often chosen to complement the abilities and skills of the dux. For example, if the leader is a superlative swordsman, then the optio might be a scout or an archer. The personality of the optio is often a contrast with the dux as well: a hard-bitten disciplinarian leader is often coupled with a charming second who is much loved by the troops; likewise, a charming and smooth leader who works well with the magi often has a stern taskmaster as optio. His role is rarely combined with that of the vanguard except in small bands. It is common to combine the roles of optio and signifer.

## Antesignanus, the Vanguard

The antesignanus literally stands before (*ante*) the standard (*signum*), and is the vanguard in any group of warriors. Another name for this role is the duplicarius, referring to the tradition of awarding the vanguard double pay and rewards, due to the danger inherent in his role. Vanguarders are not

necessarily the best warriors, but are often the toughest, and Virtues such as Enduring Constitution, Rapid Convalescence, and Tough are the mark of a good antesignanus.

It is generally considered a bad idea for the vanguard and the leader roles to be combined in a single individual. Placed as he is in the forefront of any battle, the vanguard is the most likely individual to be wounded or killed, and if the vanguard is also the leader of the troop, it dissolves into an untrained group immediately.

## Immune, the Specialist

In the Roman army, the immunes were a class of legionary who possessed specialized skills, which made them exempt from normal duties such as labor and patrol. The *liber gregis* recognizes the importance of specialists in a troop, and sensibly suggests



that the immune must be chosen according to the nature of the expedition. The most common immune is a chirurgeon; a turb that does not have access to basic first aid is in dire straits. However, like the Roman immunes, there is often a place for skills such as military architects, artillerymen, weapons instructors, carpenters, hunters, and trumpeters. Grogg with Supernatural Abilities such as Second Sight are usually immunes. If an immune does not have basic combat skills, he cannot be a member of the trained group.

## Signifer, the Legate

In the Roman legions, the signifer carried the *signum* (standard) of the troop, a spear bearing commemora-

tive medals of the battles they had fought, and topped with an open hand signifying the oath of the legion. It is the rare covenant that carries a standard on an expedition, but the signifer often bears the other responsibilities of his Roman predecessor, being responsible for the distributing the soldier's pay and keeping a record of their savings, and maintaining morale. In short, the signifer takes care of the internal tensions of the troop, and is often chosen based on his social skills, particularly Folk Ken and Carouse. As a consequence, he often acts as the spokesman of the magi when dealing with mundanes. The signifer is occasionally taught how to read and write, so that there is at least one member of the troop who can receive written orders and interpret signs. Like the immune, the signifer is still one of the

covenant's warriors, and receives basic training as a soldier.

## Equipping the Grogg

Grogg are expected to be ready for anything, and carrying the correct equipment is the essence of good preparation. However, the benefits of equipment are often downplayed in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* — this is not a game in which you load up on dungeoneering gear, since magi are considered to be above such things. They assume, as do their players, that the grogg have everything they might need. This section discusses

### The Grog Pack

The *liber gregis* lists the essential equipment that should be carried on expeditions. Beorhtic demanded that each grog should carry in their pack or on their person the following equipment:

- Five paces of hawser (stout rope)
- Flint and tinder
- A lantern and two candles
- A woolen blanket
- A leather flask filled with ale, or two parts water and one part wine (another flask filled only with wine is allowed, with the permission of a magus)
- Scraps of cloth and leather, and leather thongs, for bandaging wounds and repairing clothing
- A small flask of oil and sharpening stones to care for weapons and armor
- A heavy cloak
- An entrenching tool, either a mattock or a shovel (for digging latrine pits or burying the vanguard)

- Strong thread and a bodkin for making repairs
- A leather cup, a metal bowl, and a skewer for eating
- A quantity of food (consisting of hard baked biscuits, cheese, dried salted fish or meat, flour meal), sufficient to support the grog for the number of days ordered by a magus

Any other equipment that the grog or a magus deems necessary for applying the other skills that the grog possesses must also be included. Any personal acquisitions must be transported in the grog's own pouches.

Furthermore, distributed among the grogg in the group are:

- Waterskins, food, eating utensils, woolen blankets, and leather tarps for tents for use by all magi present
- Several empty sacks and pouches

- One set of pots and pans for cooking
- Two grappling hooks
- Two lanterns and three flasks of oil
- Ten paces of thin rope
- A saw and axe for preparation of firewood

The gear that each grog carries must be arranged so that a large majority of the load can be dropped at a moment's notice in emergency situations. The classic manner is to suspend the pack from the tines of a forked pole carried on one shoulder. For long expeditions, pack-grogg or animals should be considered.

If the covenant follows the recommendations of the *liber gregis*, then each grog pack imposes a Load of 4. However, this load need not be taken into account for most situations like combat, since it can be discarded without using the grog's action in a round.



## Encumbrance and Ability Use

Encumbrance should penalize most physical activities, such as running, jumping, hiding, and moving silently. Encumbrance also subtracts from any fatigue rolls. However, under certain circumstances, a heavily encumbered character should be

at an even greater disadvantage — particularly for climbing, swimming, and balancing. In such situations, use Burden rather than Encumbrance as a penalty to Ability rolls, to represent the additional penalty imposed by carrying a lot of extra kit.

the use of such equipment, and expands on the concepts of Load, Burden, and Encumbrance.

## Equipment Bonuses

Grogg often carry equipment to assist in the execution of their tasks. This optional rule permits certain pieces of equipment to make these tasks easier. Equipment can offer a reduction in the Ease Factor for a given Ability roll, but only if that equipment is not essential to perform the task. For example, a craftsman does not gain an equipment bonus to his Craft: Wrought Iron from using a hammer or anvil, and a crook cannot use Legerdemain to operate a lock without using the various picks and levers of his trade. However, virtually any sort of climbing is easier if a rope is at hand. Usually, no piece of equipment can assist in all uses of a single Ability, but equipment can often provide a bonus in a specialty. When a character uses equipment, the storyguide should determine whether it offers minor or major assistance. Minor assistance subtracts 1 from the Ease Factor, whereas major assistance subtracts 3. Only one equipment bonus can be gained for each roll. The following table gives some examples of equipment bonuses (in order of Ability). Naturally, the storyguide should equally impose a minor or major penalty to the Ease Factor for using substandard, shoddy, or damaged equipment.

MINOR EQUIPMENT BONUS:

–1 to Ease Factor

MAJOR EQUIPMENT BONUS:

–3 to Ease Factor

## Encumbrance and Load

The Encumbrance system of *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* (page 178) is purposefully abstract, but it can be used to approximate weight. Broadly speaking, 1 point of Load equates to 7 pounds of weight. However, unwieldy or unbalanced objects might have a Load one point higher than their weight might suggest — a good

example of this is the long spear (*ArM5*, page 176). Based on this measurement, a 100-pound human is equivalent to a Load of 15, or a Burden of 5.

The maximum practical weight a character can carry is that Load that inflicts an Encumbrance of –5, which is equivalent to a Burden of (Strength + 5). This is the weight that a character can lift over his head. A character can lift a Burden of (Strength + 7) off the ground, and can push or drag a Burden of (Strength + 12). See the nearby insert for an expanded Encumbrance table. Using a pulley to assist in lifting a load adds 3 to the character's effective Strength. Using a lever to assist in pushing a load also adds 3 to the character's effective Strength. If more than one character shoulders a load, then combine the weight that each can carry alone.

*Exempli gratia: Paul the grog has a Strength of +2. He can carry a maximum weight equal to a Load of 28 (Burden 7); this translates to approximately 196 pounds. He can lift 315 pounds off the ground (Burden 9), and drag 735 pounds (Burden 14). The story demands that the characters push a stone block aside. The storyguide judges*

## Equipment Bonuses

EQUIPMENT	ABILITY (SPECIALTY)	ASSISTANCE
Whip or crop	Animal Handling (obedience)	Major
Map	Area Lore (planning route)	Major
Astronomical tables	Artes Liberales (astronomy)	Minor
Rope	Athletics (climbing)	Major
Pole (at least 10 foot)	Athletics (distance jumping)	Major
Fine wine	Folk Ken (getting information)	Minor
Flickering light	Concentration (meditation)	Minor
Good clothing	Charm (making good impression)	Minor
Guild badge	Guild Lore (gaining favors)	Minor
Makeup	Guile (disguise)	Minor
Bird Lime	Hunt (birds)	Major
Concealed blade	Legerdemain (slitting pouches)	Major
Watchglass	Medicine (diagnosis)	Minor
Cantled saddle	Ride (resisting charge)	Major
Flawless Crystal	Second Sight (see regio boundaries)	Minor
Lampblack	Stealth (hiding)	Minor

## Expanded Encumbrance Table

TOTAL LOAD	WEIGHT (LB)	BURDEN	TOTAL LOAD	WEIGHT (LB)	BURDEN
0	0	0	91	637	13
1	7	1	105	735	14
3	21	2	120	840	15
6	42	3	136	952	16
10	70	4	153	1071	17
15	105	5	171	1197	18
21	147	6	190	1330	19
28	196	7	210	1470	20
36	252	8	231	1617	21
45	315	9	253	1771	22
55	385	10	276	1932	23
66	462	11	300	2100	24
78	546	12	325	2275	25

this to be equivalent to an Individual of Ter-ram, and therefore weighs over 4100 pounds (see Insert). It will take six grogs as strong as Paul to shift the stone block. If they each had a crowbar, then it would only take four of them.

All four-footed beasts increase their Strength by half again for the purpose of determining Encumbrance and weight. Note that pack animals and horses usually have Strength scores beyond the normal human range: a courser has a Strength of +4, and a destrier has a Strength of +6 (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 142, or the Book of Beasts, freely available from Atlas Games' website). A destrier can therefore take its rider (Load 21), his armor (Load 6), his lance, mace, and heater shield (Load 7), and a full grog pack (Load 4), and still be unencumbered (Burden 8, effective Strength 9).

1 POINT OF LOAD = 7 pounds

MAXIMUM PRACTICAL WEIGHT:  
Burden equal to (Strength + 5)

LIFT OFF GROUND:  
Burden equal to (Strength + 7)

PUSH OR DRAG:  
Burden equal to (Strength + 12)

USING A PULLEY:

+3 to effective Strength when lifting

USING A LEVER:

+3 to effective Strength when pushing

PACK ANIMALS:

1 ½ x Strength when  
calculating Encumbrance

## Roles in Stories

This section describes a number of ways in which grogs can be involved more in stories. It is divided into sections that describe the duties a grog might be asked to perform for his masters. Each section has story elements rather than story seeds; these are fragments of stories, rather than seeds in their own right. By focusing on some of the minor day-to-day hazards and annoyances posed to the grogs on an expedition, you can highlight some of the issues of the Middle Ages, and provide a richer roleplaying experience. However, be careful not to detract too greatly from the point of the expedition, and don't get sidetracked by these issues if you are building tension in your storyline.

## Sentries

Duty watches are described in Chapter 2. There are eight watches

## Weight of Common Materials

MATERIAL	WEIGHT OF 1 FT <sup>3</sup>	NUMBER OF FT <sup>3</sup> *
Beer or wine	64 lb	6
Dirt	94 lb	270
Gemstone	235 lb	6/10000**
Gold	1180 lb	1/10***
Iron	490 lb	1
Fresh leaves or vegetation	20 lbs	27
Olive oil	57 lb	62
Silver	655 lb	1/10***
Stone	155 lb	27
Water	62 lb	622
Wheat	50 lb	27
Wood	37 lb	27

\* in Target: Individual

\*\* 1728 Individuals in a cubic foot

\*\*\* 10 Individuals in a cubic foot

For humans and animals, the Size characteristic is a good indicator of weight. A +1 increase in Size doubles the weight, +2 points of Size is a fivefold increase in weight, and +3 points of Size is a tenfold increase. The inverse is true when reducing points of Size.

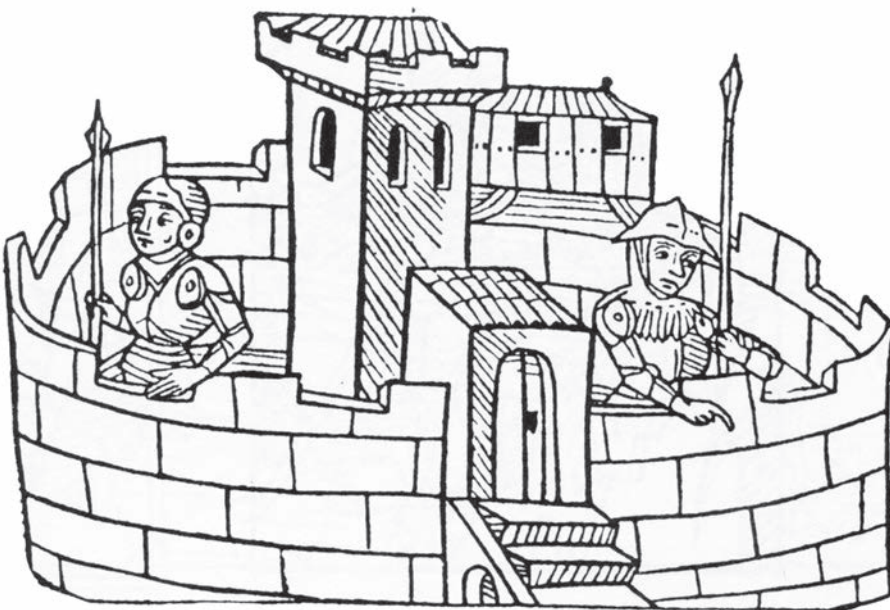
SIZE	WEIGHT
-4	5 – 10 lb
-3	10 – 22 lb
-2	22 – 46 lb
-1	46 – 100 lb
0	100 – 215 lb
+1	215 – 465 lb
+2	465 – 1000 lb
+3	1000 – 2150 lb
+4	2150 – 4600 lb



in a day, each lasting three hours. Each duty watch is usually shared between one or two men, and they spend one watch on duty, followed by three watches off duty or free. When on expedition, there is no distinction between day patrol and night patrol; when not on duty, grogs are expected to sleep if it is nighttime, or be off duty during the daytime.

The usual pattern of the day is that the troop is on the road by the beginning of the forenoon watch, although occasionally the magus orders an early start, which means the camp is roused at the start of the morntide watch, and leaves soon thereafter. A group travels for about nine hours; at the end of the foredusk watch, the dux usually orders a stop, although if a town, inn, or village is within reach, they may push on for a couple more hours. Grogg are expected to bunk down before the nighttime watch.

The dux is in charge of determining watch rotations and sentry duty. Sentries are usually only placed when an expeditionary party is stationary; when on the road, all grogg are



expected to be in a constant state of alertness. However, if traveling on horseback or with wagons, the usual watch rotation can be maintained; soldiers quickly learn to nap whenever they can, and can even do so while in the saddle.

The dux or his optio keeps track of the passing of the watches neverthe-

less, so it is clear whose turn it is to take sentry duty when the group stops for the night. Dodging sentry duty is a popular pastime among grogg, and they come up with inventive reasons why they should be exempt, or why it is not their turn.

## Guards

Providing protection from the various natural and supernatural hazards of Mythic Europe is the stock in trade of a covenant's grogg. By their very nature, magi tend to get themselves into dangerous situations, whether it is from raiding a griffin's nest, being beset by goblins in a haunted forest, or from a mob of peasants armed with pitchforks and torches. Guards usually use the Defenders maneuver in combat (*ArM5*, page 173, or else the optional rule for Defenders as Interceptor in *Lords of Men*, page 122) until their masters are safe from harm, after which time they can switch to more offensive maneuvers.

However, guard duty need not be as simple as acting as a meat shield in combat. Magi tend to be less physically able than most grogg, and not

### Story Elements: Sentry Duty

It may seem like a cliché, but nighttime is the best time to spring an ambush on a group of characters. The attackers hope that most of their opponents will be asleep, and that the sentries can be bypassed or taken by surprise. Distracting a bored sentry with seemingly innocuous sounds or sights presents an opportunity for the grog to make Personality Trait rolls (see later) — does he err on the side of caution and wake the magi despite the potential punishment that will follow, or does he allow his curiosity to get the better of him? Sentry duty in faerie auras can be particularly distracting; satyrs might entice him

into a drinking match, or nymphs might try to seduce him. Or perhaps it was all a dream...

Sentry duty can be especially important when dealing with intelligent and magical opponents. If a wizard knows he has interlopers in his woods, he can eavesdrop on their conversations and learn the names of the magi. Once the troop has moved on, he then has simply to search the campsite (or the latrine) for an Arcane Connection, and he has a pretty hefty Penetration Total against that magus. Alert sentries tend to discourage this behavior by chasing off those who might lurk at the fringes of a campsite.

## Story Elements: Guards

A broken landscape, with slabs of rock crushed and flung into weird angles by geology or mystical forces, is perhaps the biggest impediment to movement, and one where grogs really come into their own. Crossing such a landscape requires a great deal of skill: leaping chasms, climbing rock faces, and dodging falling rock. Fatigue rolls need to be made at regular intervals. This might be fine for soldiers who have Athletics around 3 or so, but less able characters need a lot of help.

Underwater adventures are another example of where grogs can come into their own. Improvising

spells that allow free movement under water is even harder than those to help one climb or balance, and so if the only way in to the Cave of Wonders is an underwater entrance, the magus will have to rely on his grogs to get him safely inside.

Combat situations can be made more challenging if combined with environmental hazards. As well as increasing the number of botch dice, hazards such as narrow cliff-side paths, steam geysers, swamps, crevasses, and so forth can require characters to make rolls (usually Dexterity + Athletics) each round to avoid whatever dangers they pose.

all are capable of using magic to compensate for their lack. Consequentially, relatively easy tasks — jumping over pits, climbing trees, fording rivers, and even riding horses — tend to pose more of a challenge to them. It is the grogs' duty to bring their masters home alive, and this includes preventing them from falling down cliffs, drowning, or being crushed under an avalanche.

Groggs must therefore often come up with novel solutions to compensate for their masters' physical ineptitude. It is the principal reason why rope takes up a substantial weight in the grog pack (see earlier), because it can be used in a number of ways. Rope makes climbing easier (and more importantly, falling less likely), and can also be used to prevent characters from being swept away when crossing swiftly flowing rivers.

## Camp Duties

When on an expedition, grogs and their masters may need to spend many or most of their nights sleeping under the stars. This may be because the magi

wish to avoid the attention of towns, or because they have been unable to secure a place to stay, thanks to The Gift. It may be simply that the expeditions take them deep into the wilderness.

When not on sentry duty, grogs are assigned a number of tasks around camp. The first order of business is always preparing tents for the magi. An area must be located — preferably among young trees — and cleared of vegetation. If the camp is simply an overnight stop, then these tents tend to be simple bivouacs designed to keep off the worst of the weather, made by slinging a tarpaulin over a rope strung between two trees, and securing the four corners off the ground. Where there are not enough trees, a corner-bivouac can be constructed by attaching the rope to a tree and the ground, and covering it with a tarp. Fresh-cut vegetation keeps the mud off the floor, and a bed of springy boughs with a blanket covering them is sufficient. If rain is expected, then a channel is dug around the tent to divert the runoff. For longer stops, the grex usually carries proper tents with sides to keep out the wind. Carrying tent poles is very unusual; suitable staves are pro-

## Trail Food

The following is typical of what grogs eat when away from home. Most of the ingredients are brought with them or gathered from the wild. Any leftovers are eaten for lunch on the next day.

**Bacon:** Smoked and dried, often very fatty. Used in stews.

**Baked Eggs:** Eggs from domestic fowl or hedgerow birds; pierced and baked in embers.

**Camp Stew:** Dried meat boiled in ale with leeks and whatever vegetables have been brought or found. Thickened with flour or stale bread.

**Chiches:** Dried chickpeas roasted in the embers, then stewed.

**Eels:** Caught overnight in a submerged bag with the mouth propped open; eaten smoked for breakfast.

**Girdle Bread:** Flour and water mixed into dough, cooked on hot rocks or twisted around a skewer.

**Gruel:** Oats and water as a thin porridge. Only eaten when supplies are low; the oats are usually those brought for the horses.

**Hedgehog:** Thickly encased in clay and baked in the embers; the spines remain in the clay ball when opened.

**Pease Pudding:** Dried peas cooked until thick. Often eaten cold next day.

**Stewed Fruit:** Berries and hard fruit are hardly ever eaten raw.

**Waufres:** Flour, eggs, and cheese, mixed together and fried as cakes. For a rare treat, drizzled with honey.

**Wortes:** All manner of green vegetables, herbs, and leeks.



vided by nature. The grogs usually sleep uncovered, unless the weather is inappropriate, in which case a tent is erected to house them all.

While some grogs are seeing to the tents, others are preparing a fire: gathering tinder, firewood, and curb stones. Suitable branches to support a cook-pot are trimmed, and water is usually put on to boil. All grogs take a turn at cooking, and most can produce a basic meal. Characters with the Survival Ability know which plants yield nutritious food, and gather wild vegetables, herbs, nuts, and fruit throughout the day to eat during the evening meal. Characters with the Hunt Ability might obtain fresh meat, but to avoid being caught for poaching, they usually just set snares for birds or small game.

If the camp is to persist longer than a single night, grogs are set to digging latrine pits, and constructing tripod frames to support washing bowls, spits, and other camp furniture.

## Guides and Messengers

Magi are much less likely to be aware of local geography, roads, and settlements than their grogs. As a consequence, the planning of journeys is often left to grogs; the magus simply announces where he wants to be and when, and the grogs do the rest of the work. Long distance travel typically focuses around itineraries, or an ordered lists of towns to visit. At each town, local knowledge is called upon to find the correct roads to the next town on the itinerary. It is important to learn the crossing points of rivers, the presence of decent roads, and the locations of settlements for overnight stops and resupplying with food in each locale; the itinerary might be annotated with such features, if the journey is expected to be repeated. Maps are generally too large and valuable to take on the road, and are generally only useful for planning the itinerary.

## Story Elements: Camping

Groggs are relatively experienced at setting up camps, but doing so in bad conditions in a hurry could lead to all sorts of errors. Perhaps the main grog tent is put on top of a badger sett, and they do not appreciate the company. The fire pit might attract salamanders from the logs, or the rushes used on the floor of the magus's tent could be infested with ants.

Gathering food can present hazards as well. Soldiers rarely pass up the opportunity to gather honey, but there is no accepted way of gathering

this sugary treat safely. This could be a comical interlude, or develop into something more dangerous if the bees decide to attack in force. Traveling in unfamiliar habitat could be dangerous; a poisonous plant could resemble an edible foodstuff found closer to the covenant, or the herbs could be tainted by the supernatural aura they have grown in.

A group of armed individuals in woodland might attract attention from nobles or their representatives, who assume the group are poachers (of course, this could easily be true).

The Area Lore Ability is used for all sorts of navigation rolls, and is essential for both planning routes and correctly following them. *City & Guild*, pages 82–83, provide some Ease Factors for locating significant landmarks such as inns, hospices, roads, fords, bridges, and so forth. A character planning a new journey of more than a week can reduce the travel time by 10% if she succeeds in an Intelligence + Area Lore roll of Ease Factor 12.

Groggs are often used as messengers for the magi. They may be sent as couriers to other covenants if the matter is urgent and a redcap is not due for a while. They may be sent ahead of a troop to inform their destination of their imminent arrival, or to arrange accommodation in a foreign town. Groggs might also be sent back home: to impart vital information to the covenant, to ask for reinforcements, or to carry wounded comrades out of harm's way.

## TRAVEL SPEEDS

The table that follows indicates the best speeds (in miles per day) achievable with different modes of transport. Note that these are the best

speeds: poor roads, severe weather, and frequent stops can substantially reduce these times. Furthermore, these are average best speed, since the presence of an inn or hospice might encourage characters to stop early for the day, or push on for a couple of hours more. Characters on foot, on horseback, or traveling by coach can fatigue themselves to travel further in a day; the horses are also fatigued by the same amount as their riders. Groups travel as fast as the slowest individual in the group.

If speed is of the essence, a character can push himself even more. A character on foot can cover a number of miles in a day equal to  $15 + (2 \times \text{Athletics})$  on good roads. If he is traveling cross country or through wilderness, subtract 5 to 10 miles per day. This figure assumes that the character is minimally encumbered, and costs the character two Long-Term Fatigue levels, one lost halfway through the day and the other at dusk. As long as he gets a good meal and a night's sleep, he can do the same on the next day. However, there is a limit to how long a character can keep up this pace; after a number of days equal to his Athletics Ability, the character only regains one Fatigue level each night

## Travel Fatigue

MODE OF TRANSPORT	TYPICAL DISTANCE W/O LONG TERM FATIGUE	TYPICAL DISTANCE W/LONG TERM FATIGUE
Foot	15	20
Horse	30	40
Cart or Wagon	15	n/a
Coach	18	24
River Vessel*	15	n/a
Small Sailing Ship**	50	n/a
Galley (sails and oars)	80**	n/a

\* Add the speed of the river if heading downstream

\*\* Over 24 hours of travel

of sleep, so every subsequent day he accrues an extra Fatigue level. If the character is encumbered, subtract the Encumbrance from his Athletics Ability before calculating distance traveled.

On horseback, a character can cover a number of miles in a day equal to  $30 + (2 \times \text{Ride})$  on good roads, subtracting 10 to 20 miles per day for cross-country or wilderness. The character and the horse suffer from Fatigue loss as described earlier. If the horse is encumbered, subtract its Encumbrance from the character's Ride Ability (see Equipment, earlier, for the Encumbrance of horses). If a character lacks the Ride Ability then he is limited to 20 miles per day, and always loses one Long-Term Fatigue level. If the character is able to change horses he can travel faster; each change of horse in a day allows the character to travel an additional  $(2 \times \text{Ride})$  miles that day. However, there must be a minimal amount of time between changeovers — these speeds assume that the horses are ready and waiting for riders. If the grog has to locate and purchase a suitable horse, he can probably achieve a maximum of one change per day; if they are ready and waiting at the appropriate locations he can manage up to three changes. Skilled couriers on horseback have sometimes managed to travel 90 miles in a day, by pushing their horses to breaking point and

having a steady supply of fresh horses.

Boats and ships can be powered by sails or by oars. Sailed vessels operate in coastal waters and across seas, whereas rowing vessels can also navigate rivers and lakes. Sailed vessels

typically operate all day and all night. If traveling downstream, a rowboat adds the speed of the current to its total speed, which is typically three miles an hour. Rowers can usually manage to row for 10 hours each day, but if going downstream, the boat can also float at the speed of the river when not being rowed, as long as someone steers it.

MILES PER DAY (FOOT):

$15 + (2 \times \text{Athletics})$  on good roads

MILES PER DAY (HORSEBACK):

$30 + (2 \times \text{Ride})$  on good roads

FOR EACH CHANGE OF HORSE:

$+ (2 \times \text{Ride})$  miles per day

FATIGUE COST:

2 Long-Term Fatigue levels

## Story Elements: Guides and Messengers

Tension can arise between grogs and magi over planning a route. For example, the grogs might desire to travel south by way of an inn famous for its ale (or its women...); however, the magi may ask for the quickest route, which would place them at the tavern at lunchtime. There is no way that the magi will want to stop for the night with half the day still available for traveling. How long can the grogs delay the group with mishaps — a false start down the wrong road, a thrown shoe on one of the horses, a loose axle pin on the cart — so that they reach the inn conveniently close to the end of the day? And will the magi even notice?

Likewise, a local grog might plan a route which avoids the vicinity of the haunted lake without explaining why. If the magi demand that the group goes the shortest route, they might suffer rebellion or even desertion, such horrors does the lake hold in the minds of the men.

Soldiers are often superstitious, and might desire to make a side trip to visit a local shrine, or pay respects at the place where a former grog is buried.

Sending grogs out to carry messages is a great way of initiating a grog-only story (see Chapter 3), or it may simply be a single event in a larger story. Messenger stories are better if small groups of grogs can be sent out rather than a single individual. Messenger stories often involve an element of speed. If the magi discover that their covenant or an ally is under immediate threat, then it might be a dash to warn them. A character injured on a mission might be in urgent need of a surgeon, but the best one in the region might be several days away. In such situations, even the simplest of obstacles — a cart with a broken wheel, a fallen tree, a washed-out bridge — can add to the dramatic tension of the situation.



## Representatives

One of the biggest obstacles that magi face is their difficulty in communicating with non-magi. The Gift surrounds them like a cloud, causing everything they say to be taken in the worst possible light. Their very presence engenders mistrust, which is only compounded by the innate suspicion that is often felt toward strangers. As a consequence, grogs can find themselves at the forefront of negotiations with mundanes on behalf of their masters. Of course, this is a role often taken on by competent companion characters as well.

Bribery is an excellent way to loosen the tongue of a recalcitrant peasant; this can be overt (jingling a pouch of coins in front of the peasant's face) or more subtle (offering to buy him a few jars of ale, or buying some of his craft, no matter how awful it might be). When providing a bribe, one should keep in mind that only townsfolk have any great use for coinage — in much of rural Mythic Europe, barter is the main form of commerce. This being said, there is a subtle art in offering the right amount of bribe. If one offers too little, the local will be offended. If one offers too much, the local might become doubly suspicious, or even mark the character as a rube or future mugging victim. As a guide, a day laborer earns about one Mythic Penny per day, and needs the equivalent of a Mythic Pound every year to feed himself and his family. A professional earns two to five times as much, depending on trade and ability. However, most mundanes in Mythic Europe live within their means, and savings are a foreign concept associated with avaricious behavior. A bribe equivalent to a day's pay grants a Minor equipment bonus (see earlier), whereas a bribe equivalent to a week's pay grants a Major equipment bonus.

## GAINING INFORMATION

The local populace often has information that is needed for the successful completion of a mission. The troop could spend weeks scouring the hills in search of the lair of a dragon and still not find it, while a few words with a yokel could provide them with the information they need in minutes. Locals are often suspicious of strangers; this is particularly true in rural areas where most individuals never leave the village they were born in, and less true in cities, where new folk come in every day. An average Communication + Folk Ken roll is usually sufficient to get an individual to talk, but increase the Ease Factor by the local's Suspicious Personality Trait.

## NEGOTIATION

Grogg are often required to make purchases for their master, since The Gift results in vendors hiking their prices as soon as the magus approaches their shop or booth. Purchases made with currency can normally only be made in a town or city; some example prices can be found on page 144 of *City & Guild*.

The Bargain Ability can be used to negotiate a good price for expensive or bulk items. Not all items can be bargained for; vendors of food very rarely reduce their prices unless a lot of food is bought at once, for example. Bargaining usually takes place with artisans, where the true value of their goods is strongly associated with the skill of its maker or the rarity of the item. First, determine the actual value of the goods; this is usually twice the cost to the seller, but in cities or crises, inflation might drive the price even higher. The buyer can attempt to determine the value by making a Perception + Bargain roll, with an Ease Factor of 9. If the goods are particularly common, or the buyer has a Craft or

Profession Ability related to the goods to be purchased, subtract 3 from the Ease Factor. If the goods are especially rare or unusual, then add 3 or more.

Next, make a Communication + Bargain roll for the buyer, and one for the seller. The seller's roll should be made in secret; if it is greater than that of the grog, then the seller is not prepared reduce the price to less than the value. Otherwise, the seller will settle for 10% less than the value for every 3 points or fraction that the grog's roll exceeded the seller's. Regardless of how good the buyer's Bargain roll is, the sale price is never less than half of the initial value.

Now that the storyguide knows how much the seller will accept, she can either assume that this is the price secured by the grog, or else roleplay the negotiation with the player. When negotiating, the seller is likely to initially ask for a price higher than the actual value of the goods. The seller will eventually go as low as the calculated price, but the grog doesn't know how low this is, and may settle at a higher price instead. He may make a Perception + Folk Ken roll to try to detect when the seller is getting close to a price he is prepared to accept; this is opposed to the seller's Presence + Guile roll.

**APPRAISE VALUE OF THE GOODS:**  
Perception + Bargain + simple die;  
Ease Factor 9 (usually)

**BARGAIN ROLL:**  
Communication + Bargain  
+ simple die for the buyer and seller

**LOWEST FINAL PRICE:**  
Value of goods – 10% per 3 points  
(or fraction) that the buyer's  
Bargain roll exceeds the seller's  
(minimum limit: 50% of value)

**GAIN BARGAINING ADVANTAGE:**  
Perception + Folk Ken + simple die  
of buyer versus Presence + Guile  
+ simple die of seller

## PURCHASING SUPPLIES FOR TRAVEL

A perennial problem with extended travel is the lack of fresh provender. A village is an excellent opportunity to restock with long-life ingredients, and also to buy fresh produce that will last the next few days of travel. Eggs, vegetables (particularly leeks and onions), bread, butter, and grain are the most commonly purchased goods; meat is less readily available, but a village might be persuaded to part with its precious supplies of bacon and fresh meat for the right price. Villagers are more reluctant to sell produce in the winter and spring, when food is at a premium, and more likely to do so in the autumn.

Be aware that there is a limit to the amount of excess food that a village has. They likely have obligations to provide fresh produce for their lord, and so must reserve the greater part of their harvest for him. They have little use for coin in the short term, since neither they nor their lord can eat money. Towns are a better prospect for resupplying; here, there is a food service industry specifically tailored to the production of food for sale. With respect to prices, in a town, a loaf of bread costs about half a Mythic Penny, a chicken can be bought for

about a Mythic Penny, as can a pound of cheese, two dozen eggs, ten salted herring, or a gallon of best ale. Broadly speaking, it costs a Mythic Penny to feed a grog for a day, if you are buying rather than growing his food.

## ARRANGING ACCOMMODATION

While inns and church-run hospices are found between major cities and along trade routes (see *City & Guild*, page 81), more isolated regions are devoid of such institutions, and travelers have to rely on the hospitality of peasants. At the very least, basic Christian charity usually allows a group of travelers to seek shelter in a barn, grainstore, or chapel, and a few pennies might buy them a hot meal.

Slightly more comfortable is accommodation in the byre; a shelf is placed above the livestock so that people can benefit from the heat given off by the animals. During the winter, the whole village might sleep in the communal byre above the village's plow-oxen. However, with magi around, the byre is rarely a sensible option; The Gift spooks animals as much as it does humans, and sharing a shed with a magus and several oxen is not a recipe for a quiet night.

The best accommodation on offer in a village is to share a bed with a householder and his wife; depending on the number of children, they have there may be room for one or two extras.

To arrange a place to stay, make a Communication + Folk Ken roll, using the Ease Factors in the following table. If the peasants have had the opportunity to talk with the magi, then the social penalty of The Gift applies to this roll even if it is being made by a grog. Bribes modify this roll in the normal fashion.

ACCOMMODATION	EASE FACTOR
Barn	3
Byre	6
Shared Bed	9

## TRANSLATION

It is not uncommon for magi to join a covenant in a region where they do not speak the vernacular language. This may be as simple as having difficulty with the local dialect, or as complete as no understanding at all. Magi rarely find time in their busy schedules to learn new languages — anyone important can speak Latin anyway, and grogs can always





be used to translate. Many grogs learn a smattering of Latin, and some become quite fluent. Given their opportunities for travel, they may also pick up foreign languages as well, and covenants occasionally employ a grog who is good with languages specifically for this purpose.

A character with a Language Ability of 2 or less needs to make Communication + Language rolls to get his point across, and an Intelligence + Language roll to understand what is said back. The Ease Factor varies according to the level of complexity of the subject matter, but a 6 is normally sufficient. Characters with Language Abilities of 3 or more need not make these rolls for everyday conversation, but may need to for more complex concepts. If the two speakers have more than one language in common, they can reduce the Ease Factor of communication and understanding by three, since they can substitute words in the other languages where they don't know the word in the main language.

Unless she is fluent (Language Ability 5 or better), use of a character's social Abilities is limited by her Language score. So a maga issuing orders in French (where her Ability is 3) cannot make full use of her Leadership 4 Ability, and must act as if she had a Leadership of 3. However, she could freely communicate her instructions to her grog captain, who, as a native French speaker, can issue her orders with no penalty using his own Leadership Ability.

As one travels further from home, one encounters changes in language which might make conversing difficult. A native speaker knows his own language at a score of 5, and may have a specialty in his own dialect, for an overall score of 6. He can sometimes communicate with a speaker of a different language, depending on how closely related the two languages are:

## Story Elements: Representing Magi

Using grogs as the interface between the magi and the rest of the world is an excellent way to get grogs involved in stories. A grog with no social Abilities is often better than a magus with some social Abilities and The Gift; even if their effective scores are the same, the magus' very presence makes people uncomfortable and suspicious.

If grogs are responsible for all social interactions, only the grogs are aware of the content of those conversations. This has several roleplaying applications. If the magi habitually leave grogs to deal with mundanes, you might want to make a clear separation between player and character knowledge. If a grog is ordered to ask a peasant what he

knows about the ruined castle, then take the player to one side and deliver the peasant's rambling account of the legend. That player now has to relate the legend to the others, as if he were the grog reporting back. Any mistakes should not be corrected, but the player can ask for his grog to make easy Intelligence rolls to fill in details like names.

If a grog is given a pouch of money and asked to purchase something, he may take advantage of the general unworldliness of magi, and take a "commission" or "finder's fee." A particularly audacious manner of doing this is under the magus' very nose, if he does not speak the language. Let the grog's Personality Traits guide this sort of behavior.

**SITUATION:** Same language, different dialect  
**PENALTY:** -1 penalty to both speakers

**SITUATION:** Closely related languages  
**PENALTY:** -2 penalty to both speakers

**SITUATION:** Distantly-related languages  
**PENALTY:** -3 penalty to both speakers

For example, a speaker of French (Norman) can talk with a native of Paris who speaks French (Orleanais), with a -1 penalty. He can talk with a native of Provence with a -2 penalty, since French and Occitan (the language of Provence) are closely related. He can even communicate basic information with speakers of Castilian, at a -3 penalty.

a character, rather than actually deciding what they do. However, grogs often have less well-developed personalities due to their role in the game, and they will undoubtedly act differently under the control of different players. As a consequence, the troupe may decide to make greater use of Personality Trait rolls when determining the actions of grogs.

Each character begins with at least three Personality Traits that range from -3 to +3 (*ArM5*, page 33). Most grogs should have a Brave and a Loyal Personality Trait. The Loyal Trait is assumed to represent their loyalty to the covenant, although they may develop different loyalties to different organizations or individuals. The Loyal Trait is also used as a measure of the impact of The Gift on non-magi (see *Growing Used to The Gift*, later). If a character has a Personality Flaw, then she could be given an additional Personality Trait that matches that Flaw. This trait should have a value of +3 (for a Minor Flaw) or +6 (for a Major Flaw).

Several resources for *Ars Magica*

## Personality Traits

Personality Traits are largely a descriptive statistic in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*, used as a guide to roleplaying

**Fifth Edition** have provided lists of possible Personality Traits. *Realms of Power: The Divine Revised Edition*, page 40, has an insert relating Personality Traits to religious virtues and vices, and discusses which traits oppose which others. *Art & Academe*, page 40, discusses the relationship between complexion and Personality traits, and provides further lists of possible traits linked to the preponderance of the humors.

## Making Personality Trait Rolls

To decide on a character's actions using Personality Trait rolls, add the Personality Trait to the result of a stress die, and compare the result to the table on page 19 of *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*. Pay special attention to the trait rolled and its sign. For example, a character with a Cowardly +2 Trait who is asked to make a Brave roll effectively has a Brave -2 Trait. If a character fails a Personality Trait roll, then he must temporarily act in a manner determined by the circumstances (that is, the storyguide). A character who lacks a Personality Trait is considered to have a score of zero. Usually, a single Personality Trait is applied to any given roll; use the most appropriate, or the highest. A grog with an applicable Personality Flaw does not usually need to roll; a Major Personality Flaw takes virtually all control from the player under applicable circumstances, whereas a Minor Personality Flaw should determine his actions in lieu of a Personality Trait Roll, but not to the exclusion of reason.

A common experience for grogs is to be under the influence of conflicting emotions. A sentry on watch might be tempted by his Lazy Trait to just go to sleep, but this is opposed by his Need to Please. A normally Brave soldier might be challenged by

his Fear of Fire. A grog might be torn between his Loyal to Covenant and his Loyal to Friends Traits. When this happens, make the Personality Trait roll as usual, but modify the Ease Factor by the score in the opposing Trait. This modification might make the Ease Factor harder or easier, depending on the situation.

*Exempli gratia: A grog is confronted by a fire-breathing dragon, which requires a Brave roll. If a magus orders him to engage the dragon, the character's Loyal trait is subtracted from the Ease Factor, since the more loyal the grog is, the easier this roll is. If the character has a Fear of Fire, this Trait should be added to the Ease Factor for the Brave roll, since this fear discourages his natural bravery.*

## Growing Used to The Gifted

As previously explained in *ArM5*, people do not get used to The Gift. They can get used to a Gifted individual, however, and regular positive interactions eventually allow a person to ignore the negative social consequences generated by that character's Gift. *Covenants* implies that it takes 15 years for an average resident of a coven to ignore the social penalty of the Gift (see Familiarity, page 40), although altruism and rewards might shorten this substantially, and providing the grogs with better than average living conditions and pay can shorten it further still. The social penalty of a magus' Gift is usually applied to any sort of situation roll that involves loyalty, but *Covenants* introduces the concept of Prevailing Loyalty, which is added to any Loyal Personality Trait rolls instead of the magus' social penalty. Prevailing Loyalty begins as the average social penalty of a covenant's magi, but can increase (or decrease) according to factors such as the length of time that magi and grogs have associated with one another, and the

attitude of the magi toward the grogs during that time. An individual grog begins with a Loyal Personality Trait that is up to 3 points different from the turb's Prevailing Loyalty.

For a more complex, but perhaps richer, system, each grog could have a separate Loyalty score for each magus in the covenant — or at least for those magi with whom he has regular contact. These Loyalty scores fluctuate in a similar manner to Prevailing Loyalty. Thus, if Ignatio the Shield Grog has regular, friendly contact with Tillitus of Bonisagus, his initial Loyal +2 might develop into two Personality Traits, Loyal to Covenant +2 and Loyal to Tillitus +3. Consequently, Ignatio has an effective Loyal 0 when dealing with Tillitus (taking into account his -3 penalty for the Gift), compared to Loyal -1 with the other magi of the covenant.

## Advanced Group Combat

Group Combat is an important concept in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*, and the principle role of grogs in many stories. The rules in this section expand the Group Combat rules in *ArM5* to add a bit more tactical depth. Feel free to use group combat when it makes sense, or have characters fight independently whenever drama or troupe preference dictates. These rules were first printed in Chapter 9 of *Lords of Men*.

## The Leader's Actions

A group leader can make one command-related die roll per round without using his action for that round. The leader acts at the same point in the combat sequence as the rest of



the group. In cases where it matters whether the group acts first, or the leader makes the Leadership roll first, the leader gets to decide the order in which the dice are rolled.

If the leader (or any member of the group, for that matter) wants to remain in the group, but do something other than attack, that's permissible. Simply don't count that individual as part of the group when calculating the group's combat bonus or resolving Damage. For example, if a group of two grogs plus a leader is fighting, and the leader chooses to spend his action doing something else besides attacking (say, casting a spell), then the group's combat bonus would be capped at +X (instead of +Y), and when the group hits, it only would inflict Damage two times, not three times.

## Morale and Discipline

These optional rules somewhat weaken the effectiveness of groups, but they make the role of the leader more important. A leader becomes significant even in an untrained group.

Effective group tactics require both discipline and morale. In battle, both of these will be tested.

### DISCIPLINE

A Discipline roll is required whenever the group is tempted to break formation, either because the group is executing a tricky maneuver or because the enemy seems vulnerable (tempting the group's members to pursue them). Discipline rolls do not take an action to make. If a Discipline roll fails, the group temporarily becomes Disordered.

**GROUP DISCIPLINE:**  
stress die + Leader's Presence +  
Leader's Leadership

If everyone in the group has a positive Loyal personality score, the group gains an additional bonus equal to the lowest Loyal score among the members.

Example discipline Ease Factors are given below:

**EASE FACTOR: 3**

**EXAMPLE EVENT:** Group moves across difficult terrain.

**EASE FACTOR: 6**

**EXAMPLE EVENTS:** Group runs (without charging); Or, enemy Disengages (without routing); Or, group changes between melee and missile combat.

**EASE FACTOR: 9**

**EXAMPLE EVENTS:** Enemy routs; Or, group Disengages.

### MORALE

All groups need to make morale rolls when bad things happen to them on the battlefield. Morale rolls do not take an action to make. A group that fails a morale check becomes Disordered. If the group is already Disordered and then fails a Morale check, it routs.

**GROUP MORALE:**

stress die + Leader's Pre + Leader's  
Leadership

If everyone in the group has a positive Brave personality score, the group gains a bonus to the Morale roll equal to the lowest Brave score in the group.

Example morale Ease Factors are given below:

**EASE FACTOR: 6**

**EXAMPLE EVENTS:** Taking wounds from missile fire when having no missiles of its own; Or, charged by approximately equal force.

**EASE FACTOR: 9**

**EXAMPLE EVENTS:** Charged by obviously superior force; Or, ambushed or attacked from rear; Or, all members of group reach Wound Penalty of -3 or worse; Or, the vanguard or leader killed, Incapacitated, or disabled by magic.

### DISORDERED GROUPS

A group that fails a Discipline or Morale check becomes Disordered. This is a bad state of affairs that leaves the group vulnerable in combat.

- A trained group that is Disordered functions as an untrained group. If it fails a second Discipline check, it functions like a Disordered untrained group.
- An untrained group that is Disordered can't attack effectively: only half its attacks (round up) can hit, and the others automatically miss. That is, instead of inflicting damage once per member of the group, it only inflicts damage half that many times (round up).
- If a group that is Disordered fails a Morale check (but not a Discipline check), it becomes Routed.

### ROUTED GROUPS

A routed group has lost its will to fight and attempts to Disengage from all opponents and flee to safety. Once Disengaged from the enemy, it's not uncommon for the members of a routed group to scatter.

A group can become Routed if it is already Disordered and then fails a Morale check.

### RALLYING A GROUP

If a group becomes Disordered or Routed, the leader may attempt to

rally it as an action. Rallying improves a routed group to being merely Disordered, or restores a Disordered group to normal status.

#### RALLY A GROUP:

##### Presence + Leadership + stress Die

The Ease Factor to rally a group depends on whether the group is Engaged in combat, and how many casualties it has taken. A casualty is a member of the group who has a Medium or worse wound, or is unconscious or unable to fight due to magical effects.

Example Ease Factors to rally a group are given below:

EASE FACTOR: 3

EXAMPLE EVENT: Group is not engaged in combat.

EASE FACTOR: 6

EXAMPLE EVENT: Group is taking enemy missile fire.

EASE FACTOR: 9

EXAMPLE EVENT: Engaged in melee.

EASE FACTOR: 12

EXAMPLE EVENT: Routed and being hotly pursued.

EASE FACTOR: +1 to Ease Factor

EXAMPLE EVENT: Group has sustained casualties.

EASE FACTOR: +3 to Ease Factor

EXAMPLE EVENT: Group has sustained 50% casualties or more.

#### GROUPS WITH NO LEADER

Ordinarily, a group that loses its vanguard or leader splits into individuals (see *ArM5*, page 173). Under these optional rules, a group that loses its vanguard or leader can still fight, though it is likely to become Disordered.

A group with no vanguard can't

attack, but uses the Defense score of its best member. The leader of a group can designate a new vanguard in the middle of battle. If successful, this takes effect immediately, and the group's future rolls are based on the new vanguard's statistics. The leader can automatically choose a new vanguard (no roll required) if the group spends a round without attacking or defending.

#### REPLACE A VANGUARD IN COMBAT:

##### Leader's Presence + Leadership vs. Ease Factor 9

A group with no leader automatically fails any future Morale or Discipline checks. A new leader can assume command automatically if the group spends a round without fighting (making no Attack or Defense rolls). Alternatively, a member of the group may assume command in combat; if successful, this takes effect immediately.

#### ASSUME LEADERSHIP IN COMBAT:

##### Presence + Leadership vs. Ease Factor 9

If more than one character succeeds at this roll in the same round, the one with the highest total becomes the leader.

## Injury and Death

Combat is sometimes an inevitable consequence of a story, and is the principle reason why magi employ grogs. However, injuries in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* can be punishing; even minor wounds, while not immediately life-threatening, impose limits on activities, and there are no easily available magics for healing wounds. A minor encounter with a group of

opponents can easily cripple the mission by wounding all of the grogs, and is particularly brutal on the vanguard.

If the characters are close to home, it might be possible to send the most wounded back, and have them refreshed with reinforcements. However, movement while injured can be painfully slow.

## Battlefield Injuries

Wounds taken in combat can pose a major impediment to continuing an expedition. A character with more than a -2 Wound Penalty cannot make any swift or sudden motions, or travel at more than half the usual pace without risking his wounds worsening (*ArM5*, page 179). Even a -1 Wound Penalty prohibits strenuous activity without risking the wound. The Wound Recovery roll made to prevent a wound from worsening is fortunately modified by the Chirurgy Ability of any first-aider, which is why a cutter is a vital member of any grex.

A character with a -1 or -2 Wound Penalty can perform sentry duty, but cannot usually partake in most off-duty activities such as pitching camp. He cannot take double duties on watch without having to make a wound-worsening roll. A character with a more severe Wound Penalty cannot even perform sentry duty without putting pressure on his ailing body.

#### FIRST AID

First aid can prevent a wound from worsening for a short period of time, allowing the patient to get to a place of safety for the proper healing of his wounds. When tending a patient's wounds, a surgeon can make a First Aid roll against the Improvement Ease Factor of his patient's most serious wound on the Wound Recovery Table (*ArM5*, page 179). If this is success-



ful, the patient is treated as one category higher with respect to Activity While Injured (ArM5, page 178). The effects of a successful First Aid roll last just one day, and cannot be repeated. A botched First Aid roll provokes an immediate Wound Recovery roll, and the patient receives no First Aid bonus. First aid can also start the healing process (see *Art & Academe*, page 61)

FIRST AID ROLL:  
Dexterity + Chirurgy  
+ Recovery Modifiers  
(see *Art & Academe*, page 54)  
+ Magical Aid + stress die  
vs Improvement Ease Factor



### MAGICAL FIRST AID

The 10th level *Creo Corpus* spell *Bind Wound* (ArM5, page 129) prevents any wound from worsening while in effect, and can be a life saver in many situations. Even low-level *Creo Corpus* spells can grant a modest, long-term bonus to Wound Recovery rolls, which includes those to avoid wounds worsening. Covenants commonly create an enchantment with one of these spells as a constant effect, at least to get the vanguard back on his feet. *Endurance of the Berserkers* (ReCo 15) negates all Wound and Fatigue penalties for a short time, but the average human can only be affected by this spell twice before it ceases to have an effect (ArM5, page 134).

A more powerful enchantment consists of a long duration *Chirurgeon's Healing Touch* (CrCo 20), which removes a wound entirely for as long as the character is under its influence (ArM5, page 129). However, this spell would have to be boosted to Sun Duration, meaning that it would inflict a Warping point every time it is used for the strong mystical effect (ArM5, page 168). Furthermore, it could only negate a Light Wound; more powerful effects would be need-

ed for more serious wounds. Naturally, a magus with the ritual form of this spell and the vis spare can negate such a wound altogether.

### The Death of a Grog

It is an uncomfortable truth that soldiers die; even more, they are expected to die. Their purpose, after all, is to place themselves between danger and their masters. Particularly lucky or skilled soldiers sometimes last long enough to start families, or even retire. Even luckier grogs get to live at covenants where the magi are either so peaceful or so formidable that the risk of death or serious injury is minimal. Yet for most turbs, the passing of a grog is depressingly frequent.

Some troupes prefer to play grogs as an expendable resource, and barely mark their passing. It is unlikely that the turb itself is so blasé about death. In the heat of the battle, they may not note the passing of their comrade, and even if they do, they will not dare to let it affect them. When the heat of battle has passed, though, they gather up the dead and mourn their loss.

The medieval attitude to death is a mixture of reverence and superstition. In Christian thought, a "good death" is at the end of a long life. The deceased is reconciled with the community and with God through the sacrament of Extreme Unction (or Last Rites), which spiritually prepares him for the journey to the next life. Most importantly, he has done penance for all his sins in this life, and received forgiveness. But soldiers hardly ever die in this manner. Christians fear the quick death, the *mors improvisa*, because it robs them of the opportunity to render themselves penitentially into a state of grace.

It is considered important for a cadaver to be physically clean as a symbol of the desired spiritual cleanliness, and the body of a fallen comrade is washed clean of blood and, if possible, wrapped in a clean linen sheet. Grogg often turn to the magi in the absence of a priest for Extreme Unction. As Latin speakers, it is often assumed that magi can perform priestly duties. Indeed, in dire circumstances, this sacrament can be performed by any baptized member of the Church; ordination is not a requirement. However, when per-

formed by an ordained priest, Extreme Unction absolves the person from all mortal sins and protects the spirit of the deceased from supernatural effects for three days (*Realms of Power: The Divine Revised Edition*, page 75); this is usually sufficient time for the body to be buried in consecrated ground.

Grogg usually show a strong desire to carry their fallen comrade home. Tradition dictates that a body is buried in the same parish as his birth, but some covenants maintain their own graveyard for more far-flung members of their community. The inability to recover a body, or to return it home, is a painful thing, and grogg leave behind a fallen comrade with great reluctance. A magus suggesting that a body be abandoned is likely to provoke feelings of rebellion, and can result in the loss of Prevailing Loyalty (see *Covenants*, page 40). If the body must be left behind, it is important that it is buried whole, not burnt or dismem-

bered, and the grave must be marked. The grogg may express a desire to return for the body at a later date, to ensure that it receives the correct burial rites. Curiously, the same reverence is usually shown for the dead even if an individual was disliked in life.

#### REMEMBRANCE

Grogg often institute some communal ritual to revere their deceased comrades. The *liber gregis* suggests that this is permitted, even encouraged by the magi. A roll of the fallen, displayed in a prominent place and ceremonially inscribed with the names of deceased grogg, is a good way to achieve this. Even if the grogg cannot actually read the honor roll, they know which names correspond to their particular friends, and know that they will not be themselves forgotten when death comes for them. The *liber*

*gregis* also suggests that, once a year, on All Souls' Day (November 1), the magi lead a ceremony remembering the fallen, and pleads that covenants find the money to add the grogg's name to the obituary of a local monastery, so that prayers will be said to speed his time in purgatory.

If a grogg has left behind a wife or family, they will often be cared for by the troop. Any pension owed to the deceased individual devolves to them, and the other grogg often contribute what aid they can afford. It is not unusual for a close friend of the deceased grogg to offer to marry the widow, so that she will be well-cared for and her children protected from poverty.

It is not necessary for every grogg death to be played out in detail, but it is worth it on occasion, so that the grogg can be remembered in death as much as he was in life.



# Creating & Maintaining Groggs

Character creation can be a tedious business, and the purpose of this chapter is to make it easier. When you are creating a magus or companion character, it is worth putting in the extra effort of Detailed Character Creation (*ArM5*, page 28), as you can expect to be playing this character for several years or decades of game time. Groggs, however, tend to have shorter life spans and even shorter life expectancies, but simply using the character templates in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* results in grogs who are all too similar. This chapter aims to find a middle way between these two extremes.

The rules presented here also allow grogs to be easily maintained, so they are kept up to date and ready for action. Herein also are rules for allowing a character to expand beyond his original concept, and perhaps even transform into a companion character.

## Virtues and Flaws

A freshly-created character has as many points of Virtues as she has points of Flaws, but characters are expected to change over time, and an individual need not remain that way

forever. In addition to gaining Flaws through misadventure or foolish actions, a character can gain Virtues through exposure (deliberate or not) to powerful magic, and may also gain them as a result of stories.

Sometimes, after a character has been played for a while, it might become apparent that she has the wrong complement of Virtues and Flaws. Perhaps the player decides that Wrathful is an inappropriate choice for his sentry, and thinks that Reclusive might be more appropriate. In cases like this, with the approval of the troupe, these changes can simply be made. If the character is quite new to the saga, then even major changes can be applied with little effect, but changes in an established character should be restricted — a Minor Flaw can be exchanged for another Minor Flaw, and a Major Flaw for a Major Flaw, and the same

applies to Virtues. Changes should not be made that affect the Characteristics or Abilities of a character, and one should certainly not discard a Virtue or Flaw that has been a major feature of a story in the past.

These changes are minor in comparison to a character who wants to develop in new ways, and expand himself beyond his original profession. Perhaps a grog aspires to become a priest, or rid himself of a Malediction. The rest of this section describes the process by which these changes can be made.

## Gaining New Flaws

It is comparatively easy for characters to gain new Flaws. These are often the consequence of player actions, and need no special procedures or effort to allow them to hap-

### Changes in Social Status

Among all the alterations to Virtues and Flaws, the Social Status Virtues and Flaws are perhaps the most likely to occur. One of the covenfolk can be promoted to custos after years of service. A freeman can take Holy Orders and become a priest. A knight can be disgraced and take

up life as an outlaw. If these changes occur, simply replace the old Social Status Virtue with the new one. Only in some circumstances do characters retain the old social status in addition to the new one, and these are clearly indicated in the Virtue or Flaw description.

pen — most characters will not go out of their way to make their life worse, but sometimes misfortune befalls them.

An important distinction to make is that changing circumstances need not actually generate Flaws, even if there is a Flaw that describes the situation the character is now in. Only if the change in circumstance has an effect on the game, becomes a story seed, or alters how the character is roleplayed should this actually be treated as a Flaw. For example, a character who loses a hand to gangrene always gains the Missing Hand Flaw, because having only one hand always has a mechanical effect on the game. However, a character who gets married does not always gain the Dependents Flaw. Only if the player is interested in having adventures based on his character's wife and children should he acquire the Flaw. The storyguide should be careful not to allow a grog character to gain a Story Flaw, unless it is temporary in nature or the character is destined for transformation into a more central role in the saga (see Transformation, later).

### GAINING FLAWS THROUGH MISHAPS

The easiest way to gain a Flaw is through misfortune. Most often, General Flaws are gained through mishap, particularly those that affect the body. Occasionally, surgeons have to amputate limbs to save a patient's life (*Art & Academe*, page 62), and in the heat of battle, horrific injuries occur with startling regularity (*Art & Academe*, pages 43–44; *Lords of Men*, page 125). Furthermore, many of the diseases that abound in Mythic Europe can result in permanent injuries such as blindness, deafness, and palsy.

### GAINING FLAWS THROUGH ACTIONS

Character actions can easily lead to changes in social status (see insert earlier), with characters becoming branded criminals or outlaws. With the approval of the storyguide, a character can gain Story Flaws by starting a feud, becoming indebted to a powerful individual, or acquiring

an animal companion, although grogs are usually prohibited from gaining Story Flaws during the game, much as they are off limits during character creation. Offending a faerie is a good way of gaining a Malediction or disfigurement.

### GAINING FLAWS THROUGH MAGIC

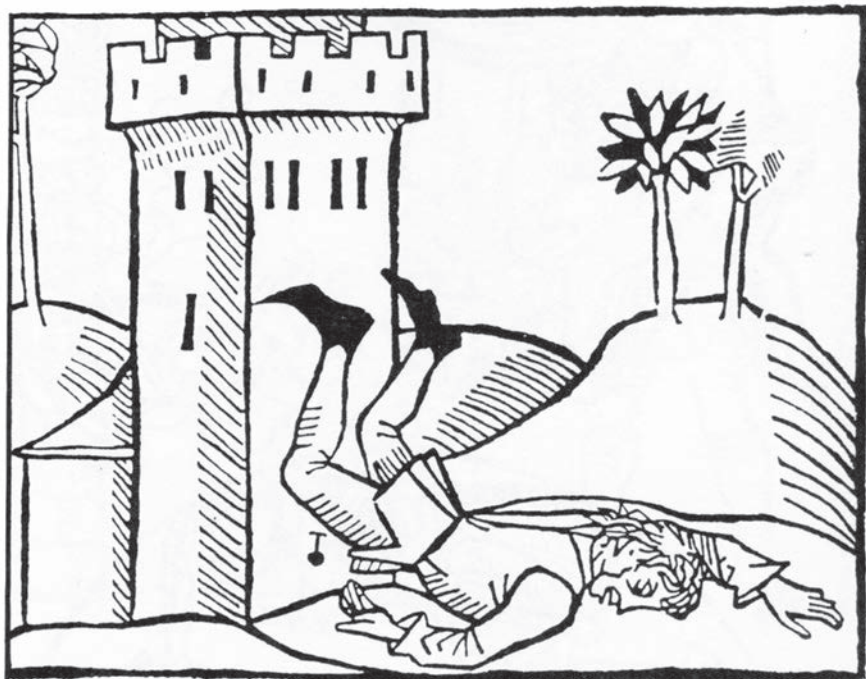
There are some hedge wizard traditions that can impose Flaws on an individual in the form of curses: for example, the Malediction Power of infernalists (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 109) or the Grant Power of faerie wizards (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 127). These are often used offensively against enemies, but are usually limited in duration.

More damaging are the permanent Flaws that can be imposed by certain supernatural creatures at a cost to their Might Score. These curses are a permanent alteration to the character, although it may be possible to eventually undo the curse (see Losing Flaws, later). Furthermore, Warping induces the acquisition of Flaws in those characters who are not aligned to a Supernatural Realm (*ArM5*, page 168).

## Gaining New Virtues

Much like Flaws, a character need not settle for the Virtues chosen for him at character creation. There are three principle ways in which new Virtues can be gained: through magic, through initiation, and through actions. These methods are described later.

If a Virtue is gained that affects the way in which a character gains experience points, this does not affect any experience points gained thus far. So a character who gains an Affinity with an Ability does not immediately recalculate all the experience points applied to that Ability so far.





## GAINING VIRTUES THROUGH MAGIC

There are an assortment of supernatural methods through which a character can gain new Virtues, although many of these methods grant the Virtue on a temporary basis, such as a grugach's spells (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 65), an Object of Virtue (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124), or faerie wizardry (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 127).

However, there are some ways that a Virtue can be granted permanently, through the agency of a supernatural being. The Goetic Arts (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 114) can rip a power from a supernatural creature and give it to a human, and some magical creatures and faeries have the power to permanently grant Virtues at the cost of reducing their Might score. The acquisition of Virtues in this manner should never be frivolous, and either be guided by the needs of the story, or actively sought as the object of a story.

Finally, severe Warping can result in Virtue acquisition. Typically, the Virtues gained from Warping reflect the source of the supernatural power that caused it.

## GAINING VIRTUES THROUGH INITIATION

Initiation is a mystical process through which a character acquires Virtues through the rituals of a mystery cult (see Chapter 2 of *The Mysteries Revised Edition* for more details) or traditions of hedge magic (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 12). The character must develop a score in the Organization Lore of the cult or tradition in question before even being considered for Initiation. The Initiation process itself is balanced internally, requiring the character to pay for her new virtue in ordeals, quests, sacrifices, and

study. It is perhaps most common for grog characters to be Initiated into the Ceremony Ability (see any of the *Realm of Power* books for their specific variants) to enhance the supernatural powers of a companion or magus-equivalent character.

Initiation can occur "off-stage" for grogs, but it is unusual for non-magical individuals to partake in a mystery cult or secret society to the degree of achieving Initiation. Joining a hedge magic tradition is perhaps more likely, but also more difficult since they tend to be wary of those associated with the Order of Hermes.

## GAINING VIRTUES THROUGH ACTIONS

Sometimes a character's actions through the course of a story results in him acquiring the effects of a Virtue. Typically, Virtues gained in this way reflect social interaction with storyguide characters. For example, a character can gain the effects of the Social Contacts Virtue by recruiting an agent, or the Protection Virtue by making a friend with influence, assuming that these are not just passing associations. The troupe should be cautious about a grog gaining a Major Virtue, unless the character is destined for transformation into a more important role (see later).

## Losing Flaws

Most of the methods by which Virtues can be gained (see earlier) can also rid a character of Flaws, but not all methods are applicable to all Flaws. A character with a Missing Hand cannot grow it back through Initiation, but must instead resort to supernatural means. However, characters may be able to take part in stories that rid themselves of a curse, for example.

## Character Transformation

A grog character need not remain a grog for life. The dividing line between grog and companion is a conceit of the game mechanics, separating the support characters from those on whom the stories are focused. However, sometimes grogs may grow to transcend their original roles, and become central characters around which stories pivot. The chief game difference between grogs and companions is the number and type of Virtues and Flaws, and while several methods are discussed earlier in this chapter by which a character can change or expand his choices in Virtues and Flaws, converting a grog character into a companion character through these methods would be slow indeed, taking years (if not decades) of game time.

This section presents some ideas as to how a character can be suddenly transformed from a grog character to a companion character. The essential first stage to this process is a reason to do so. The vast majority of grogs do not transform into companion characters, and so for this to happen implies something special has occurred. This is nearly always precipitated by a story. This story should go some way to explain how and why the character has just gained more Virtues and Flaws. The troupe should be careful to ensure that these Virtues and Flaws are appropriate to the type of transformation — it would be very unusual for a grog who has just become the leader of his own mercenary company to suddenly acquire the Large Virtue, for example, while this might be possible for a character who drunk a faerie potion. Remember that a companion character need not take all ten points of Flaws, and do not be tempted to add inappropriate Flaws just to gain more Virtue points.

## INAUGURATION

Those events which result in the investiture of a character with temporal or spiritual authority are termed inaugurations. This variety of transformation is usually accompanied by a change in social status. Typical inaugurations result from attempts at social mobility: a craftsman becomes dean of his guild; a priest becomes bishop; or a scholar achieves his doctorate. However, an inauguration need not be planned by the character involved; it might result from a sudden windfall, or an unexpected turn of events.

*Exempli gratia:* A character finds a powerful artifact on adventure. It was intended for a companion character, but a grog got there first. To represent the central role of that artifact and its wielder in the saga, the troupe agrees that the character can become a companion.

*Exempli gratia:* The storyguide has planned a long series of adventures that will shape the saga to come for many years, but what it really needs is for the covenant to have a tame nobleman. However, the saga has been going for a few years now, and the players already have companion characters. The storyguide has a quiet word with Elaine, the creator of Sir Edwin, who is a grog character despite his noble birth. With Elaine's agreement, she designs a story where Sir Edwin is able to restore his family fortunes by proving the malfeasance of a neighboring baron. Sir Edwin is awarded the deposed baron's fief, and becomes a Landed Noble and a companion character. The new Flaws and Virtues he acquires are all related to the lands and feuds he has inherited.

## METAMORPHOSIS

The process of metamorphosis is a magical change which overcomes a character and permanently changes him into something else. This power can conceivably come from any of the realms of power, but is probably controlled by non-human inhabit-

ants of that realm rather than by human artifice. Metamorphosis often results in the acquisition of Supernatural Virtues and Flaws from the appropriate realm. Metamorphosis can easily just happen to a character, rather than be specifically sought out or quested for. However, the goal of some secret societies is to effect a metamorphosis of their leader into a supernatural being.

*Exempli gratia:* The Queen of Winter was an antagonist that the storyguide had intended to be an ongoing foe for the characters, but through the lucky guesses of the player characters, they managed to pierce the faerie's disguise and slay her in the first encounter. One of the covenant's grogs delivered the killing blow, and the storyguide decides that the Queen lays on him her death-curse. Over the next few months, the grog undergoes some odd transformations, each of which forms the focus of a story. By the shortest day of the year, Winter has a new faerie King under the control of the storyguide. After the story arc is complete, she decides that the covenant can reverse the transformation of the grog, but the experience leaves him permanently altered, and he is better off re-envisioned as a faerie-touched companion character.

## INITIATION

Initiation can simply add Virtues to a character, but initiation into a mystery cult can also be a means to transform a character. A grog can easily remain a grog character as a member of a cult — they can play a support role just as well inside a secret society as they can anywhere else — but seeking to join such a cult displays a level of dedication or self-importance that is more suited to a companion character. The cult can provide a means to upgrade the character's importance in a saga. Of all the methods presented here, initiation is perhaps the most likely to produce a Mythic Companion, which is a magus-equivalent character. Some

Mystery Cults have as their ultimate goal some form of magical alteration of a character; this is more of a metamorphosis transformation than an Initiation as such.

*Exempli gratia:* A morbid grog who has been a grave-robber under a necromancer for years seeks initiation into the Disciples of the Worm, a Hermetic mystery cult. The standard initiatory path is designed for magi, but the storyguide has determined that the cult also accepts mundanes. As part of his initiation, the grog becomes bound to the ghost of an Old One (whatever that is), and discovers that he has a host of new abilities, many of them supernatural.

## PILGRIMAGE

Pilgrimage can be a life-changing event. Characters embark on a pilgrimage for all sorts of reasons — not all of them matters of piety — but those who return are usually changed in some manner. Going on pilgrimage can be a good pretext for a planned change in character, whether the journey (physical and spiritual) is played out in stories or occurs behind the scenes. For more information on pilgrimage, see *The Church*, pages 15–19.

This type of transformation need not be taken literally. Any story or story arc that takes a character out of his normal routine and location, tests his character, and then transforms his life forever is a pilgrimage. This includes such stories as: going on Crusade; embarking on the Grail Quest; undertaking the "black pilgrimage" to the unholy city of Chorazin; or seeing the jinn-haunted streets of Irem of the Pillars. When the character returns from such a journey, he will never be the same again, a change that is particularly well-represented by transforming into a companion character.

*Exempli gratia:* Peter, a companion character, dies tragically, but the story arc planned for him was never even started. This involved



## Starting Characteristics

### POSITIVE / NEGATIVE POINTS

(+14/-7)

(+14/-7)

(+14/-7)

(+13/-6)

(+13/-6)

(+12/-5)

(+10/-3)

(+8/-1)

### CHARACTERISTICS

+2, +2, +2, +2, +1, +1, -1, -3

+3, +2, +2, +1, +1, 0, -1, -3

+3, +3, +1, +1, 0, -1, -2, -2

+3, +2, +2, +1, -1, -1, -1, -2

+2, +2, +2, +2, +1, 0, -2, -2

+3, +3, 0, 0, -1, -1, -2

+2, +2, +2, +1, 0, 0, 0, -2

+3, +1, +1, 0, 0, 0, 0, -1

*Peter's lycanthropy, his wife and daughter, and a rather unpleasant and powerful non-Hermetic sorcerer from their distant homeland. His son, hitherto a grog character, decides to take up his father's quest, and in the process become a companion character for the player who used to play Peter.*

## Characteristics

Every character has 7 points to spend on buying positive Characteristics, and can take up to 7 negative points to gain an equal number of additional points for positive Characteristics (ArM5, page 30). Various Virtues and Flaws can alter the number of points gained, or affect the final Characteristics once the points have been spent. The nearby insert has several arrays of Characteristics bought with the standard number of points; simply pick one for your character.

## Aging, the Easy Way

Characters who are 35 years old or older usually need to make aging rolls each year. When creating an old character, or updating a large number of grogs, making aging rolls can be time-consuming. The Aging Chart in the nearby insert presents the expected number of Aging Points

gained for a decade of aging. Since the results of the aging roll are quite variable, results have been presented for mild, average, and harsh years. To use the table, decide whether the grog has experienced mild, average, or harsh aging for each decade, then cross-reference the row that corresponds to the character's Aging Score. The Aging Score is equal to the Aging Total excluding the stress die: age/10 (round up) – Living Conditions modifier – Longevity Ritual modifier. The character takes the indicated number of Aging Points. Apparent Age can be determined by rolling a simple die. If

it is less than or equal to the indicated number of Aging Points, then Apparent Age advances 10 years for that decade, otherwise it advances a number of years equal to the die roll. If the character has spent part of a decade at one Aging Score and part at another, use the higher score for the whole decade. To deal with fractional decades, just take an appropriate proportion of the numbers indicated, rounding all fractions up.

*Exempli gratia: Paul the Grog is designed as a 45 year old character. Rather than making 10 aging rolls, his player consults the Aging Chart. His Living Conditions Modifier is 0, so he has 6 years with an Aging Score of 4 (from 35 to 40 years old) and 4 years with an Aging Score of 5 (from 41 to 45 years old); but this is treated as 10 years at an Aging Score of 5. He therefore takes 5 Aging Points. Had the storyguide required him to use the harsh aging column, he would have had 6 Aging Points instead.*

At character creation, harsh aging might represent a character who has adventured a lot prior to his introduction as a player character, and he might be permitted to start with Ability Scores 1 point higher than his

## Aging Chart

The numbers in the nearby table indicate the number of Aging Points and the number of crises expected to be gained by a character in a decade at different Aging Scores. For more details, see ArM5, pages 169–170. The Aging Points listed exclude those deriving from crises. Aging Scores of less than 4 are provided for those with good Living Conditions Modifiers.

AGING SCORE	MILD AGING	AVERAGE AGING	HARSH AGING
1	1	2	3
2	2	3	4
3	3	4	5
4	3	4 / 1 crisis	5 / 2 crises
5	4 / 1 crisis	5 / 1 crisis	6 / 2 crises
6	5 / 1 crisis	6 / 1 crisis	7 / 2 crises
7	6 / 1 crisis	7 / 1 crisis	8 / 2 crises
8	7 / 1 crisis	8 / 1 crisis	9 / 2 crises
9	7 / 1 crisis	9 / 1 crisis	10 / 2 crises
10	9 / 1 crisis	11 / 1 crisis	12 / 2 crises

age would normally permit (ArM5, page 31). Likewise, a character taking mild aging might be restricted to lower maximum Ability Scores. Characters with the Mild Aging Virtue or Poor Conditions Flaw (see Chapter 6: New Virtues and Flaws) would be required to suffer mild or harsh aging, respectively. After character creation, the storyguide might dictate that conditions around the covenant affect which type of aging characters suffer, due to mild winters, uncommonly good or bad conditions at the covenant, outbreaks of disease, and so forth.

## APPLYING CRISES

It is up to the storyguide as to whether the character suffers the crises listed on the table; in particular, she might be inclined to ignore crises for newly created characters,

since Decrepitude can quickly cripple a character.

The Aging Points listed on the Aging Chart only apply if the character suffers no crises. If crises are applied, then the character gains a Decrepitude score equal to the number of crises suffered, and the appropriate number of Aging Points for that level of Decrepitude. He also gains a number of additional Aging Points: if he suffers one crisis, then he gets half of the Aging Points listed in the Aging Chart; if he suffers two crises, then he gets one-third; and so on. Round all fractions up.

*Exempli gratia: If the storyguide requires Paul to account for crises, he experiences one for his decade of average aging. He therefore has a Decrepitude of 1, and 5 Aging Points, along with an additional 3 Aging Points (half of the 5, he would have gained without crises, rounded up), for a total of 8 Aging Points. Had he experienced harsh aging, then he would have suffered two crises, granting him*

*a Decrepitude 2 and 15 Aging Points, plus an additional 2 (one-third of 6), for a total of 17.*

## EFFECTS OF AGING ON CHARACTERISTICS

All Aging Points must be applied to the Characteristics of the character in the usual fashion. The Aging Table (ArM5, page 170) is designed to affect certain Characteristics in favor of others. Just under half of all Aging Points gained (excluding those from crises) are applied to any Characteristic (that is, a roll of 10–12 on the Aging Table). Of the remaining Aging Points, approximately half are gained in Quickness or Stamina, 30 percent in Perception or Presence, 15 percent in Strength or Dexterity, and the remainder in Intelligence and Communication. Players should bear these distributions in mind when applying Aging Points to a character.

## Childhood Training Packages

The five childhood packages from *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* (page 31) are presented here in the same format as the training packages for ease of reference; along with two new ones — Covenant-bred and Feral Childhoods. These packages can only be taken for the first five years of life.

### ATHLETIC CHILDHOOD

FIVE YEARS: +15 Athletics, +15 Brawl, +75 Native Language, +15 Swim

### COVENANT-BRED CHILDHOOD

This childhood is only available to characters with the Covenant Upbringing Personality Flaw.

FIVE YEARS: +5 Athletics, +15 Area Lore: Covenant, +5 Folk Ken, +15 Latin, +75 Native Language, +5 Organization Lore: Order of Hermes

### EXPLORING CHILDHOOD

FIVE YEARS: +15 Area Lore, +5 Athletics, +5 Awareness, +75 Native Language, +5 Stealth, +15 Survival

### FERAL CHILDHOOD

This childhood is only available to characters with the Feral Upbringing Flaw.

FIVE YEARS: +5 Animal Handling, +15 Area Lore, +15 Athletics, +15 Awareness, +15 Brawl, +15

Hunt, +5 Stealth, +30 Survival, +5 Swim

### MISCHIEVOUS CHILDHOOD

FIVE YEARS: +15 Brawl, +15 Guile, +75 Native Language, +15 Stealth

### SOCIAL CHILDHOOD

FIVE YEARS: +15 Charm, +15 Folk Ken, +15 Guile, +75 Native Language

### TRAVELING CHILDHOOD

FIVE YEARS: +5 Area Lore: Area A, +5 Area Lore: Area B, +15 Folk Ken, +5 Living Language, +75 Native Language, +15 Survival



## Abilities

Non-magus characters receive 15 experience points every year. This is an average value, based on two seasons of exposure (4 experience points), one season of practice (4 experience points), and one "vocational" season of teaching, training, adventuring, or reading books (7 experience points). For example, a soldier might spend one season being taught Single Weapon by the drill sergeant with the rest of the turb, practicing the Hunt Ability in the woods, and gaining exposure in Awareness and Athletics from his sentry duty.

Poor characters have to replace the vocational season with another season of exposure. Wealthy characters gain an extra vocational season instead of one of the seasons of exposure.

## Updating Grogg

Applying yearly experience points to grogg need not be a chore. Those who are employed by the magi on a regular basis can be updated once a year, in the winter season. Each player should be responsible for updating an equal number of the regular grogg. The grogg captain determines which Ability has been taught that year (probably Single Weapon), and all grogg gain 7 experience points in that Ability (you can use the Teaching Quality of the drill sergeant if you prefer). For non-soldiers, determine other sources of experience points for this vocational season, and apply either 7 experience points or the Source Quality, if it is known. The

player then applies 4, 2, and 2 experience points to up to three different Abilities, representing the season of practice, and two seasons of exposure. Remember to update the age of the grogg, and the current year on the



character sheet, and determine aging if applicable.

If a grogg has taken story experience points, these should be applied immediately when they are received, and a note made on the character

sheet. During the winter update, the grogg loses a season of regular experience points for each award of story experience points. It is recommended that seasons are exchanged in the following order: exposure, vocational, practice, exposure. So a character taking two seasons of story experience points loses one exposure season and his vocational season.

Grogg who are used infrequently can be updated every three or five years, simply by applying an appropriate training package (see later). Remember to make a note of the last time the character was updated on her character sheet. Use the table given earlier under Aging to determine any effects of the passage of years.

## Training Packages

Calculating Ability scores can be one of the most time consuming parts of character creation. This section introduces a quick and easy way of building a character through training packages. These training packages work exactly the same way as the childhood packages, applying a number of experience points in certain Abilities. The process can be used for grogg, companions, and for the pre-apprenticeship years for magi.

A package adds a certain number of years to the character's age; some add three years, and others add either three or five years, depending on choice. Along with these years come experience points in various Abilities. Most characters will take the same package more than once, to give them a concentration in their core Abilities. Each

## Wealthy and Poor Characters

For characters with the Wealthy Virtue, use the Training Packages method as described, but reduce the character's post-childhood age by one quarter. So a character who takes 32 years' worth of training packages after childhood is only 29

years old, rather than 37.

For characters with the Poor Flaw, increase the post-childhood age by one half. That means a character with 13 years' worth of training is actually 25 years old rather than 18.

of the training packages assumes that the character spends his vocational seasons training the key Ability of that package, and his practice seasons contribute either to the key Ability or to a secondary Ability. Some training packages require that the character can take Academic, Arcane, or Martial Abilities (this is indicated after the package name), and therefore the character needs a Virtue that permits this. A starting character should not be built with more than 15 years in a single package; few individuals are this single-minded.

Remember that a starting character cannot have more than 75 experience points (a score of 5) in an Ability unless they are 30 or older (*ArM5*, page 31), or have an Affinity. If a particular build results in more than 75 experience points, then the excess should be redistributed among the character's other Abilities. If the character has an Affinity with an Ability, add up all the experience points he receives in that Ability from training packages, then add half as many experience points again.

To round the character off, you may need to add one or two more years of age, and distribute the resulting experience points to bring some Abilities up to the next score. If the character has any Supernatural Abilities, this method should be used to pay for those Abilities, but remember that the character starts with 5 free experience points in any Supernatural Ability.

## GROG BACKGROUNDS

Soldiers — particularly soldiers of fortune like grogs — are rarely born into a military family. Even grogs born to the covenant might have trained in other skills before taking up the sword. When building a grog with training packages, you are encouraged to give them a few years in labor, craft, or professional trades to represent what they did before they became a warrior. It is also a way of generating a simple but interesting back story: if a character spent the first eight years of his post-childhood life as a Farmer, and then five years as a Woodsman before taking five years as a Soldier, what circumstances lead him to abandon his farm at the age of 13 and take up residence in the woods? Did he become a bandit? Perhaps he was a forester?

## Career Training Packages

These packages represent trades or professions to which a character might belong. They provide the key skills of that trade.

### ADVOCATE (ACADEMIC OR NONE)

An advocate has studied law, either at a university or through private tutors or a cathedral school. If the char-

acter has the Jurist Virtue (*Art & Academe*, page 91), then he need not have a Virtue permitting Academic Abilities, since this Virtue permits taking the key Abilities as a layman. If he has attended university, then he should take at least five years of Student and have a Virtue which grants extra experience in Academic Abilities. Characters in England need Common Law rather than Civil and Canon Law.

**FIVE YEARS:** +40 Civil and Canon Law, +5 Leadership, +15 Artes Liberales, +15 Latin

**THREE YEARS:** +30 Civil and Canon Law, +5 Leadership, +5 Artes Liberales, +5 Latin

### ANIMAL TRAINER

The five-year package is suitable for a professional animal handler, such as a master of hounds or an ostler, and the Profession can vary accordingly. The three-year package is for those who have regular contact with animals but not as their principle job.

**FIVE YEARS:** +30 Animal Handling, +30 Profession: Animal Trainer, +15 Ride

**THREE YEARS:** +30 Animal Handling, +15 Ride

### APOTHECARY

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 (Area) Lore, +20 Chirurgy, +40 Profession: Apothecary

**THREE YEARS:** +5 (Area) Lore, +10 Chirurgy, +30 Profession: Apothecary

### ARCHER (MARTIAL)

**FIVE YEARS:** +20 Awareness, +40 Bows, +15 Concentration

**THREE YEARS:** +15 Awareness, +30 Bows



## CHURCHMAN (ACADEMIC)

Suitable for priests, friars, and nuns who have had some training within the church. Academic churchmen should also take the Theologian package. Parish priests probably have the Public Official or the Leader package, replacing some or all of the experience in Leadership with Profession: Preaching (see *Art & Academe*, page 13).

**FIVE YEARS:** +10 Artes Liberales, +30 Organization Lore: Church, +5 Latin, +30 Civil & Canon Law  
**THREE YEARS:** +5 Artes Liberales, +20 Organization Lore: Church, +20 Civil & Canon Law

## CONMAN

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Charm, +30 Guile, +30 Intrigue  
**THREE YEARS:** +15 Charm, +15 Guile, +15 Intrigue

## COURTIER

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Charm, +30 Etiquette, +15 Folk Ken, +15 Intrigue  
**THREE YEARS:** +5 Charm, +30 Etiquette, +5 Folk Ken, +5 Intrigue

## CRAFTSMAN

An apprenticeship in a craft typically takes eight years, at the end of which time the character should have a primary Craft Ability of 3 (see *City & Guild*, page 42). It is assumed that each craftsman learns more than a single Craft Ability during a typical apprenticeship, and picks up several related trades. Journeymen should take a Trader package to account for the other Abilities he will need, and Masters will need the Trainer package.

**FIVE YEARS:** +10 Bargain, +25 Craft: Type A, +15 Craft: Type B, +15 Organization Lore: Guild, +10 Folk Ken

**THREE YEARS:** +10 Bargain, +15 Craft: Type A, +10 Craft: Type B, +5 Organization Lore: Guild, +5 Folk Ken

## CULTIST (ARCANE)

A cultist has spent years worshipping an evil force in secret. If the character has the Ceremony Virtue, he can apply some of his experience points in Infernal Lore to that Ability instead. This package might also represent a pagan (in which case substitute Faerie Lore for Infernal Lore), or a devotee of a mystery cult (substitute Organization Lore: Cult and Magic Lore for Infernal Lore).

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Guile, +50 Infernal Lore, +10 Stealth  
**THREE YEARS:** +15 Guile, +30 Infernal Lore

## CUNNING MAN (ARCANE)

Knows the local legends and the ways of the fae.

**THREE YEARS:** +10 (Area) Lore, +5 Bargain, +30 Faerie Lore

## CUTTER

A cutter is trained in patching up the wounded and administering first aid; alternatively, he could be an empiricus, a traveling surgeon.

**THREE YEARS:** +40 Chirurgy, +5 Folk Ken

## FAILED APPRENTICE

The character must have the Failed Apprentice Virtue to take this pack-

age, which permits her to take Arcane and Academic Abilities. She probably has several years of Student to account for her Academic Abilities. It is assumed that she has no Art scores; either she has not been Opened to the Arts, or else her ability to work Hermetic magic has been destroyed.

**FIVE YEARS:** +5 Artes Liberales, +5 Code of Hermes, +5 Concentration, +5 Finesse, +10 Latin, +25 Magic Theory, +15 Organization Lore: Order of Hermes, +5 Penetration

**THREE YEARS:** +5 Concentration, +10 Latin, +20 Magic Theory, +5 Organization Lore: Order of Hermes, +5 Penetration

## FARMER

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Animal Handling, +15 Area Lore, +5 Folk Ken, +40 Profession: Farmer  
**THREE YEARS:** +10 Animal Handling, +5 Folk Ken, +30 Profession: Farmer

## FISHERMAN

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Area Lore, +30 Profession: Fisherman, +15 Survival, +15 Swim  
**THREE YEARS:** +5 Area Lore, +20 Profession: Fisherman, +5 Survival, +15 Swim

## FOOTPAD

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Athletics, +15 Guile, +15 Legerdemain, +30 Stealth  
**THREE YEARS:** +5 Athletics, +5 Guile, +15 Legerdemain, +20 Stealth

## HARLOT

Carouse is most appropriate for an alehouse strumpet or street-corner

working girl, whereas Etiquette is more suited to a courtesan or mistress. They typically gain an Organization Lore appropriate to their clientele. The Trader package (taking Profession: Prostitute) is also appropriate.

**FIVE YEARS:** +30 Charm, +30 Carouse or Etiquette, +15 Organization Lore  
**THREE YEARS:** +20 Charm, +20 Carouse or Etiquette, +5 Organization Lore

## HERBWIFE

**FIVE YEARS:** +10 (Area) Lore, +30 Chirurgy, +5 Folk Ken, +30 Profession: Apothecary  
**THREE YEARS:** +5 (Area) Lore, +30 Chirurgy, +10 Profession: Apothecary

## JAVELINER (MARTIAL)

This package can also be used for troops trained in the sling.

**FIVE YEARS:** +20 Athletics, +15 Awareness, +40 Thrown Weapon  
**THREE YEARS:** +10 Athletics, +5 Awareness, +30 Thrown Weapon

## LABORER

**FIVE YEARS:** +20 Athletics, +15 Brawl, +40 Profession: Laborer  
**THREE YEARS:** +10 Athletics, +5 Brawl, +30 Profession: Laborer

## LAY BROTHER

A lay brother works at a monastery, but has not taken Holy Orders. This package is also suitable for novices preparing for ordination. In the latter case, some years of Student are appropriate. The Profession Ability could be Scribe, Gardener, Brewer, or any other suitable trade.

**FIVE YEARS:** +50 Organization Lore: Church, +10 Folk Ken, +15 Profession (see earlier)

**THREE YEARS:** +30 Organization Lore: Church, +15 Profession (see earlier)

## MAGICIAN (ARCANE)

Suitable for characters with Supernatural Abilities, although the scores in these Abilities are purchased with extra years, as detailed earlier. The wizard can also buy Enriched Objects of Virtue by sacrificing 5 experience points per object (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124).

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Concentration, +30 Magic Lore, +30 Penetration  
**THREE YEARS:** +15 Concentration, +15 Magic Lore, +15 Penetration

## MINSTREL

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Carouse, +5 Charm, +5 Folk Ken, +50 Music  
**THREE YEARS:** +15 Carouse, +30 Music

## MYSTIC (ARCANE)

This hermit spends his days in contemplation of the Divine, but the same package could be used for a different Realm of Power.

**FIVE YEARS:** +20 Concentration, +5 Organization Lore: Church, +30 Dominion Lore, +20 Survival  
**THREE YEARS:** +10 Concentration, +20 Dominion Lore, +15 Survival

## NATURAL PHILOSOPHER (ACADEMIC)

A natural philosopher seeks to uncover the wonders of the natural world through his studies. The focus

of a natural philosopher could equally be Artes Liberales or Medicine. For rules on formulae, see *Art & Academe*, Chapter 5.

**FIVE YEARS:** +40 Philosophiae, 7 formulae  
**THREE YEARS:** +30 Philosophiae, 3 formulae

## PIKEMAN (MARTIAL)

**FIVE YEARS:** +20 Athletics, +15 Awareness, +40 Great Weapon  
**THREE YEARS:** +10 Athletics, +5 Awareness, +30 Great Weapon

## PHYSICIAN (ACADEMIC)

A physician is assumed to have attended school or university to study Medicine, and so such a character should take at least five years of Student and have a Virtue that grants extra experience in Academic Abilities. Many physicians never learn Chirurgy; for those who do, take the Cutter package.

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 Folk Ken, +40 Medicine, +20 Profession: Apothecary  
**THREE YEARS:** +5 Folk Ken, +30 Medicine, +10 Profession: Apothecary

## PUBLIC OFFICIAL

Suitable for reeves, mayors, and so forth, but also priests who take an active role in local politics, and members of a craft guild.

**FIVE YEARS:** +15 (Area) Lore, +15 Intrigue, +15 Leadership, +30 (Organization) Lore  
**THREE YEARS:** +10 (Area) Lore, +10 Intrigue, +10 Leadership, +15 (Organization) Lore



## SAILOR

FIVE YEARS: +15 Area Lore: Area A, +10 Area Lore: Area B, +30 Profession: Sailor, +5 Survival, +15 Swim  
THREE YEARS: +5 Area Lore, +20 Profession: Sailor, +5 Survival, +15 Swim

## SCOUT

FIVE YEARS: +15 Area Lore, +30 Awareness, +30 Stealth  
THREE YEARS: +15 Area Lore, +15 Awareness, +15 Stealth

## SCRIBE (ACADEMIC)

You may replace Latin with any Living or Dead Language that the scribe might be using.

FIVE YEARS: +20 Artes Liberales, +15 Latin, +40 Profession: Scribe  
THREE YEARS: +10 Artes Liberales, +10 Latin, +25 Profession: Scribe

## SENTRY (MARTIAL)

FIVE YEARS: +30 Awareness, +15 Concentration, +30 Single Weapon  
THREE YEARS: +20 Awareness, +5 Concentration, +20 Single Weapon

## SERVANT

FIVE YEARS: +15 Folk Ken, +20 (Organization) Lore, +40 Profession: Servant  
THREE YEARS: +10 Folk Ken, +5 (Organization) Lore, +30 Profession: Servant

## SOLDIER (MARTIAL)

FIVE YEARS: +15 Athletics, +20 Brawl, +40 Single Weapon

THREE YEARS: +5 Athletics, +10 Brawl, +30 Single Weapon

## STORYTELLER

FIVE YEARS: +15 Guile, +5 Carouse, +5 Folk Ken, +50 Profession: Storyteller  
THREE YEARS: +15 Guile, +30 Profession: Storyteller

## STUDENT (ACADEMIC)

This package assumes that the character has received academic teaching at a parish school, cathedral school, or monastic school, or from a private tutor. Characters who have attended a university receive additional experience points from their Social Status Virtues (see *Art & Academe*, pages 90–92). Characters attending a parish school can only take the three-year package, since these schools only teach Artes Liberales and Latin.

FIVE YEARS (CATHEDRAL SCHOOL): +15 Artes Liberales, +30 Latin, +15 Theology, +15 Civil and Canon Law OR Philosophiae

FIVE YEARS (MONASTIC SCHOOL): +15 Artes Liberales, +30 Latin, +15 Theology, +15 Medicine OR Philosophiae

FIVE YEARS (PRIVATE TUTOR OR UNIVERSITY): +15 Artes Liberales, +30 Latin, +30 any Academic Ability

THREE YEARS (PARISH SCHOOL): +15 Artes Liberales, +30 Latin

## TEACHER (ACADEMIC)

The Teacher package covers the academic life. The character receives experience points in whatever language he is speaking when he teaches, which is usually Latin.

FIVE YEARS: +15 Artes Liberales, +5 Folk Ken, +15 Language, +40 Teaching

## TINKER

FIVE YEARS: +15 Area Lore: Area A, +15 Area Lore: Area B, +15 Bargain, +15 Craft, +15 Survival  
THREE YEARS: +15 Area Lore, +15 Craft, +15 Survival

## THEOLOGIAN (ACADEMIC)

Not necessarily a priest, a theologian is assumed to have attended school or university to study Theology, and so should take at least five years of



Student or have a Virtue which grants extra experience in Academic Abilities.

FIVE YEARS: +15 Civil & Canon Law, +15 Organization Lore: Church, +5 Latin, +40 Theology

THREE YEARS: +5 Civil & Canon Law, +5 Organization Lore: Church, +5 Latin, +30 Theology

## TRADER

This package can be used for any individual who makes a living from a profession rather than a craft, by changing the Profession Ability to something more appropriate.

FIVE YEARS: +30 Bargain, +15 Folk Ken, +30 Profession: Merchant  
THREE YEARS: +20 Bargain, +5 Folk Ken, +20 Profession: Merchant

## TUMBLER

FIVE YEARS: +50 Athletics, +10 Carouse, +15 Legerdemain  
THREE YEARS: +30 Athletics, +5 Carouse, +10 Legerdemain

## WOODSMAN

FIVE YEARS: +15 Area Lore, +30 Hunt, +15 Stealth, +15 Survival

THREE YEARS: +5 Area Lore, +20 Hunt, +5 Stealth, +15 Survival

## Non-Career Training Packages

These packages represent suites of background skills acquired throughout a person's life rather than specifically learned for a trade. Characters usually take these packages only once or twice.

## ATHLETE

THREE YEARS: +30 Athletics, +5 Brawl, +5 Ride, +5 Swim

## BRAWLER

This package is also good for a character taught the basics of self-defense.

THREE YEARS: +15 Athletics, +30 Brawl

## CHARMER

THREE YEARS: +30 Charm, +5 Folk Ken, +5 Guile, +5 Intrigue

## COVENFOLK

Characters who have not had exposure to Latin must redistribute the experience points in that language to the other Abilities of this package.

THREE YEARS: +5 Area Lore, +20 Area Lore: Covenant, +15 Latin, +5 Organization Lore: Order of Hermes

## FORAGER

Someone used to relying on the land to supplement his diet would employ this package.

## Combat Statistics

It is often tedious to calculate combat statistics for a grog. The following table has pre-calculated combat statistics for common weapons, with the following assumptions: the character has a 5 in the appropriate Ability with a specialty in the weapon indicated; the character has a Dexterity and Quickness of 0, a Strength of 0 or equal to the minimum Strength required for the weapon (whichever is greater); and the character has zero encumbrance. It is a quick job to apply the appropriate Characteristics to the combat totals and subtract encumbrance from Initiative.

WEAPON	ABILITY	INITIATIVE	ATTACK	DEFENSE	DAMAGE	LOAD
Dagger	Brawl	0	+8	+6	+3	0
Bludgeon	Brawl	0	+8	+6	+2	1
Axe & Buckler Shield	Single	+1	+10	+6	+6	2
Short Spear & Buckler Shield	Single	+2	+8	+7	+5	2
Short Sword & Round Shield	Single	+1	+9	+9	+5	3
Long Sword & Heater Shield	Single	+2	+10	+10	+6	3
Mace & Heater Shield	Single	+1	+9	+9	+8	4
Great Sword	Great	+2	+11	+8	+10	2
Staff	Great	+2	+9	+9	+2	2
Warhammer	Great	0	+12	+6	+14	3
Pole Arm	Great	+3	+10	+7	+8	2
Sling & Buckler Shield	Thrown	-3	+7	+7	+4	1
Javelin & Round Shield	Thrown	0	+8	+8	+5	3
Short Bow	Bow	-1	+9	+6	+6	2



## The System in Action

Elaine wants to play a grog who is the younger son of a noble family that has fallen on hard times. Sir Edwin has nevertheless trained for knighthood. He has the Warrior Virtue, allowing Martial Abilities. Sir Edwin had a Social Childhood, and Elaine assumes that he has been a Courtier for three years, a Rider for six years, and a Soldier for eight years. Elaine ends up with a 22 year old character with the following experience points: +30 Animal Handling, +20 Athletics, +30 Brawl, +20 Charm, +30 Etiquette, +20 Folk Ken, +15 Guile, +5 Intrigue, +75 Native Language, +60 Ride, +70 Single Weapon. Since Sir Edwin will be principally using a lance, Elaine decides to change the score in Single Weapon to Great Weapon

instead. This leaves the character with the following Abilities: Animal Handling 3, Athletics 2(5), Brawl 3, Charm 2(5), Etiquette 3, Folk Ken 2(5), Great Weapon 4(20), Guile 2, Intrigue 1, Native Language 5, Ride 4(10).

Since Sir Edwin has taken the Poor Flaw, he is actually 31 years old. She applies 35 of the experience points from the Warrior Virtue to the Great Weapon Ability, taking it to 6 (since Sir Edwin is older than 30), and puts the remaining 15 experience points into Single Weapon 2. She could make this a score of 3 with the left-over experience points in some of the other Abilities (5 from Folk Ken and 10 from Ride, for example) if she wanted.

Further examples include:

**BANDIT:** Athletic childhood, Fisherman, Woodsman, Scout, Soldier  
**BEGGAR:** Exploring childhood, Tinker, Conman, Local  
**BURGLAR:** Mischievous childhood, Local, Footpad, Tumbler  
**DRILL SERGEANT:** Athletic childhood, Soldier, Trainer, Leader  
**MERCENARY:** Exploring childhood, Soldier, Leader, Brawler, Forager  
**TOWNSMAN:** Social childhood, Local, Trader, Public Official  
**SKIRMISHER:** Athletic childhood, Rider, Soldier, Javeliner  
**WANDERING FRIAR:** Exploring childhood, Lay Brother, Student, Churchman, Tinker  
**VILLAGER:** Athletic childhood, Laborer, Farmer, Local, Forager

**THREE YEARS:** +15 Area Lore, +15 Hunt, +15 Survival

### LEADER

This is suitable for anyone in a position of authority.

**THREE YEARS:** +10 Folk Ken, +5 Charm, +30 Leadership

### LOCAL

A villager or townsman who has good local knowledge of the area and its institutions can claim this package.

**THREE YEARS:** +15 Area Lore, +15 Folk Ken, +15 Organization Lore

### RIDER

**THREE YEARS:** +15 Animal Handling, +30 Ride

### TRAINER

This package is suitable for drill sergeants, master craftsmen, and so forth.

**THREE YEARS:** +5 Folk Ken, +5 Language, +5 Leadership, +30 Teaching

### WASTREL

Someone who has wasted years of his life in taverns gambling and drinking would acquire these skills.

**THREE YEARS:** +5 Brawl, +30 Carouse, +5 Folk Ken, +5 Guile

## Chapter Six

# New Virtues & Flaws

This chapter contains a collection of new Virtues and Flaws that are especially suitable for grogs. These new Virtues and Flaws are used in the construction of the grog templates in Chapter 7, and they open up more ways to distinguish the grogs in your saga from one another.

## New Virtues

These new Virtues are available to any character, but may be particularly useful for grogs.

### ALMOGAVAR

*Free, Social Status*

The character is a member of a band of mercenaries and raiders, living a life of adventure according to a code of honor and discipline. He shares a bond of solidarity with his fellows, and they can depend on each other's loyalty. He has Standard Armaments, and may take Martial Abilities. He may choose to be the Adalil at no additional cost, getting an increase in both authority and responsibility. He is supported by his unit, and may not take the Poor Flaw or Wealthy Virtue.

### ALMOGATEN

*Minor, Social Status*

The character is the leader of a

band of Almogavars, chosen by his fellows for his skill and experience. He commands a dozen men, and he is responsible for their welfare and prosperity. He has Standard Armaments and may take Martial Abilities.

Similar to the Mercenary Captain Virtue, you may choose Wealthy or Poor to represent the fortunes of the almogaten and his soldiers. If he is Poor, he leads only a half-dozen men and he has hit hard times lately. Some of his men only have Inexpensive Armaments, but his main concern is finding the next meal. If he is Wealthy, he leads a company of two dozen men, and can afford to upgrade their armaments. The band might own several horses, and perhaps some herd animals.

### CRAFT GUILD TRAINING

*Minor, General*

This character has received above-average training during his apprenticeship, from a craft master or professional guild. Like Warrior and Educated, this virtue gives a bonus of 50 experience points. These must be spent on any Craft or Profession Abilities, Bargain, or Organization Lore: Guild.

### DOMESTIC ANIMAL

*Minor, Social Status, animals only*

The character is an animal who is the property of a covenant or char-

acter, and is supplied with food and shelter. He is expected to serve his master in return for this provender, as a mount, beast of burden, hunter, or so forth.

### FEROCITY

*Minor, General, animals only*

Like companion and magus characters, this character has Confidence points. However, these Confidence points may only be used in situations where its natural animal ferocity is triggered, such as when defending its den or fighting a natural enemy. Describe a situation which activates the Confidence for its species, and take 3 Confidence points and a Confidence Score of 1 to use when those circumstances are met.

### FORGETTABLE FACE

*Minor, General*

Never will this character be the one noticed or picked out of a crowd. Moments after speaking with him, very few people can give an adequate description of him. He often gets away with things because people are not sure it was actually him. If other characters must make a roll to identify him, it is at -3. On the downside, this trait is incompatible with great beauty, charisma, or commanding presence. Virtues like Venus' Blessing or Inspirational are prohibited, although Curse of Venus could work.



## HERMETIC EXPERIENCE

*Minor, General*

The character has experience with the magi of the Order of Hermes. Maybe he is currently employed by a covenant, once served in the retinue of a magus, or has had other dealings or disputes with them. In any case, you have an additional 50 experience points to spend on Order of Hermes Lore, Magic Lore, or Latin. You cannot spend other experience points on Magic Lore or Latin unless the character has another Virtue or Flaw permitting this. This Virtue may be taken by any grog or covenfolk, or those who have had an exceptionally close relationship with the Order of Hermes.

## JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES

*Minor, General*

The character is capable of turning his hand to almost anything. He suffers no additional botch dice for attempting an Ability roll for an Ability that he has no score in (ArM5, page 62). If it is an asterisked Ability, then he can attempt a roll as if he had a score of zero with three extra botch dice, *if and only if*

## FREE, SOCIAL STATUS

Almogavar

## MINOR, SOCIAL STATUS

Almogaten  
Domestic Animal  
Master of Kennels  
Turb Trained

## MINOR, SUPERNATURAL

Mythic Farrier

## Summary of New Virtues

## MINOR, GENERAL

Craft Guild Training  
Ferocity  
Forgettable Face  
Hermetic Experience  
Jack-of-All-Trades  
Master of (Form) Creatures  
Mild Aging  
Minor Enchantments  
Pack Leader / Natural Leader

he is normally able to take Abilities of that type. Characters without this Virtue cannot even attempt rolls on an asterisked Ability without at least one experience point in it (ArM5, page 62). For example, he must have a Virtue permitting him to take Arcane Abilities to attempt an unskilled Magic Lore roll. Some Abilities are excepted from this Virtue, such as those that are not rolled (such as Parma Magica or Penetration), and all Supernatural Abilities (which require a specific Virtue for each Ability, rather than the type).

## MASTER OF (FORM) CREATURES

*Minor, General*

The character is able to tame animals and other unintelligent beings that have a Magic Might aligned with a particular Form. During character creation, the character may take Magic Lore, and this Virtue may be taken multiple times, once for each Form. (This Virtue was originally presented in *Realms of Power: Magic*.)



## MASTER OF KENNELS

(Minor, Social Status)

The character manages the kennels for a noble patron, and is responsible for the training, breeding, and health of the animals. He employs additional staff appropriate to the size of the kennels. He is a commoner, yet treated with considerable respect by the household. If he has the privilege of riding with the hunt, then he may well be a skilled Bowman. He is expected to organize the houndsmen, that is the dog handlers, as well as instructing servants or locals to perform that role. The Master of Kennels may learn Martial Abilities, and has 50 additional experience points at character generation to spend on the Abilities Animal Handling, Etiquette, Hunt, Latin, an appropriate Profession Ability (such as Feuterer or Farrier), and Ride. (Paraphrased from *Lords of Men*.)

## MILD AGING

*Minor, General*

The character's aging rolls benefit from a +1 bonus to the Living Conditions Modifier, in addition to whatever his social standing normally offers him (*ArM5*, page 170). Furthermore, he receives a +3 bonus to rolls to survive an aging crisis. He may be dedicated to living a healthy life, or else have been blessed by some supernatural being.

## MINOR ENCHANTMENTS

*Minor, Supernatural*

The character has one or more items in his possession that have magical powers. These should be designed as Hermetic enchantments, and the total levels of powers in all the items, after adjustment for uses per day and so forth, must be 25 or less. The character may have this Vir-

tue more than once: add the total levels together, but no single power can be greater than 30th level. If he loses the item or it is destroyed, then it is gone for good.

## MYTHIC FARRIER

*Minor, Supernatural*

The character may use the Touched by (Realm) Virtue (*City & Guild*, page 71), to a limited extent. He may craft horseshoes with magical effects, using Hermetic guidelines for a single Hermetic Form, chosen at character creation. Animal is a popular choice. The powers of the horseshoes can only affect the horse itself, or its immediate environment. A Terram effect, for instance, to make the ground which the horse touches stable is permissible, but an Auram power to change the weather isn't. To calculate the Craft Total, add the controlling characteristic to the Craft: Farrier Ability. As this field of work requires wit as well as deftness of hand, either Intelligence or Dexterity may be used; this is a permanent choice which must be made at character creation. This ability is most likely aligned with the Magical or Faerie Realm, but an Infernal farrier is a possibility. You may take this Virtue twice, but no more. Taking the Virtue a second time adds either a second Form to use while enchanting, or allows the character to use it with another Ability, but not both. For variations on this Virtue, simply rename it Mythic (Professional), and replace Craft: Farrier with another Craft Ability. Retain the limit of a single Ability and a single Hermetic Form.

## PACK LEADER / NATURAL LEADER

*Minor, General*

The character is a dominant individual with a demeanor that encourag-

es others to do what she says. Her self-assured manner gives her a +3 bonus in social situations in which she takes the lead; people are more likely to follow her orders or do as she suggests. If she is Gifted, this bonus can temporarily help to overcome the social penalty of The Gift, due to the strength of her domineering personality. This Virtue is known as Pack Leader for animal grogs, or Natural Leader for humans.

## TURB TRAINED

(Minor, Social Status)

This character has grown up at the covenant, been trained to fight in the turb, and picked up a few things from the magi's trusted servants. At character creation, he is allowed to learn Martial Abilities. He may also learn whichever single dead language the magi speak in addition to his local tongue. His fortunes are tied to the turb, and he is thus prohibited from being Wealthy or Poor.

# New Flaws

Most of these Flaws are Minor Flaws suitable for grog characters.

## BOUND TO (ROLE) ROLE

*Minor, Supernatural*

This character is physically bonded to some form of device, whether through a mystic event, long years of exposure and warping, or the ministrations of an experimental magus. The degree of the bonding is for the troupe to define, but the bonding may be physical, such as a locksmith whose fingers are picks, files, and keys, or mystical, such as a watchman who is confined to his watch tower as though contained by an unbreakable ward.



The manner of this bonding determines the kind of life that the character may live. A watchman unable to leave his tower may make it his home, while a coachman who has become part of his coach can not survive for long once separated from it.

If separated from the bonded device or place in any way, the character must make deprivation checks (ArM5, page 180) as though deprived of food (i.e., a check every three days). The effects of this are canceled if the character is brought into contact with the device or returned to his bound place, at which point they rebond.

This Flaw also includes the effects of the Unaging Virtue, but the character's apparent age advances in line with their physical age. Role-Bound characters retain the need to sleep and breathe and those not physically bonded to a device, such as those bound to a place, retain their other physical needs.

This Flaw may originate from any of the Supernatural Realms: a magical origin might represent the expression of an Essential Trait, a faerie origin could show that the character occupies an archetypal role, ready to play his part in the wider story, while divine and infernal origins may represent eternal punishment on Earth.

This Flaw may only be taken by grogs and is suitable for the *Warping to a Pattern* Minor Site Hook presented in *Covenants*, page 11.

## Summary of New Flaws

### MAJOR, PERSONALITY

Compulsive Lying

### MAJOR, STORY

A Deal with the Devil  
Pagan

### MAJOR, GENERAL

The Falling Evil

### MINOR, SOCIAL STATUS

Companion Animal

### MINOR, PERSONALITY

Compulsive Lying  
Foreign Upbringing  
Gullible  
Imagined Folk Tradition  
Vulnerability  
Magical Fascination  
Pack Mentality  
Weak Personality

### MINOR, SUPERNATURAL

Bound to (Role) Role  
Broken Vessel  
Curse of Slander  
Cursed Guile

Manifest Sin  
Necessary (Realm) Aura  
for (Ability)  
(Realm) Stigmatic  
Susceptible to Warping  
Viaticarus  
Warped by Magic

### MINOR, GENERAL

Careless with (Ability)  
Craving for Travel  
Curse of Slander  
Devoted Parent / Child  
Fish Out of Water (Terrain)  
Flashbacks  
Hallucinations  
Independent Craftsman  
Jinxed  
Lingering Injury  
Master of None  
Night Terrors  
Poor Living Conditions  
Primitive Equipment  
Raised in the Gutter  
Restricted Learning  
Rolling Stone  
Savantism  
Sleep Disorder  
Stuck in His Ways  
Uncertain Faith  
Uncontrollable Strength  
Uninspirational  
Unlucky  
Unspecialized  
Worthless Abilities

### BROKEN VESSEL

#### *Minor, Supernatural*

The character is constantly aware that her supernatural powers may only be temporary. Failures using those abilities represent the ebbing away of the power that sustains them. When a zero is rolled on any Stress Roll (not Simple Roll) against any of her Supernatural Abilities, Powers, or in casting spells, she loses 5 experi-

ence points from that Ability or an Art involved in the Power or Spell. If the roll then botches, the character automatically loses enough experience points to reduce her score in the affected Art or Ability by one full level (or 5 experience points, whichever is greater).

Characters may only take this Flaw if they have at least one Supernatural Ability or Art normally improved through experience points.

### CARELESS WITH (ABILITY)

#### *Minor, General*

The character is particularly reckless when it comes to a particular Ability, chosen when this Virtue is taken. This Ability should be one that is important to the character, or the troupe may veto the choice of this Flaw. When she fails, she does so dramatically. Whenever she rolls a zero when using the Ability, that zero is

treated as a botch. She may need to roll extra botch dice depending on the circumstances, but she always suffer the effects of at least a single botch. This Flaw may be taken more than once; each time, it applies to a different Ability.

### COMPANION ANIMAL

*Minor, Social Status, animals only*

The character is the Animal Companion of another character (either a player character or a storyguide character) and therefore has little control over his own life. He is largely dependent on his master for food and shelter, and has an additional Personality Trait of "Loyal to Master" which represents this bond. Among people who know his master, the character is treated better than he would be, perhaps as that person's pet or bodyguard. Others most likely treat him as a brute or a dumb beast.

### COMPULSIVE LYING

*Minor or Major, Personality*

Telling the truth is really hard for this character. This does not apply in situations where the answer is evident and any lie would be transparent; he does not claim that the sky is green under normal conditions. However, when he cannot be immediately caught out, he finds it hard to avoid embellishing stories, or simply making them up. Perhaps he wants to make himself look good, perhaps he wants to downplay his own part in a conflict, or perhaps he just loves the power of confusing people. As a Minor Flaw, this is just a tendency, and the character can make himself tell the truth if it really matters. If taken as a Major Flaw, the character cannot resist embellishing a story, no matter what the circumstances. At best, he might manage to keep the alterations minor.

### CRAVING FOR TRAVEL

*Minor, General*

The character suffers from feelings of loneliness, boredom, and depression if he does not expose himself to new experiences. He can stave off the boredom for a while, but if he remain in one place for more than a season, he suffers a -1 penalty to all rolls and totals until he experiences a change in scene. This penalty rises to -3 after a year of boredom. This character is probably the first to volunteer for a mission beyond the covenant gates, and may even spend part of each year in a different location such as the nearby wood. This Flaw might seem to make the character unsuitable for life at a covenant, so you should decide what it is at the covenant that means he keeps coming back. Perhaps it is the love of his life, the camaraderie, or perhaps just the feeling that he fits in here.

### CURSE OF SLANDER

*Minor, General or Supernatural*

Wherever he stays, unpleasant rumors and ill-favored stories about this character begin to spread within a short time. This can be due to bad luck, or it could be something supernatural, like a curse. The slander is centered on one specific section of mundane society — the nobility, the church, guilds, peasants — and it seriously hampers his working life. After staying one season in an area, he gains a bad Reputation at level 1, usually a Local Reputation. He gains one point toward raising the Reputation in each further season, or more if he is involved in disturbing or strange events. Truly remarkable deeds can halt the increase for one season, but they will be forgotten come next season. At a covenant, people are used to strange things and deviant behavior. The Reputation is gained

and increases in intervals of years rather than seasons, giving the poor victim more time before he becomes completely shunned. If the character leaves an area, the Reputation stops increasing, and may even fall, at the troupe's discretion.

### CURSED GUILLE

*Minor, Supernatural*

This is the Flaw for "the boy who cried wolf," and probably results from Infernal influence. The character has three extra botch dice when using Guile. More importantly, the character is rarely believed, even when he is being honest. He must make a Communication + Guile roll against an Ease Factor of 9 in order to be believed when he tells the truth at important moments. For example, if the character is returning from a scouting mission, and you fail his Guile roll when he reports back, the maga may assume that he has been deficient in his duties; perhaps she thinks that he never went scouting at all, but instead went to the nearest town to entertain himself. This character may prefer the company of animals to that of people, as they do not respond to subterfuge.

### A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

*Major, Story*

The character has sold his soul to the devil and now find himself destined to infernal damnation. This Flaw includes the effects of Plagued By Supernatural Entity as Hell's agents goad and cajole the character, reminding him of the bargain he made and tempting him with offers of possible release in return for just one more small service. The character is called upon to undertake an inherently sinful action, but the reward is always snatched away on some technicality of the agreement or simply because



of the duplicitous nature of the infernal. Note that the character can, in fact, repent and get out of the deal by God's grace, but the repentance must be genuine, and the forces of Hell will try to stop it, thus generating stories that way.

### DEVOTED PARENT/CHILD

#### *Minor, General*

The character is extremely attached to a parent or child. Where he goes, she goes also. Separation of more than a day will cause anxiety, and will give a -1 penalty to all rolls due to stress.

### THE FALLING EVIL

#### *Major, General*

The character occasionally suffers convulsions and blackouts. Convulsions occur randomly and infrequently; for any given event, the storyguide should secretly roll a stress die, and if the result is 9 or more then a convulsion will occur at some point during that event, as chosen by the storyguide. This spasm causes random movements and hallucinations, leaving the character temporarily Incapacitated. She collapses to the ground and twitches, and you can make a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 9 every round; success means that the convulsion ends, although the character is reduced to the Dazed Fatigue level following a fit. The Falling Evil is usually caused by possession by demons (*Art & Academe*, page 48), but that form of the illness is usually temporary in nature. The character does not seem to have a disease, and cannot naturally recover from this affliction. It may be that it stems from a different source. In Ancient Greece and Rome, it was called the "divine illness," as it was believed that the gods spoke to those who had fits.

### FLASHBACKS

#### *Minor, General*

When engaged in combat, or a similar violent and tense situation, the stress might trigger a flashback to the horrors of past battles, which left this character mentally scarred. The hallucinations seem so real that it is hard to avoid reacting to them. When an event appropriate for the Flashbacks occurs, roll a stress die against an Ease Factor of 9. On a failure, the character panics and revert to his past nightmares. At the storyguide's discretion,

modifiers from -1 to -5 could apply, for things like full-scale battle, fires, or stampeding animals. In addition, add or subtract any relevant Personality Traits, depending on whether they might lessen or worsen the effects of this Flaw.

Bear in mind that positive traits like loyal, reliable, law-abiding, or calm should be helpful in avoiding this affliction. Similarly, negative traits like selfish, angry, or corrupt subtract from the roll, making him more likely to succumb. Often, his actions hurt, embarrass, or offend comrades, employ-



ers, or other important people, and might have social repercussions. On a botch, he'll get into real trouble — it could result in someone being seriously hurt or killed, in valuables being broken or in him failing in his duty at a critical time.

For magi, this Flaw should not involve flashbacks to Twilight episodes, spell botches or laboratory disasters. Since most of these situations won't get worse by applying a penalty to the rest of the scene, it won't be enough of a Flaw. But magi can be affected by combat, house fires, or cave-ins just as much as other character types.

## FISH OUT OF WATER (TERRAIN)

### *Minor, General*

This character has an affinity with one type of terrain, whether this is at sea, in the woods, the rolling hills, or in the urban landscape of towns and cities, and feels uncomfortable and awkward when away from where he wants to be. The character suffers a -1 penalty to all stress rolls taken outside of their favored terrain and also rolls one more botch dice than normal in those situations.

Appropriate areas may be Cities & Towns, Villages, Rivers, The Sea, Mountains, Woodland, Desert, etc.

This Flaw may only be taken once, because taking it more than once makes it less serious, rather than more.

## FOREIGN UPBRINGING

### *Minor, Personality*

This Flaw is somewhat similar to Covenant Upbringing, but means that the character is a foreigner and comes from a remote or isolated corner of Mythic Europe. He appears and sound nothing like the locals, has odd customs, habits, and religion (although he need not be pagan), and is quite confused by local society. However,

he is not an Outsider, and has been accepted — for the most part. His Native Language is one foreign to the saga, and he needs to learn another language in order to communicate with the rest of the turb. The maximum scores for locality-dependent Abilities like Language, Area Lore, or Organization Lore, as well as some social Abilities, are half (round up) that which his age normally allows.

## GULLIBLE

### *Minor, Personality*

There is one born every minute — and it is this character! He is an easy victim of ruses, stories and teasing lies. People lying to him get a bonus to their Guile rolls of +1 to +3. Depending on how bright or sharp-witted he is, he might not fall for obvious lies, denials of things that are evident or common knowledge. However, he most likely falls for lies that are even remotely plausible, and if he has no idea whether or not something is true, he is almost certain to believe it. This could, for instance, be whether or not there are mischievous faeries under the bridge. If you really want the character to not fall for something, make an Intelligence + Folk Ken Stress roll against an Ease Factor equal to the Communication + Guile roll of the person telling the tall tale. Recommended modifiers to the Ease Factor are +0 for obvious lies (ones that someone without the Flaw would certainly not believe), +6 for outlandish tales and +9 for things which could be true, or lies told by someone in authority, or who has expert knowledge of the subject at hand.

## HALLUCINATIONS

### *Minor, General*

The character is afflicted by vivid hallucinations which seem to be true

visions, but rather than coming from a higher power, they are figments of her imagination and fantasy. She finds these visions particularly troublesome, and seeks meaning in them where there is none to be had. Coincidence might mean that some part of her hallucinations comes to pass, which only furthers her belief that there is meaning within them. If the character also has the Visions Flaw, then some of her visions are true, but most of them are meaningless jumbles of nonsense generated from within her mind.

## IMAGINED FOLK TRADITION VULNERABILITY

### *Minor, Personality*

Although this flaw closely resembles a Delusion, Imagined Folk Tradition Vulnerability has other game mechanical effects as well. This character utterly and sincerely believes that he has been touched by the fay, and that they have granted him his special skills — whether or not any such exist. So, naturally, he is convinced that he is as vulnerable to traditional wards and folk magic as the fey. Whenever there is talk about such folk remedies, or people around him try to perform them, he does his best to dissuade them. If he can get away with it, he removes or sabotage such wards; for instance, he sneaks around at night and removes any warding marks or materials at doorways. Finally, he exhibits strange behavior around active wards or ritualistic actions. This could be refusing to shake hands with a person right after they have drawn the sign of the cross, or flinching whenever salt is flung over someone's shoulder. On the plus side, this Flaw allows the character to purchase a score of 1 (but no more) in Faerie Lore at character creation. This is because he needs a rudimentary knowledge of the fay and the wards against them in order to be able to act



this way. Without such knowledge, his behavior is based on what he *thinks* such wards might be.

## INDEPENDENT CRAFTSMAN

*Minor, General*

This character has his own way of working and doesn't like other people getting in his way. This character always treats his Leadership and Craft or Profession Abilities as three levels lower when working with others on a given task. For Craftsmen, this means that whether he is working as an assistant or working with assistants his Craft Ability has a penalty of -3. This affects the number of assistants he can employ in the workshop and the benefit that he provides when working as an assistant.

## JINXED

*Minor, General*

The character is a magnet for any bad luck. He is not personally the cause of the bad luck, and so need not roll any extra botch dice or suffer any penalty to die rolls. However, whenever chance determines who will be affected by misfortune, the odds are biased against him to be the one affected. For example, if it has been determined that a rope used for climbing will break, it is more likely to do so when the jinxed character makes the climb. If determining when the bandits will attack the camp at night, it is more likely to happen right at the moment when the character is relieving himself. If the storyguide is rolling dice to determine the target of a random event, a jinxed character should be affected half of the time, and his comrades between them the other half. His bad luck does not tend to spill over onto others; in fact, other characters may prefer to keep him around to deflect any bad luck from themselves.

## LINGERING INJURY

*Minor, General*

The character suffers from an old injury that won't heal properly, resulting in a -1 penalty to all rolls involving physical activity. If he botches a physical action, he aggravates the injury and the penalty becomes -3 (recovery from aggravation is as for a Light Wound). This condition worsens with age, so multiply whatever the penalty is by 1 + (Decrepitude Score).

## MAGICAL FASCINATION

*Minor, Personality*

This character is intensely interested in supernatural and magical phenomena, to the exclusion of all other motivations. It is as if his life is hollow and drab without these experiences. He will involve himself in any supernatural investigation, social encounter, or confrontation. He must try and find out as much as he can about it, and he is curious and has busy hands, definitely trying to take souvenirs. To represent the scraps of knowledge he has, he is allowed to have a score of 1 (but no more) in either Magic or Faerie Lore at character creation. But most of the time, he is filling in the blanks himself and making it up as he goes along, enthusiastically.

## MANIFEST SIN

*Minor, Supernatural*

A sin or crime this character has committed in the past stains his spirit and is manifest to those who can perceive things hidden to mortal senses. Characters with Second Sight, Sense Holiness & Unholiness, or similar Supernatural Powers or Abilities perceive the sin through one or more senses. See ArM5, page 67, for these Abilities.

The manifestation of the sin or crime should be chosen by you and the storyguide together, and should always be appropriate to the sin or crime in question. For instance, the perpetrator of a violent crime may appear to have blood on his hands, or be accompanied by the sobbing of his victim, while lustful sins may be seen to play across the sinner's leering face.

In addition, the character suffer a -1 penalty to all social interaction rolls or totals as the intangible aura of their past sins affects those with whom they interact.

While his spirit is tainted and the manifestation will always be with him, he may spend a Faith Point, including Faith Points gained from taking Holy Communion and from relics, to banish the manifestation for Sun duration. While banished, the sin cannot be perceived and the social penalty is also suspended.

This Flaw originates from either the Divine or the Infernal Realm, as a mark of punishment, penitence, or temptation.

## MASTER OF NONE

*Minor, General*

Either by choice or circumstance, this character never seems to be able to stick at a task or job for longer than a season, usually following the work as it moves through the year. As a result, this character can't apply any experience points earned to an Ability or Art that they have already applied experience points to this year. Where they can't be applied to a different Ability or Art, the experience points are lost.

Experience points gained through other virtues, such as Secondary Insight, are unaffected and may be applied normally.

## NECESSARY (REALM) AURA FOR (ABILITY)

### *Minor, Supernatural*

Due to some connection with a given supernatural realm, the absence of a given supernatural aura has a pronounced effect upon the character's ability to focus on certain tasks. The character has a -3 penalty to any totals he generates with a particular Ability when not in the right aura. A character may take this Flaw once for any particular Ability. The chosen Ability should be one which the character is likely to use frequently, such as in service to the covenant or to support his day-to-day activities.

When applied to Craft or Profession Abilities, this Flaw also reduces the character's capability to support himself by reducing the number of Labor Points he accumulates each season when not working within the appropriate aura.

Troupes should think carefully about how a character would be limited by taking Magic (which covers most covenants) or Dominion (which covers most other human settlements) aura. If the character would not be limited, the Flaw should not be allowed.

## NIGHT TERRORS

### *Minor, General*

This character is plagued far too often by horrible nightmares and fits of screaming in his sleep. The character must make a Stress Roll against an Ease Factor of 9 in order to avoid suffering terrors. The storyguide may call for modifiers of -1 to -3 if he has faced eerie or terrifying events recently, like meeting a demon or battling the undead.

Suffering from terrors means that the character wakes up often and in

a panic during the night. Situations might occur where he overreacts or reacts in unfortunate ways, if forced awake during such nights. The morning leaves him with a Long Term Fatigue Level lost. These Long Term Fatigue Levels are cumulative, so several bad nights leave him in bad shape. Subtract the character's Fatigue penalty from the Ease Factor to avoid night terrors, to represent how a truly exhausted victim will at some point sleep through the nightmares due to sheer exhaustion. If a night of terrors renders the character Unconscious, he slips into deep, dreamless sleep. He sleeps for an entire day and night, and wakes up at Winded, ending the string of Night Terrors. A character with this Flaw may not also take the Sleep Disorder Flaw.

This Flaw normally makes seasonal Laboratory work impossible, and so is not suitable for magi.

## PACK MENTALITY

### *Minor, Personality*

The character is a follower, not a leader. He rarely takes the initiative, but is usually happy to follow the direction of a forthright and decisive person. If he finds a leader, he tends to stick with him.

## PAGAN

### *Major, Story*

Your character is a devout pagan, which disturbs powerful people in Mythic Europe. He avoids churchmen, and cannot pass as a Christian because he believes to do so will invite retribution from his gods. He may have either Magic Lore or Faerie Lore, depending on precisely who he worships. This is not a Flaw in those parts of the Novgorod Tribunal where pagans are still common. Note that you do not need this Flaw





to have a pagan character; only if he refuses to deny his pagan nature does this generate stories.

Grog may not take Major Story Flaws. This Virtue is repeated here to aid the design of companions. It is not compulsory for time-lost characters (see Chapter 7, Grog Templates), but suits many. A fuller description appears in *Houses of Hermes: True Lineages*, page 109.

## POOR LIVING CONDITIONS

*Minor, General*

Either because of this character's own poor living conditions, or those of people he is in frequent contact with, he is more susceptible to the rigors of daily life. The character has an additional -1 Living Conditions Modifier. This is cumulative with the character's base Living Conditions Modifier, as per *ArM5*, page 170.

## PRIMITIVE EQUIPMENT

*Minor, General*

The character is capable of using only the simplest tools and equipment. Perhaps her training was incomplete, or she has been affected by some sort of curse, or maybe she originates from a less technologically-capable society and refuses to adapt. She is restricted to Inexpensive weapons and armor only, regardless of what is made available to her. If forced by order or necessity to use other equipment, her Burden is one point higher when she uses anything other than Inexpensive weapons, and one point higher when she uses anything other than Inexpensive armor. She suffers a -1 penalty to Attack and Defense if using inappropriate weapons, and a -1 penalty to Initiative and Protection if using inappropriate armor. If the character works as a laborer or craftsman, she uses simple tools

and primitive procedures. Unless working with simple tasks, the base Craft Value (see *City & Guild*, page 67) is raised by 1-3 at the storyguide's discretion, based on complexity. Further, her workshop may not be improved with regards to Innovation (*City & Guild*, page 65). Other Profession Abilities dependent on tools and equipment suffer a similar penalty for complex tasks. You should only take this Flaw if the character belongs to a profession that relies heavily on equipment, such as a smith, mason, or soldier.

## RAISED IN THE GUTTER

*Minor, General*

This character was raised on the margins of society. She is able to use her social abilities normally with those of the lower and middle classes, but doesn't know how to act among her "betters." When using Charm or Guile, it is obvious that she's from the bad part of town, and this makes convincing people to do what she wants harder (-3 on rolls). She can use Etiquette normally if she's holding her social place (which means staying silent and doing exactly what she's told) but suffers a -3 penalty if she tries to go beyond this.

## (REALM) STIGMATIC

*Minor, Supernatural*

The character occasionally manifests physical phenomena in the presence of supernatural powers. Pick one of the four Realms of Power; whenever he enters an aura of strength 4 or more aligned to that realm, or is affected by a power greater than fourth magnitude (20th level) from that realm, he suffers from the stigmata. Every individual suffers from stigmata differently, but the most common variants are dark marks appearing on the skin, blood

issuing from orifices, spontaneous eruption of wounds, minor twisting of the limbs, or the acquisition of minor animal features. Whenever they manifest, the character loses a Long-Term Fatigue level that he cannot recover while he remains under the influence of that Realm. When he recovers the Fatigue level, the stigmata fades. If he ever takes a Warping point from exposure to his sensitive Realm, his stigmata erupt so violently that he takes a Light Wound as well as Fatigue, and the stigmata remain until he recovers from this wound.

## RESTRICTED LEARNING

*Minor, General*

The character is incapable of learning new things without assistance. Pick five Abilities at character creation; you can only apply experience points to these Abilities. The character cannot learn any new Abilities on her own; she must receive experience points from Teaching or Training to develop a new Ability or to improve one that is not part of the initial five. Furthermore, she cannot use an Ability with no score, even if it can normally be used untrained. Any Supernatural Abilities from Virtues she possesses are added to the list of Abilities to which she can apply experience points. All mundane animals are required to take this Flaw.

## ROLLING STONE

*Minor, General*

The rolling stone gathers no moss, and neither does this character. She has moved from village to village so often that she finds it difficult to create attachments in the community. All social rolls have a -1 penalty within the community.

## SAVANTISM

*Minor, General*

The character's family was cursed by faeries; his mother tripped over a hare while pregnant with him; or he was born on horseback. He is physically capable, but simple-minded and slow-witted. He has half the standard experience points at character generation, all future Advancement Totals are halved, and he may not begin with an Ability above 3. However, with one favored Ability, he is exceptionally gifted. This Ability can improve normally, is limited to a score of 6 as a starting character, and has +3 to all rolls related to its specialization rather than just +1. The Ability must be something he could reasonably have access to learn; there would need to be an extraordinary background story for a savant who is a master of the longsword!

Most savants will be like the tragic fool whose precocious skill with horses has gone forever unnoticed, but some may have more esoteric talents. If the favored Ability requires a Virtue, such as Academic or Martial Abilities, then he must have that Virtue as normal; a mathematical savant would need Educated to learn Artes Liberales. Magi may well desire the company of certain specialists: a Jerbiton maga would appreciate an artistic savant, for example. Similarly, a Failed Apprentice may have been left stricken with savantism when his Gift abandoned him, but he retained remarkable clarity on the Code of Hermes, becoming a valued clerk to a Quaesitor.

## SLEEP DISORDER

*Minor, General*

More often than not, this character is unable to sleep soundly during the night. The resulting deprivation means that he is likely to nod off in periods of quiet and boredom. When

the character is alone, comfortable, bored, or otherwise at risk of falling asleep, he needs to make a suitable Personality roll to avoid nodding off. Loyal, Reliable, and Lazy (for a penalty in the last case) are all appropriate. The character's current Fatigue penalty applies to the roll.

Regardless of whether he manages to stay awake, the following night you must make a stress roll (no botch) against an Ease Factor of 6 to see if the character sleeps well. Every night he has slept poorly, he loses a Long Term Fatigue Level. Continue this until he sleeps soundly for a whole night. Once he has lost 3 Long Term Fatigue Levels, he automatically sleeps through the night, due to sheer exhaustion. This Flaw is not compatible with the Night Terrors Flaw.

## STUCK IN HIS WAYS

*Minor, General*

Having come from a covenant, this character knows how things must be done to best serve the needs of covenant folk and magi alike. Only, his new home does things differently. And they're wrong. When making Stress Rolls against his Profession Abilities or any Ability concerning his new covenant, such as Leadership or Folk Ken, this character uses the lower of that Ability score and his current Covenant Lore Ability for his current covenant. Note that bonuses from Puissance or other Virtues still apply to the roll.

This Flaw can also be applied to organizations other than covenants, such as abbeys, universities, guilds, or churches.

## SUSCEPTIBLE TO WARPING

*Minor, Supernatural*

Your character's constant exposure to magic at the side of his magus has

made him more susceptible to supernatural Warping than he might otherwise be.

In any year in which the character gains a Warping Point from any Realm or any source (including Longevity Rituals, living within an aura, and powerful supernatural effects), the character gains one additional Warping Point associated with that same Realm. This means that if he gains a single Warping Point from each Realm in a year, he gains four additional Warping Points, one from each Realm, at the end of that year.

These additional points do not contribute to Wizard's Twilight or to other events caused by the acquisition of Warping Points as they accrete slowly over the course of the year.

## UNCERTAIN FAITH

*Minor, General*

Whether through a flaw in the character's understanding of doctrine, a moral turmoil, the disheartening absolution of repeated sins, or exposure to conflicting philosophies, he finds it hard to fully express devotion to his faith. Some element of doubt stands between him and the Divine, and all rolls for holy influence, tempering an aura, invoking God's aid, or invoking a saint or *baraka* (see *Realms of Power: The Divine*) suffer a -3 penalty.

The character also has an "Uncertain Faith" Personality Trait at +1 that describes this conflict or doubt, which always provides demons with an opportunity to sow further doubt through their Obsession power (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 31).

Supernatural Abilities originating from the Divine, including Methods and Powers, are not penalized. This Flaw is not compatible with the True Faith Virtue.



## UNCONTROLLABLE STRENGTH

*Minor, General*

This character doesn't know his own strength, and at times he has trouble controlling it. This Flaw may not be taken if the character's Strength is below 0. Whenever he handles delicate or fragile objects, whenever care must be taken to knock somebody out gently, and so on, he risks overdoing it, severely. The character must make a stress roll against an Ease Factor of 6 to avoid using too much power and causing damage of some kind. In addition to this, any Strength Stress Roll uses one extra botch die.

## UNINSPIRATIONAL

*Minor, General*

This character is bland, boring, and simple, with almost no chance of ever getting noticed or enticing anyone. His Presence and Communication may not be greater than 0. Any use of Abilities like Leadership, Charm, Intrigue, Etiquette or similar — as well as Personality Rolls — to stir or impress people suffers a -3 penalty.

## UNLUCKY

*Minor, General*

The character is exceptionally unlucky, and is frequently dealt a bad hand by the forces of chance. He gets a -1 to -3 penalty (at storyguide's discretion) on rolls in situations based on luck rather than skill or talent, depending on how much luck is involved. It would be wise for him not to take part in games of chance.

## UNSPECIALIZED

*Minor, General*

The character does not have any specialties for any of her Abilities.

## VIATICARUS

*Minor, Supernatural*

At some point in the character's past, he was at death's door, and as a result a priest performed the sacrament of Extreme Unction. The purpose of this sacrament was to remit him of all venial sins, and prepare him for the journey beyond (the viaticum); but against all expectations, he survived. This leaves him in a spiritual no-man's land, not one of the dead, but neither wholly of the living. Because of this, he is immune to the temptations of demons, and therefore cannot be affected by their Obsession power; he simply does not register to them as a soul in need of corruption. However, his skin has an unusual pallor, and his eyes are sunken. People may smell a charnel odor about him. These effects are subtle at first, but as he ages, he gradually comes to resemble a corpse more and more, resulting in a penalty to all social interaction rolls equal to his Deceit score.

He has difficulty crossing thresholds where unquiet spirits are not welcome; if a person with a (Realm) Lore of 1 or more has set up a traditional ward, such as a line of salt or an iron nail laid on the lintel, then he cannot enter the protected building or area. Further, although he does not have a Might score, he is repulsed by any magical warding that can keep out a creature with a Might score aligned to Corpus or Mentem (including the *Aegis of the Hearth*), regardless of its level or Penetration. However, both types of exclusion can be negated if he is invited to cross by the person who established the ward, or someone who lives within. He can still touch individuals with Magic Resistance, since he has no active power around him.

If the character's status is known in the community in which he lives, he should take the Outcast Social Status Flaw.

## WARPED BY MAGIC

*Minor, Supernatural*

The character's adventures have exposed him to powerful magical forces that have left a mark on him. He has five Warping Points and a Warping Score of 1, including a Minor Flaw (which is not balanced by a Virtue) that somehow reflects the source of the Warping. His encounters allow you to spend experience points on Magic Lore during character creation. A magus may take this flaw to represent Warping gained before his apprenticeship. With the permission of the troupe, this Flaw may be modified to represent Warping from other Realms.

## WEAK PERSONALITY

*Minor, Personality*

This character doesn't feel strongly for or against anything and lacks the unique traits most people have to make them really stand out. Consequently, all Personality Traits must be between +1 and -1. When making personality rolls, treat any roll above 6 as merely 6. The character may have no other Personality Flaws or Virtues or Flaws that grant Personality Traits. Depending on the personality of the observer, he may seem a complete pushover with no opinion of his own, insensitive because he rarely shows strong emotion, or simply lacking in initiative to those seeking leadership and guidance. These elements result in a -1 or worse (at the Storyguide's discretion) modifier in most social situations for obviously being a cold fish. Finally, he will never be known for his great loyalty or pious nature, and will have a hard time winning respect or getting promoted. His lack of enthusiasm for the Church in particular might be viewed as a lack of faith. On the plus side, he might occasion-

ally be seen in a positive light since he never disagrees strongly.

### WORTHLESS ABILITIES

*Minor, General*

A time-lost character (see Chapter

7: Grog Templates) must have about 30 experience points that have been rendered valueless by her shift in time. For example, she may have Area Lore of 3 for a city that no longer exists, or her Etiquette score may have been rendered useless by changing social structures. Troupes may per-

mit companions to purchase this Flaw multiple times.

In the example of the legionaries given in the Time-lost Witnesses template (see Chapter 7), their wasted ability is their Organization Lore. The army to which it refers no longer exists.



# Grog Templates

This chapter contains many suggested backgrounds for grogs, including suggested Virtues and Flaws and fully worked-out Abilities at three different ages, to help players create a wide range of grogs quickly and easily.

## The Advisor

*My lord, if I may, the magus Bellatorius is reputed to be a man not given to either forgiveness or forgetfulness. If you really must challenge someone to certamen, perhaps Benedic ex Miscellanea might make for a less resentful target.*

This specialist within the covenant has found a niche for himself by learning all he can about his covenant, the Order of Hermes, and the supernatural realms with which his masters so frequently come into contact. This encyclopedic knowledge of the world in which his magi operate makes him an essential companion to the more cloistered magi.

## General Background

He may have been a failed monk or student, or simply an educated man who fell upon the secrets of the mystical world by chance. With few practical skills, he is left to make a living from his mind. A brush with the Order of Hermes early in his life could have

opened his eyes to a world beyond the mundane; perhaps he was the son of a notary who visited a covenant, or a student intrigued by the strange behavior of his tutor.

He researched everything he could about the Order of Hermes, learning things that others tend to ignore. And then he identified a covenant. He was probably able to identify several from the letters and journals he found, and chose the one that best suited his personality. From there, he worked his way into the covenfolk, becoming an uninvited fixture.

The Advisor is most likely the constant companion to one particular magus. Just as the more adventurous magus may have a favored shield grog, so the more political magus may take a weapon of another kind: knowledge.

The Advisor specializes in some key Abilities of use to a magus, and in doing so he frees his magus from having to develop those skills himself.

But this has a cost. The position is high-profile, the Advisor never being far from his magus, and costly. The Advisor must be maintained in a manner as befits both him and the magus. This may include creating Longevity Rituals for the Advisor, or enchanted items, or simply ensuring that he is dressed in appropriate finery.

The Advisor most likely attends his master on all matters of business, including Tribunals and covenant councils. Others may object to this, unless the covenant or Tribunal develops a culture of allowing such attendants, and this may be a source of friction.

## The Role of the Advisor as Grog

Given that the Advisor is ever-present, serving his master in matters political and supernatural, it is easy to assume that the character may take on a more important role within the game than his status as a grog might suggest. There are two ways to approach this. The first is to assume that, like other grogs, the Advisor is a tool to be used by the magus when going about his business. Most magi recognize their failings with things martial, and employ sentries and bodyguards to ensure their safety. Others have little time

or aptitude for politics, and enjoy the protection afforded by a constant Advisor. In game terms, investing in an Advisor allows the magus character to ignore certain Abilities in the knowledge that a grog will serve that function.

The second way of approaching the Advisor as grog is to simply accept that the character may one day grow in importance and become a companion in its own right. Guidelines on advancing characters from the grog status to companion can be found in Chapter 5.

These advisors may be seen as the start of a courtier tradition within the Order of Hermes and magi may soon take to maintaining their own court of advisors, each with a given speciality.

## Character Creation

The following notes provide help on creating an Advisor character.

### AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Custos Virtue grants access to Arcane Abilities (see later), which means that the Advisor must have lived at a covenant long enough to have demonstrated his ability and worth. He is educated and so must be old enough to have learned at least Latin and Artes Liberales. In later years his master or masters are likely to develop

a Longevity Ritual for him, so he can reach a considerable age, with Ability scores to match.

The Advisor is inclined to the mental Characteristics, not the physical ones. By assigning -1 to each of the four physical Characteristics, scores of +3, +2, +1, and +1 are available to assign to the mental Characteristics. Intelligence should be the highest Characteristic, and +2 could be applied to Perception for a more-watchful Advisor, or Communication for a messenger, herald, or ambassador.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Virtues and Flaws for Advisors are: Custos; Educated, Puissant Order of Hermes Lore; Ability Block (Martial), Small Frame, Susceptible to Warping\*

\* See Chapter 6: New Virtues and Flaws

Advisor to a magus is an honored and respected position, so Custos is the appropriate Social Status Virtue. This allows the grog access to the Arcane Abilities that he will find useful to complement his master's own knowledge. He is also Educated, as per the Virtue, which represents the classical tuition he received during his early years.

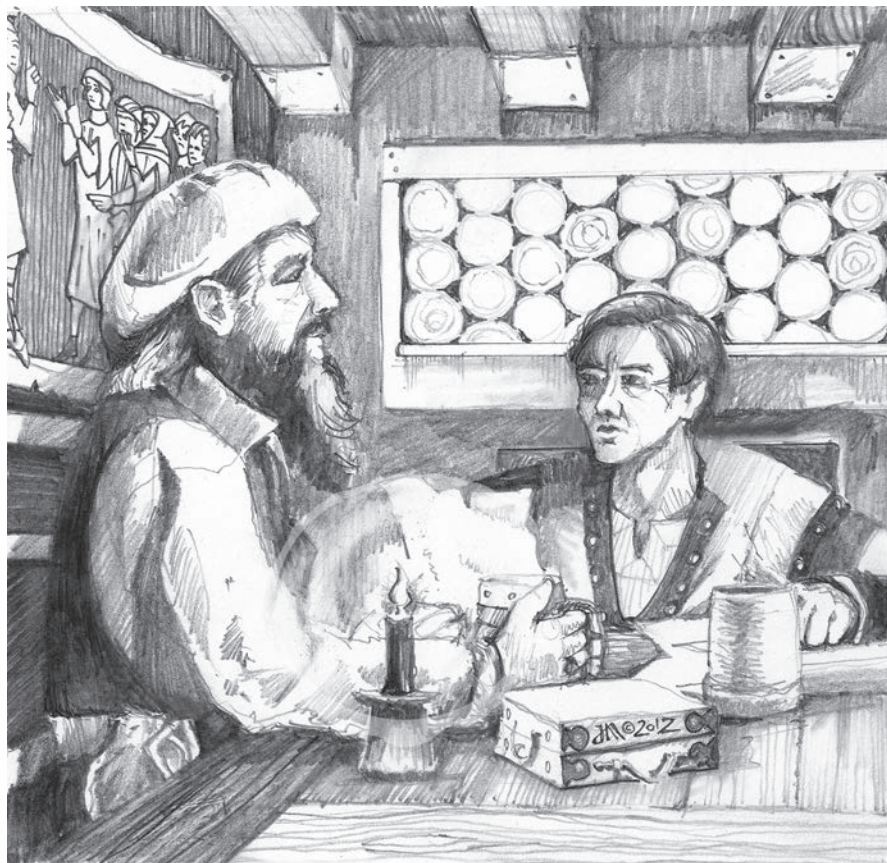
The last Virtue is Puissant Order of Hermes Lore. The character has a knack for retaining information learned about his master's House, Tribunal, allies, and enemies.

The Advisor is not physically inclined. He has no aptitude for martial pursuits and is more vulnerable than most, due to his Small Frame.

While the Virtues are almost essential to the Advisor, the Flaws are much more open and you should choose those that fit your own Advisor. He may be Tainted with Evil, explaining why he needs the security of the covenant. Or his many years of academic work may have given him Weak Characteristics.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Lacking in martial prowess, the Advisor relies upon his fastidious memory to show his value to his masters. The main abilities of note are the Art of Memory Ability (as presented in *The Mysteries Revised Edition*, page 25), used to recall details that his master may find useful at a later date, and Order of Hermes Lore. This latter Ability allows the Advisor to advise his master as to the names of magi he is about to meet, remind him of dealings with other covenants that he is about to encounter at Tribunal, and to steer him the right way in protocol. This is supplemented by a growing knowledge of the Code of Hermes, likely gained through the experience of keeping his master out of trouble.





## TRAINING PACKAGES

Appropriate training packages are: Charmer, Covenfolk, Courtier, Cunning Man, Failed Apprentice\*

\* Experience points against Penetration can instead be invested in the various Realm Lore Abilities that the Advisor picks up over time.

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

The following abilities represent a typical Advisor at three points in his career:

**ABILITIES AT AGE 20:** Art of Memory 3 (scenes), Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Charm 3 (first impressions), Covenant Lore 2 (personalities), Etiquette 3 (nobility), Faerie Lore 1 (faerie queens), Folk Ken 3 (nobles), Code of Hermes 1 (interaction with mundanes), Intrigue 3 (gossip), Latin 4 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (covenfolk), Living Language 5 (poetry), Magic Lore 2 (magical traditions), Order of Hermes Lore 2 +2 (personalities), Philosophiae 3 (moral philosophy)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 35:** Area Lore 3 (politics), Art of Memory 5 (scenes), Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (alertness), Charm 3 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 2 (laws and customs of a specific area), Covenant Lore 3 (personalities), Etiquette 3 (nobility), Faerie Lore 2 (faerie queens), Folk Ken 3 (nobles), Code of Hermes 2 (interaction with mundanes), Intrigue 3 (gossip), Latin 4 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 2 (covenfolk), Living Language 5 (poetry), Magic Lore 2 (magical traditions), Order of Hermes Lore 5 +2 (personalities), Philosophiae 3 (moral philosophy), Theology 2 (local practices)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 50:** Area Lore 4 (politics), Art of Memory 5 (scenes),

## Advisor Story Seeds

The following story seeds use the Advisor as a hook into situations that the magi and their companions must resolve.

### POISONED

The Tribunal meets and the Advisor lies dying, poisoned by a non-Hermetic potion seemingly resistant to the simple healing spells. Some of the magi race to find a cure for the poison while keeping the Advisor's condition secret from their enemies. The others must conduct Tribunal business and discover the would-be assassin, all without the one man they have come to rely on.

### AN UNEXPECTED ADVISOR

Nobody is entirely sure how long he has been at the covenant, who his parents were, or how he came to know so much, but the reserved and confident young man was right. Investigating the young

man's reasoning and examining his information proves it: that trouble with the Church *was* stirred up by a Tytalus known to the covenant. How had this young man spotted what is now so obvious when all the magi of the covenant failed? What are they going to do with their unexpected benefactor? And what are they going to do about the Tytalus? Their new Advisor may have an idea ...

### ESPIONAGE

The Advisor has gone missing. He was not seen to leave, and both his chamber and office have been magically cleansed of any Arcane Connections to him.

A week later, a redcap inquires after him, and then reveals that she may have seen him, fleetingly, at another covenant. She got a sense that she'd seen something she shouldn't have. Did this other covenant steal him away? How and why?

### PERSONALITY TRAITS & REPUTATION

The ideal Advisor is Loyal above all else, and must be Dependable. His third trait is more open to choice: he could be Analytical, a Perfectionist, or be gifted with a Wry Humor.

Regardless, the Advisor is most likely a long-suffering companion tasked with providing the answer his master needs at just the right time, and the Personality Traits earlier help reinforce that outlook.

As he continues in service, he may gain his own reputation, separate from his master. This is especially true where he is tasked with looking after a young, inexperienced magus prone to mistakes.

Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Awareness 2 (alertness), Charm 4 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 2 (laws and customs of a specific area), Covenant Lore 4 (personalities), Etiquette 4 (nobility), Faerie Lore 3 (faerie queens), Folk Ken 4 (nobles), Greek 1 (prose), Code of Hermes 3 (interaction with mundanes), Intrigue 3 (gossip), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 2 (covenfolk), Living Language 5 (poetry), Magic Lore 4 (magical traditions), Order of Hermes Lore 6 +2 (personalities), Philosophiae 3 (moral philosophy), Theology 2 (local practices)

The Ability scores earlier take into account the extra experience points granted by the Educated Virtue.

## Advisor as Companion

The Advisor archetype lends itself to the companion category quite easily. Given the increased capacity for Virtues and Flaws, the companion can gain additional starting experience points to increase his Ability scores, and take supernatural abilities such as Second Sight that further increase his involvement in stories. The companion can also take Story Flaws that draw him and his masters into ongoing trouble and can set up moments of crisis where his loyalty is tested.

## The Almogavars

*Desperta Ferras! (Awake the Iron!)*

— Battle cry of the Almogavars

## General Background

The Almogavars are a special type of mercenary unit from Iberia, employed in vast numbers in the Chris-

tian north. Renowned for their fearless ferocity, they are frontiersmen as well as soldiers, and are tied to neither land nor liege. They wander in search of adventure, selling their services as mercenaries or engaging in their own raids into Muslim territory. They are often employed by towns, nobles, clergy, and kings. In Mythic Iberia, magi of the Order of Hermes rely upon them as well. The peninsula is a dangerous place, and even the most peaceful of covenants have need of some sort of protection. It is also possible to hire Almogavars to work in locations other than Iberia, and this description can be used as a template for other mercenary units as well.

Almogavar comes from the Arabic *al-mogàuar*, meaning "raider" or "devastator." Though this is accurate, they are also known for charity and generosity. For example, after raiding a wealthy Muslim estate, they may give a portion of the spoils to the poor. Despite their coarse appearance, Almogavars live by a code of honor and military discipline. If treated well and given respect, they are both loyal and dutiful. But if abused or mistreated (or not paid), they are known to seek revenge or simply take what they are due.

Almogavars originated in the Aragonese Pyrenees as bands of shepherds resisting Moslem incursion. Prospering as raiders and paid militia, Almogavar culture rapidly spread throughout Iberia. Their ranks are open to all, including men from Aragon, Catalonia, Castile, and other regions. They even accept Basques, Mozarabs (Arabized Christians), and runaway slaves from Muslim lands. All they require is submission to their code. This freewheeling lifestyle may seem attractive to those ostracized by society, such as Jews, foreigners, desperadoes, and those with a Magical Air or The Gift. They still have to deal with a certain amount of suspicion at first, but in time they are able to earn trust and respect that is not possible in most social settings.

Almogavars are willing to work for unusual employers, such as magi. Covenants hire them to supplement their grogs, and some wizards have a small unit as a personal retinue. Magi employing Almogavars should be mindful how they treat them. Some magi are accustomed to pushing their underlings around, threatening them, and using magical punishment. Almogavars are prideful and independent, and don't take lightly to threats. Magical interference with their code of discipline is seen as a great offense.

A typical band of Almogavars consists of around a dozen men, guided by an Adalil (sergeant) and led by an Almogaten (captain). Leaders are chosen from the ranks according to merit, and this familiarity and personal loyalty creates a close-knit and cohesive unit. When large numbers are involved, command might be delegated to a knight (or magus), and they occasionally form alliances to gain a mantle of legitimacy.

Almogavars are a form of elite infantry, considered equal to or better than the light cavalry of the Moors, and are employed in both skirmishes and full assaults. They favor light ar-

### The Vibria Company

Originally from Barcelona, the Vibria Company made their early fortunes in employment with the Jerbiton magi who dwell there, then later with other magi of the Order. In the Catalan tongue, a vibria is a type of dragon (a wyvern), and the name is meant to subtly advertise to their preferred clientele. Each member has the new Virtue of Hermetic Experience, and are all veterans at least 30 years old. They specialize in Hermetic clientele, and like the Monjoie Company, they

accept payment in vis, which they use to barter for enchanted items and longevity. They are hired out as small teams of specialists, and they have multiple units deployed in different tribunals. For example, the Red Wyverns are located in the Stonehenge Tribunal, and the Draco Negra Division is in Rome. These remote groups take in local recruits, so regional units may carry variant armaments and have different customs, but they still adhere to the same code.



## Almogavar Story Seeds

These story seeds can bring Almogavars into the saga.

### ALTERING THE BARGAIN

Embarking on a dangerous expedition, the magi decide to hire some extra protection. They meet an Almogaten named Jabier, who has experience dealing with magi and knows the area well. However, he has ulterior motives and desires wizardly assistance against his enemies. Hiring or bribing a magus isn't an option. He shudders to imagine what price a wizard would charge, and most of all, he doesn't want the magi to know what he's up to. Instead, he plans to manipulate the magi into accomplishing his goals and convince them that it was their idea all along, and expects to be paid for his assistance. The original objective of the magi will need to be tailored for your troupe, but it is no coincidence that it will cause them to cross paths with Jabier's enemies. He spreads rumors to attract the at-

tention of magi (these may be true or false), concerning something the magi desire or desperately need. Also, since they are being manipulated by someone who is uninformed as to the finer points of the Code of Hermes, there is the risk they may wind up violating their Oath by interfering with mundanes.

In the end, Jabier might double-cross the magi, attempt a charming explanation, or convincingly lie and keep his secret. If Jabier and company continue in employment, the magi have gained an elite unit of professional soldiers that are brave and loyal. However, their first loyalty is to one another, and they continue to have their own secret intrigues and occasionally get the magi involved in their adventures.

### THE STRANGE SOLDIERS

The covenant employs a company of Almogavars that is an odd band of outcasts and outsiders. One is a Berber who deserted the Almohade

army; their big bruiser is Jewish, and their stoic leader is secretly a woman. One veteran soldier named Carlos is stranger than the rest, for he unknowingly possesses The Gift. His fellows have known him many years, and don't think he is any stranger than they are. They just think he is just socially awkward with new people, and are amused by his difficulty with animals. But they recognize his ability to sense danger and perceive hidden threats, a trait for which they praise him, and attribute to wisdom and experience.

Carlos' Gift grants the Supernatural Virtue of Premonitions. He would make a fine apprentice for an adventurous magus, but an adult apprentice presents special challenges, and Carlos is stubborn and set in his ways. As a further complication, perhaps his Gift is first discovered by a visiting magus. Carlos refuses to separate from his fellows, and the covenant risks violence against their guest or possibly losing their elite grogs to a rival covenant.

mor, typically wearing sheepskins and heavy leather sandals with an open-faced helmet. Their primary weapon is the Azcona, a short, light lance that can be used as a spear or a javelin, and they carry a short sword for close-quarters combat. Almogavars prefer lightweight mobility and carry few supplies, provisioning themselves by foraging and raiding. This allows them to make incursions into enemy territory at greater speed and for a greater distance than cavalry. Leaders sometimes ride on horseback, but prefer fighting on foot.

In combat, Almogavars utilize innovative and unconventional tactics. Against cavalry, they throw their spears at the enemy's horses, and once unhorsed, the riders are easy prey for

the expert infantry. On the rare occasion that an Almogavar fights on horseback, he braces his spear in his stirrup, aiming to strike the enemy's mount. They exploit the terrain to their best advantage, even preparing the battlefield by wetting the ground or scattering sharp stones. Stealth and surprise are also favored tactics, and they often attack at night and set up ambushes. Almogavars are also known to employ fear and awe to frighten an enemy and weaken their morale. Facing a foe before battle, they strike their weapons against rocks to create sparks as they howl a chant to "Awake the Iron."

Alongside magi, Almogavars quickly adapt to the use of magic in battle. Their irregular and inventive tactics blend well with the many un-

usual and unexpected applications of wizardry. If a magus has no combat experience, they may suggest ideas for him. Magic could be used to alter the terrain, set traps, or frighten and disorient the enemy. Even an experienced martial magus can benefit from their experience, and they can advise them as how to best target their spells. However, once they gain familiarity with the supernatural and learn the limits of magic, they might be able to devise strategies that can defeat a magus.

Recruiting Almogavars can be done through a companion or some agent, and some magi have contacts of their own. It is easy to find common rabble willing to sell their sword arms. The hard part is finding soldiers

of skill and discipline willing to work with magi. The culture and code of the Almogavars make them an excellent fit. Though usually employed as a group, they can also be hired individually as specialists.

## Character Creation

Almogavar characters must take the Social Status Virtue of Almogavar, and may select Virtues and Flaws as normal. Their regular outfit is as described, but players may equip their characters as they choose with Standard Armaments. The combination of sheepskin leather and the open-faced iron helmet grants a Protection of 1, with a Load of 1. They typically carry a short sword, and occasionally a small round shield. The azcona is used as a short spear on foot or while mounted, or is thrown as a javelin. Use combat scores for how the weapon is being used.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Almogavars emphasizes courage, fortitude, and cleverness. Suggested Virtues include Enduring Constitution, Reserves of Strength, Tough, Warrior, an Affinity with Single Weapon or Thrown Weapon, and Puissant Single Weapon or Thrown Weapon.

Several Personality Flaws can be used to reflect the life of an Almogavar. Dutybound could represent their code of honor and discipline, Proud a sense of individual dignity, or what others see as Reckless could be the bravery that comes from having stared death in the face. As mercenaries are often looked down upon, they might be Oversensitive to insults. Almogavars are also known for being Generous to the poor and Compassionate for the oppressed. General Flaws can represent injuries from past battles, such as Disfigured, Missing

Ear, Missing Eye, Missing Hand, and Lingering Injury.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

For Martial Abilities, Almogavars focus on Single Weapon and Thrown Weapon. Hunting and Survival are important, and their basic socialization revolves around Carouse, Folk Ken, and Leadership.

They also acquire the Ability of Profession: Soldier, as do other mercenaries and members of a paid military. As with other Profession Abilities, this is a catch-all for knowing for how to do one's job. For a soldier, this includes things such as packing gear, pacing a march, making camp, and performing the duties of their office.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

Suggested Childhood Training Packages include Athletic, Mischievous, and Traveling Childhood. For Career Training Packages, suggestions include Javeliner, Soldier, Woodsman, and the Non-Career Training Package of Forager. It is wise to round the character out with other useful Abilities as well.

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

**YOUNG RECRUIT (AGE 18):** Area Lore 2 (ambush sites), Athletics 3 (hiking), Awareness 2 (ambushes), Brawl 4 (getting away), Carouse 1 (singing), Folk Ken 1 (warriors), Guile 1 (excuses), Hunt 1 (birds), Native Language 5 (cursing), Single Weapon 4 (azcona), Stealth 1 (camouflage), Survival 1 (semi-desert), Thrown Weapon 4 (azcona)

**MATURE SOLDIER (AGE 30):** Area Lore 3 (ambush sites), Athletics 3 (hiking), Awareness 3 (ambushes),

Bargain 1 (wages), Brawl 4 (getting away), Carouse 2 (singing), Folk Ken 2 (warriors), Guile 2 (excuses), Hunt 2 (birds), Leadership 2 (in combat), Native Language 5 (cursing), Profession: Soldier 2 (avoiding duties), Ride 1 (fleeing), Single Weapon 5 (azcona), Stealth 2 (camouflage), Survival 2 (semi-desert), Thrown Weapon 5 (azcona)

**EXPERIENCED VETERAN (AGE 42):** Area Lore 4 (ambush sites), Animal Handling 1, Athletics 3 (hiking), Awareness 3 (ambushes), Bargain 2 (wages), Brawl 4 (getting away), Carouse 3 (singing), Charm 1, Folk Ken 2 (warriors), Guile 2 (excuses), Hunt 2 (birds), Leadership 4 (in combat), Native Language 5 (cursing), Profession: Soldier 3 (avoiding duties), Ride 1 (fleeing), Single Weapon 6 (azcona), Stealth 2 (camouflage), Survival 3 (semi-desert), Thrown Weapon 5 (azcona)

Sample Ability Scores do not take into account any Virtues or Flaws.

## Almogavar as Companion

You can also play an Almogavar as a companion. The character could be the Almogaten leading the unit, or perhaps he is a specialist of some sort. Optionally, he might hire himself out individually as a specialist. He will lack the support and camaraderie of a unit, but his fortunes are his own and he may be Poor or Wealthy.

As a companion, the character may have Story Flaws, and these could apply to himself or his whole unit. Enemies is an obvious example. Close Family Ties could represent a tightly bonded unit, and maybe they *are* all related. Dependents may be unusual, but some bands of Almogavars include the women and children of the warriors in addition to the usual camp followers.



# Animal Trainer

*I'd stay clear of Blackeye, sir. He don't cower, he fights. You smell of strangeness to him, sir. He'd have your throat, he would.*

## General Background

Granted authority over his lord's kennels because of his exceptional skill with animals, William the Houndsman holds a peculiar place among his master's servants: while the lord's animals respond very well to him, all the folk treat him with deep suspicion and fear. His lord has recognized this sensation as similar to that he feels when meeting with those strange magi of that tower on the edge of his lands. He has sent William to their tower to manage his kennels there, away from the poor regard of his other castle folk. Fortunately for William, the wizards mostly keep themselves to themselves, because they scare him and his dogs. Unfortunately for him however, they also seem to employ even more soldiers than his lord, none of whom seem to like him very much.

Animals and magi rarely mix well; The Gift prevents most contact. As well as forcing them to walk everywhere, this is problematic for any magus who would live among the lords of men; going out hunting is practically impossible if you can approach neither horse nor hound. But some magi employ grogs skilled specifically in training animals to their purpose, and for some such grogs, magi may be the only masters who would have them.

An Animal Trainer will most likely be specialized in dealing with hounds, hawks, or horses. For one who would find employment at a covenant, his skill need not be quite so mundane: perhaps he has a particular talent for handling griffins!

Besides the obvious attraction to a covenant for a young man who trains

griffins, mundane beasts are likely to be of interest as well. Many magi would desire to employ someone able to train horses to accept a Gifted rider, or a pack of war dogs to work with a Flambeau knight. However, this can take many years, by which time most beasts would be too old for any useful purpose.

As covered in *Art & Academe*, a trainer generates a number of training points in each season that she spends working with an animal (see the Formulae later). Once these training points equal the creature's Might, the animal is trained and will follow its master's commands. All training must be continuous and uninterrupted, for as many seasons as are required. Most mundane animals lack a Confidence Score, so this will typically require a

total (Intelligence + Animal Handling + Animal Ken) of 2+ to train an animal within a single season. A more experienced trainer may tame additional animals in a season, potentially as many as her Animal Handling Ability.

### TRAINING POINTS

#### ACCUMULATED EACH SEASON:

Intelligence + Animal Handling  
+ Animal Ken – Creature's Might  
– Gift Penalty

#### REQUIRED NUMBER OF POINTS:

Creature's Might

#### MUNDANE ANIMAL MIGHT =

1 + (2 x Confidence Score)

Because of The Gift, a magus who seeks to train animals mundanely



would need a much higher Animal Handling Ability (at least 3), which represents a significant expense of experience points.

Note that an animal can be trained to accept specific individuals with The Gift, but not The Gift itself; a pegasus trained to accept one Gifted rider must be retrained to accept another.

The advantages to a covenant for employing an Animal Trainer are clear, but it is less obvious why an Animal Trainer would want to work for a covenant. Spending more time with animals than with people might make his departure from common society more tolerable, but there should be more compelling reasons for a grog to isolate himself in this way.

For instance, Animal Ken is a very popular Supernatural Virtue for an Animal Trainer character, but whereas this will likely incur suspicion from commoners, it could be valued highly in a covenant. Such grogs, placing themselves outside of normal society, should take an appropriate Personality Flaw, or something relating to their background or nature, such as Bad Reputation.

## Character Creation

The following suggestions cover the most important points to bear in mind when creating an Animal Trainer.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Obviously, every Animal Trainer character should have a good Animal Handling score. Animal Ken is the exception rather than the rule — however, since you will likely want to play an exceptional character, this is not unexpected in an Animal Trainer grog.

Other useful Abilities include Ride, for a horseman; Leadership, for a master of kennels; Bargain, if the Animal Trainer is also involved in the buying

and selling of beasts of burden; Survival, if he is spending his days up on the moors with his sheep; and Hunt, if he is a falconer. You should also select a Profession Ability related to his specific trade, such as Profession: Feuterer (master of hounds), and so forth. The obvious exception to this is if your Animal Trainer is entirely self-taught, such as the forest girl who talks with unicorns. Folk Ken should be considered for any grog dealing with other people, but many Animal Trainers lead quite a reclusive lifestyle. Craft Abilities can be useful in some situations: the farrier practices Craft Blacksmith (horse-shoes), and the teamster probably has Craft Cartwright (repairing wheels).

### TRAINING PACKAGES

Appropriate training packages are: Animal Trainer (obviously!), Farmer, Magician (if she deals with magical animals), Rider, Woodsman.

### SAMPLE ANIMAL TRAINER CHARACTERS

These various characters represent Animal Trainers at different ages, of different social strata, and who work with different animals.

#### Madoc, Age 15 Young Shepherd

Madoc despairs of his lonely existence up in the hills, but has cried wolf once too often and has been shunned by his village as a liar and a thief; the covenant offers comfort, security, and above all, other people. If only the farrier would believe him when he says he never set the best horse in the stables to bolt.

**VIRTUES & FLAWS:** Puissant Animal Handling, Strong Characteristics; Cursed Guile, Judged Unfairly

**ABILITIES:** Animal Handling 4+2 (sheep), Area Lore: Bangor 2 (animals), Area Lore: Gwynedd 2 (pastures), Athletics 2 (climbing), Awareness 2 (animals), Bargain 1 (food), Folk Ken 2 (employers), Guile 2 (excuses), Ride 1 (carefully), Stealth 2 (towns), Survival 3 (hills), Welsh 5 (wheedling)

#### Alyse, Age 25 Adult Gryphon Trainer

Raised by faeries, Alyse has lived and worked with gryphons since she was very young. She cannot understand why that ignorant wizard is so astonished by the creatures whenever he meets them.

**VIRTUES & FLAWS:** Animal Ken, Arcane Lore, Master of Animal Creatures; Delusion: everyone can talk to animals, Susceptible to Warping, Faerie Upbringing

**ABILITIES:** Animal Handling 5 (gryphons), Animal Ken 4 (gryphons), Area Lore: Black Forest 3 (gryphons), Athletics 2 (falling), Awareness 3 (above), Brawl 2 (grapple), Faerie Lore 3 (gryphons), Folk Ken 2 (magi), German 5 (animals), Magic Lore 4 (gryphons), Ride 4 (gryphons), Stealth 1 (forest), Survival 3 (forest), Swim 1 (strong currents)

#### William, Age 35 Veteran Kennel Master

Why do these wretched custodes expect him to drill alongside them at sword and shield when they clearly dislike and distrust him so? William's bones are starting to stiffen, and he agrees with his old dogs about learning new tricks.

**VIRTUES & FLAWS:** Inoffensive to Animals, Master of Kennels, Puissant Animal Handling; Magical Air

**ABILITIES:** Animal Handling 6+2 (hounds), Area Lore: Loire 3



(hunting grounds), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 4 (hounds), Brawl 2 (grappling), Carouse 2 (drinking games), Etiquette 3 (servant), Folk Ken 2 (nobles), French 5 (polite), Hunt 5 (with hounds), Latin 2 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 3 (dogs), Profession: Feuterer 4 (feet), Ride 4 (in woodland), Stealth 3 (woodland), Survival 1 (woodland)

## Animal Trainer as Companion

Any of the Animal Trainer characters earlier could be created as an interesting companion simply by adding a Story Flaw. One of Alyse' gry-

phons could actually be a Magical Animal Companion, if it were considered a close friend rather than a flying mount. Perhaps William's hounds are all actually a single magical animal, as a gestalt manifestation? As a companion character, Madoc might be desperately honest in all dealings — but afflicted by Beelzebub, who seeks to corrupt his pious soul; he may have the Cursed Guile and Plagued by Supernatural Entity Flaws.

Companion characters are generally expected to be significantly more capable than grogs; in most cases, this is very simple to do, by purchasing more of the required Abilities for their role — taking Leadership, Ride, and an extra weapon Ability or two covers the difference between a knight and a soldier. But there are

really only one or two pertinent Abilities to choose from for an Animal Trainer, so your companion will likely be much more varied in her capabilities than your grog. If you're after "the best trainer in the region," then you will want Puissant Animal Handling, Affinity with Animal Handling, and very probably the Animal Ken Virtue.

A character may be an Animal Trainer out of necessity rather than in a professional capacity. A lady whose lover transforms into an owl every morning needs to train as a falconer simply to keep him with her through the day. Certain literary necessities demand that she be a shapeshifter as well; the owl and his lady both are companion characters, sharing the True Love and Lycanthrope Flaws.

## Animal Trainer Story Seeds

As well as being a potentially valuable member of a turb, an Animal Trainer can be the catalyst for many interesting stories, especially if magical animals are involved.

### THE EYES OF A HAWK

A maga is departing the covenant and sees a haggard young man gazing intently at a bird of prey circling overhead, which in turn is gazing intently at her. What does each see in the other that holds their attention so firmly? Jack Faulkner served an important knight in the region — until one of his kites suddenly attacked the knight's daughter and blinded her. Accused of carelessness and assault, Jack was flogged and dismissed from the knight's service. Jack has wandered aimless and penniless since; he has recently strayed near the covenant. The kite he has spotted is a strikingly beautiful specimen of its species; it is a Hawk of

Virtue, who recognizes the maga for her Gift. Did it have a reason to attack the girl? Could she be a changeling? Or could the bird have a secret, sinister purpose? Kites are well known as thieves and tricksters. In neither case could the proud knight admit Jack Faulkner back into his service, not after having punished him so publicly.

### THE HORSE WHISPERER

Lydie is a young girl who talks to horses. She prefers their company to humans, because folk are rude and cruel to her — even her own family, who deem her wicked and corrupt. This drew the attention of a magus who then bought her from her parents (they were only too glad to be rid of the witching child) to train as his apprentice. She has studied with him for three years now, but still resists all attempts to be Opened to the Arts. In his arrogance, he refuses to

believe that Lydie may not possess The Gift — all the signs are true. Except, of course, that animals do not shun her as they do him. Unfortunately, she has Animal Ken, but no touch of The Gift at all.

### A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING

The covenant keeps a flock of sheep, for meat and cheese; its sheep share the hills with other villagers' flocks, and this has served everyone well enough for years. But something is wrong. The other shepherds are losing sheep to some night predator, while the covenant's flock is left untouched — and everyone is blaming young Madoc. Of course, the boy is innocent, but nobody believes him. The true culprit is one of his rams: a magical animal that turns into a wolf at night, and goes hunting. He does not kill and eat the sheep of his own flock, because they are family.

# The Bodyguard Maidservant

*Your wine, my lady.*

Many important and vital jobs are done by insignificant mundanes, who go unnoticed before the eyes of magi, lords, and clergy alike. These unsung heroes rarely win a place in history. However, a conniving master can put this virtual invisibility to much use. This bland and demure maidservant can fill many roles.

## General Background

This female grog has never felt at home in the rigid roles of gender and feudal hierarchy of mundane society. From an early age, she has yearned for danger, adventure, and most of all independence and freedom. But for a low-

born girl, all this is most often an impossible dream. Before she was mature enough for her family or village to seal her fate, and force her to marry and follow a peasant's life, she fled. She spent some time actively seeking out people different enough, and places sufficiently strange, to offer her the needed break from society. And in the end, Mythic Europe offers only one real place like this — an Hermetic covenant.

Swallowing her pride for a time, she had to suffer manual work and the indignities of being a common woman, but it was still a lot better than life in your average farming village. Eventually, she had found enough training and practiced enough for the magi to notice her special skills. To outside observers, she is still a mere maidservant, assistant, scribe, or other insignificant minion. But she really serves as a bodyguard in disguise for a magus, as well as a set of invisible eyes and ears. Among the mundanes, a maga can benefit greatly from being able

to bring her protection into feminine circles, where male guards get left outside. A magus may find he has access to these female circles, using his maidservant as intermediary.

Lacking the brawn and toughness of most shield grogs, she really doesn't cut it for front line fights. Instead, she manages by being more clever, alert, and opportunistic than the rest, and by being inconspicuous to the very last instant. The secretive nature of her work means that some events blow her cover. This forces her to change position, apparent vocation, and appearance once in a while. But these challenges are what drives her, her skills developing in the independence granted her at the covenant.

## Character Creation

Here are outlined suggestions, recommendations, and tips for creation of a Bodyguard Maidservant character.

## Bodyguard Maidservant Story Seeds

The following story seeds could involve a Bodyguard Maidservant.

### THE SWITCH

During an extended journey, the magi and retainers come across a merchant with a caravan of substantial size, followed by the unavoidable pilgrims and beggars. Deciding to combine safety in numbers with a little comfort, the magi accept the invitation of the merchant. During the night, a young girl sneaks into the midst of the characters. She claims she is the daughter of a nobleman being held captive, but that she managed to sneak out for a short time. If they don't wish to help her escape the merchant, she slips away,

or is a very quiet captive. If helped, she reveals that she is really a servant who changed places with her mistress, so she could escape.

But the mistress obviously failed to get safely away and obtain help, so now the servant is in trouble. As the mistress is the daughter of a robber baron, a rival to the caravan master, great rewards could be had. Meanwhile, the caravan master is going to pieces over losing his captive, because holding her as hostage was the only thing keeping local bandits from attacking, since they refer to the robber baron. Now the characters must keep the servant girl safe and unnoticed so she can help them find the baron's daughter, while at the same time being under attack by local bandits.

### THE UNKNOWN ASSASSIN

A magus cannot for any reason call off a meeting he has with an important nobleman or clergyman, not even when he knows one of his rivals has hired a highly qualified assassin. Nervous to the point of paranoia, he and his female bodyguard — who is disguised as a scribe — attend the meetings. Meanwhile, specialists and discreet magi from his covenant try to get to the bottom of the case. Who wants the magus dead? Who is the assassin, and how will he make the hit? The entire time, the magus and the bodyguard sit at the edges of their chairs, eyes darting around to each and every face or corner in the room, as discreetly as it can be done.



## SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

The following Virtues may apply to a Bodyguard Maidservant character: Keen Vision, Sharp Ears, Lightning Reflexes, Puissant Awareness, Puissant Guile, Forgettable Face\*

If the concept calls for a bodyguard or assassin with larger weaponry than daggers, you need a Virtue to be allowed to purchase Martial Abilities. Warrior is a good choice; Custos might make you too high-profile, which would defeat the purpose. Educated or Arcane Lore might fit a mature or older character, to represent the fact that the magi allow her to become literate and learn Latin and various mystical abilities.

The Bodyguard Maidservant may suffer from some of these Flaws: Small Frame, Oversensitive (chauvinism), Mistaken Identity, Weak Personality\*, Compulsive Lying\*, Uninspirational\*

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

## SOCIAL STATUS

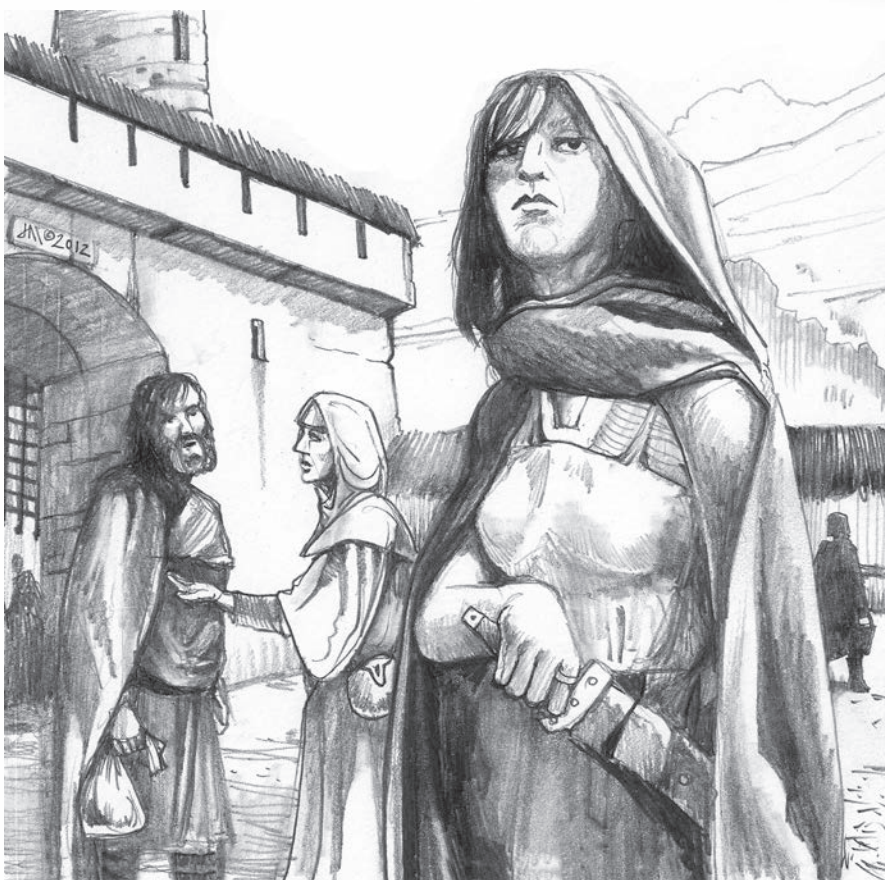
Covenfolk is recommended, and although the single magus you work for might hold you in high regard, appointing you to Custos is detrimental to you staying incognito. The same goes for most other Social Status Virtues.

## SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Appropriate Abilities are: Awareness, Athletics, Guile, Legerdemain, Brawl, Profession (various)

## TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages include: Social, Exploring, or Mischievous Childhood. Courtier, Conman, Harlot, Tumbler, or Servant. Charmer or Covenfolk, combined depending on the concept.



## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

**YOUNG BODYGUARD (AGE 15):** Athletics 3 (dodging), Awareness 4 (alertness), Brawl 3 (dagger), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Guile 3 (10) (identity change), Native Language 5 (being subservient), Profession: Maidservant 3 (tidying up)

**MATURE BODYGUARD (AGE 25):** Athletics 3 (dodging), Awareness 5 (alertness), Brawl 3 (dagger), Etiquette 2 (hermetic), Folk Ken 3 (anticipating attack), Guile 5 (20) (identity change), Legerdemain 3 (holdout), Native Language 5 (being subservient), Profession: Maidservant 3 (tidying up)

part, this character could easily pull off other jobs than bodyguarding. She could serve well as an assassin, by focusing more on a Martial Ability, Stealth, and perhaps Profession: Poisoner, Herbalism, or Alchemy for concocting poison. Or she could serve as a spy or saboteur with little change, although being literate can be a huge boon. Visitors usually pay little heed to an anonymous servant, so a person with sharp ears can pick up many useful things. She could even be sent to other covenants or castles, to spy or to gather arcane connections.

## Bodyguard Maidservant as Companion

### Concept Variations

With the skills required to go for long periods of time with a changed identity, in disguise and playing a

As a character in the companion slot, she has enough extra Virtues to become an expert in her field. Using Puissance and Affinities and perhaps

Learn (Ability) From Mistakes or Careful with (Ability), a highly skilled bodyguard or spy can be created. Improved or Great Characteristics may also stack the odds in her favor. Special skills can be added to the concept with a multitude of Supernatural Virtues or Abilities; Entrancement, Magic Sensitivity, Premonitions, Second Sight, Piercing Gaze, Skinchanger, or Shape-shifter are useful examples. An Educated character and one with Arcane Lore can be a great boon to the magi.

The role of such a companion can have a much larger scope than the grog. Being more than a simple servant, the maid most likely plays a larger part in decision-making and planning. The work and assignments can be more elaborate or long-term, and by adding a Story Flaw the whole affair can be woven into stories, integrating with personal issues. The maid and the magus could take advantage of Enemies, Mistaken Identity, Blackmail, or Close Family Ties as openings for plots or missions.

As a companion, this character could also easily run missions with a staff and accomplices, providing seeds for using other companions and grogs in the story, which would again create stories for the entire troupe.

## The Bull

*I was only looking at it!*

Some grogs stand out because they perform unusual functions. Others stand out because they are a classic stereotype. Among the fighting grogs, the Bull is one such.

## General Background

Every covenant turb has one. One guy, built like a brick outhouse, none too bright and probably a bit clumsy

as well. But he has a heart of gold; he's brave and loyal, and the best kind of comrade in arms anyone could imagine. His comrades gladly share their food with him, as he would do the same for them. If they get hurt, he carries them on his back to safety.

Playful teasing is the order of the day; he takes it all in his stride, and tries to give back, but lacks sophistication. His role is, to some degree, to provide comic relief, but he is not a caricatured clown — more of a morale booster. Most days he is laughed with more than he is laughed at. Of course, a few bad apples, be they too clever or cruel, always spoil things by overdoing it, and that can really set him boiling.

The role in the turb is closely related to the Tough Guy. He doesn't have the potential to be a trusted Custos or personal shield grog of the magi, nor will he ever be a good leader of a trained group. But he is a good man for a vanguard or covering the flank during battle. He is definitely handy when the turb is in a tight spot, and they'll be glad they brought him along as backup. For the more delicate matters, he is best left home. Many social operations could suffer greatly from his "helpful" contributions. But if they need heavy lifting or serious bruising? He's the man.

## Character Creation

Use the following notes for creating a Bull character.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

The Bull has his problems, but he may enjoy some of these Virtues: Large, Tough, Rapid Convalescence, Reserves of Strength, Enduring Constitution, Warrior, Turb Trained\*

The following Flaws may prove applicable to a Bull character: Clumsy, Carefree, Covenant Upbringing, Gullible\*, Uncontrollable Strength\*,

Offensive Fighter\*, Magical Fascination\*, Pack Mentality, (Realm) Stigmata, Master of None, various Social Status Flaws (see later)

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

## SOCIAL STATUS

Covenfolk or Turb Trained seem appropriate, although Wanderer or Branded Criminal could do. Outcast or Outlaw could be an answer to why he has joined the covenant. He is unlikely to be in a position of authority, so Custos, Mercenary Captain, Outlaw Leader, or Knight are inappropriate choices.

Note that unless the Social Status chosen allows you to take Martial Abilities, you must take a Virtue for this (e.g., Warrior).

## SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Abilities include: Brawl, Single Weapon, Great Weapon, Athletics

## SUGGESTED TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages include: Athletic, Covenant-bred, or Exploring Childhood. Footpad, Laborer, Sentry, or Soldier. Brawler, Covenfolk, or Local.

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

**YOUNG MAN (AGE 20):** Athletics 3 (climb), Brawl 4 (wrestling), Carouse 4 (merrymaking), Great Weapon 5 (poleaxe), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Native Language 5 (rhyming insults), Ride (trotting) 2

**MATURE MAN (AGE 25):** Athletics 3 (climb), Brawl 5 (wrestling), Carouse 4 (merrymaking), Chirurgy 3 (cuts), Great Weapon 5 (poleaxe), Latin 4 (Hermetic), Magic Lore 1 (magical minerals), Native



## Bull Story Seeds

The Bull is particularly prone to blundering into stories.

### SUCH BAD LUCK ALMOST SEEMS UNNATURAL

During a Tribunal, the Bull is unwittingly entrusted with a delicate and valuable object owned by a magus from another covenant. Naturally, it ends up damaged, which stirs up a lot of commotion. The offended magus not only demands restitution, but also severe punishment of the grog, and holds one of the magi responsible.

The speed with which this case starts to build does seem suspicious to the magi. Someone knowledgeable in the Order's affairs and recent history remembers a similar situation some years back, which also centered on the offended magus. Another clever companion starts to find scraps of evidence proving this, because naturally the whole thing is fabricated. But at the same time, the Bull is in trouble in more than one way. While most of his turb mates support his claim of bad luck, a few hold it personally against him.

Furthermore, the grog leader of the visiting magi demands satisfaction by combat, and his turb stoop to all-time lows concerning cheating and sabotage. Scuffles are bound to occur, but the duel ought to be stopped. Can the clever magi or

their retinue solve the affair and stop it? The offended magus becomes angry and reckless once his plot starts to fall apart. He might resort to certamen right there, and in the end might also challenge the opposition to Wizard's War if he is humiliated or pushed sufficiently.

### THE NEW RECRUIT

A magus who recently joined the covenant brought along some of his own servants, among them the Bull. A few of the other magi along with their retinue currently have him out on a mission to a highly magical forest, which is part diplomatic outreach to the magical spirits of the place, and part vis hunt. At first, he seemed fine, a solid fighter, and quickly became popular among the turb, bringing laughter to the ranks. But just minutes into the delicate situation with the magical beings of the forest, temptation sets in everywhere he looks. He is bound to get too nosy at some point. The rest of the turb try to keep him from getting in trouble, but it becomes more difficult at every new encounter. Potential conflicts arise, which must be dealt with. Touchy-feely diplomacy seems to have gone out the window, however, and kicking the encounter up a notch is more to the liking of at least one of the magi. And power seems to be a lan-

guage understood by the spirits. The next obstacles come once the Bull starts pilfering things to take home as souvenirs ...

### WHIPPING INTO SHAPE

A young man who until recently worked as a laborer at the covenant has been promoted to fighting grog. He has been in training for a short time, and shows great potential, or at least great strength and toughness. The grog leaders decide to bring him along on a mission to whip him into shape, since a routine matter of checking up on some loose threads from a previous event in a nearby village needs seeing to. But the grog not only lacks the discipline of most other grogs, he also has a knack of getting into, not trouble as such, but interesting situations. What could possibly go wrong here?

Perhaps he is socially inept and offends someone the leaders need to talk to. Perhaps he derails the trip by practically tripping over something magical. In the end, the trip encounters obstacles of a manageable kind — providing much-needed lessons for the grog — as well as some totally unexpected windfall, like a vis find. Or possibly it yields the opening for another story, like discovering an infernalist circle, or a contested vis source.

Language 5 (rhyming insults), Ride (trotting) 3

VETERAN (AGE 36): Athletics 5 (climb), Brawl 5 (wrestling), Carouse 4 (merrymaking), Chirurgy 4 (cuts), Organization Lore: Covenant 3 (fighting turb), Great Weapon 7 (poleaxe), Latin 4 (hermetic), Leadership 1 (group fighting), Magic Lore 1 (magical minerals),

Native Language 5 (rhyming insults), Ride (trotting) 3

## Concept Variations

A concept related to the Bull is the bulwark. The bulwark is a much more defensive fighter, more focused on holding the line than breaking it. This grog

could serve as a defensive vanguard, or might even be a shield grog for a magus. This is done by avoiding any Flaws which make him prone to aggression, impulsiveness, or distraction from duty; he should definitely not take the Berserk Virtue. Consider adding Dutybound or Vow, concerning the protection of his master. Long Winded or Lightning Reflexes might be valued Virtues. For com-



bat abilities, replace Great Weapon with Single Weapon, and a shield is almost a must, as is heavy armor.

Keeping the idea of the Bull, an alternative idea is to tone down the martial concept and relate his mentality and style to a manual laborer. Being a fully trained craftsman probably isn't on the Bull's cards, but there's hard work that needs doing at every covenant. He could be the hulking porter or beefy well-digger making a fool of himself, or the person everyone teases playfully. But in the end he is a true buddy, loyal to his mates.

## The Bull as Companion

When using this concept as a companion, do not change it radically. The intent is a slightly comical grog, well-liked and possessing high spirits, a person whom others lovingly tease in good fun, and who is unfortunate or unlucky in some areas. With a larger Virtue budget, he could be made into a very efficient fighter, and by using many of the suggested Flaws, he could keep this concept. But he is not a leader, and should not aspire to become one, nor should one invest in Social Status virtues giving him men of his own. Instead, view him

as a proficient individual, and focus on making him tough, resilient, and able to recover from the injuries he will inevitably suffer. You could in fact give him all the suggested Virtues, perhaps swapping Large for Giant Blood.

Working further with the supernatural aspects, a character with good synergy — story-wise — with the Magical Fascination concept could be created by adding Faerie Friend, Plagued by Supernatural Entity, or something similar. Using Arcane Lore, he could actually be proficient in Magic or Faerie Lore, upping the stakes for his involvement in these sorts of stories.

## The Confessor

*This is not the first time we have discussed these matters, maga Umbra, and I fear it shall not be the last.*

A magus' soul is imperiled just as much, if not more so, by temptation and obsession as any person's. The abstract allure of knowledge and power provide new opportunities for sin to take hold and guide the magus away from the righteous path. So it is important for the magus to make peace with his maker and be absolved of sin. This is where the Confessor comes in.

## General Background

Every community has a need to find resolution for things that prey heavily upon the conscience. Christian tradition has the sacrament of penance and the practice of confession at its heart. In confessing his sins to a priest and undertaking the prescribed penance, a character's soul is cleansed, and the character is free to resume his life unencumbered by sin. This is one of the key roles played by





the priest in his community.

Covenants are often similar to manorial holdings in that they rely on one or more villages not only for income, but also for their day-to-day activities. The covenant is also home to servants, cooks, guards, librarians, and all manner of other covenfolk. These communities, both inside and outside of the covenant, need spiritual guidance.

The Confessor is a priest or religious leader who provides confidential counsel and moral guidance to those in his parish. In the case of a Christian priest, the receiving of confession is a responsibility of his office and a duty to his parishioner's soul. Even if the Confessor doesn't live within the covenant, he lives nearby and receives the visits of magi, just as he would others in his parish.

The Confessor is also well-placed to act on behalf of the magi in matters concerning the Church, and may find himself drafted into service from time to time.

## Character Creation

The following notes will help with the creation of a Confessor.

### AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Confessor may be anyone from an inexperienced young priest, through a mature monk, to an elderly imam. But he tends to have high Intelligence, Communication, and Presence characteristics. There is an opportunity to build long relationships between a younger Confessor and the magi of the covenant, and see those relationships grow throughout the saga. The character can be used by the storyguide to confront characters with their actions, and help the players explore their consequences.

## The Practice of Confession

In the Christian tradition, as described in *Realms of Power: The Divine Revised Edition*, page 75, the suppliant confesses his sins to a priest, is absolved of those sins, and receives a penance to perform. The priest sets the penance as befits the sin. The character gains a temporary Confidence point that can be used to help him complete his penance, and until the penance is completed, there exists a holy connection between the character and his confessor. Every Christian character is expected to confess her sins at least once every year. See the Diocese chapter in the *The Church* supplement for more detail.

As with Christianity, confession of one's sins is integral to both Judaism and Islam. But unlike Christianity, confession is made directly to God, with no human intermediary. Those who have sinned are urged to pray and undertake penance. The two traditions also differ from Christianity and from each other, in other ways.

The first ten days of the Jewish month of Tishri are spent seeking reconciliation with those whom Jews may have wronged. This is in preparation for the tenth day of Tishri, known as Yom Kippur, or

the Day of Atonement. This day is set aside to atone for the sins of the previous year. Jews must fast on this day, taking no food or drink; refrain from working; and engage in prayer and other cleansing rituals.

Followers of Islam may serve their penance by fasting for a period, but the act of seeking forgiveness from God or protection from sin is called *Istighfar*. This is founded on the idea that God alone knows the deeds and thoughts of the suppliant. *Istighfar* is always partnered with *Taubah*, or repentance, and no prayer for forgiveness or protection can be heartfelt without true repentance.

### SECULAR CONFESSION

The Confessor, as presented here, is a religious figure who steers the character away from a path of sin. But as neither Islam nor Judaism provide for anyone to intercede between the individual and their God, the Confessor role is instead a secular confidante or trusted advisor. The nature of the relationship may mean that a religious figure is still appropriate, but with no implied doctrine present.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

The following lists of Virtues and Flaws are appropriate for various religious leaders who might be cast in the role of Confessor.

**CHRISTIAN CONFESSOR:** Priest; Relic, Clear Thinker; Uncertain Faith\*, Vow (Celibacy), Weakness (Drinking)

**ISLAMIC CONFESSOR:** 'Alim\*\*, Educated (Islamic), Clear Thinker; Uncertain Faith\*, Vow (Celibacy), Temperate

**JEWISH CONFESSOR:** Rabbi\*\*, Educated (Hebrew)\*\*, Clear Thinker; Outsider (Minor)\*\*, Uncertain Faith\*, Meddler (Minor)

\* See Chapter 6: New Virtues and Flaws

\*\* See *Realms of Power: The Divine Revised Edition*

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Aside from knowledge of Latin, the Artes Liberales, the Church, and Theology, the Confessor relies upon

## Confessor Story Seeds

The following story seeds start with the Confessor and his relationship to the magi and their covenant but provide challenges that the magi must face and resolve.

### STRANGE PENANCE

An elderly Tytalus staying at the covenant suddenly falls into Twilight. Although he recovers, he has seen that his end is near, and calls for a confessor to hear his many and numerous sins. Uncertain what penance to give so old and so powerful a man, the inexperienced Confessor seeks the advice of the magi of the covenant, careful not to divulge the nature (or quantity) of the old man's sins.

### A SOURCE OF GOSSIP

The new Confessor hears the confessions of the covenfolk, including the magi, in an antechamber off the main hall. But what's discussed soon turns to gossip. Who or what has been eavesdropping on these private moments, and what have they learned that the princeps doesn't want revealed?

### FALSE CONFESSION

The covenant is involved in a conflict that leads to a death. Soon after, the Confessor receives a visit from the maga involved, looking for absolution. The Confessor hears her confession and instructs her to undertake a pilgrimage in penance for her sin. But it soon becomes apparent that the maga is making no preparations to leave. On challenging her, the maga denies any knowledge of the confession or the resulting penance. Has something affected her mind? Was it really her who sought confession? If not, what manner of creature could breach the Aegis? And perhaps more importantly, now that the Confessor has approached the maga, will she now confess her sin and see her soul cleansed of its taint?

### BROKEN CONFIDENCES

The Confessor, after a lifetime of hearing the sins, squabbles, and sorrows of his parish, is abducted by demons, or faeries in the role of demons, each one intent on taking a sin from the Confessor's memory and seeing it played out a thousandfold. As the beasts sweep across the land, they take the Confessor with them

to feed their plague of evil. Villages and towns descend into anarchy under the influence of the demons inspired by the Confessor. As the magi follow their friend and confidante, they come face-to-face with their own sins, and must now explain their actions, once thought forgiven.

### THE MANUAL OF CONFESSION

A popular and influential magus, rumored to wield holy magic, comes to the covenant looking for material to help him with a tractatus he is writing. The book is a penitentiary, or a manual of confession, designed to help penitent and confessor alike to correctly identify their sins and the appropriate penance to be undertaken. While mundane manuals of confession derive penances for an individual based on the four humors, the seven sins, and the seven virtues, the magus is attempting to add the fifteen Hermetic Arts. Are the magi happy to have this magus poking around their sins, penances, and studies? What happens if his notes fall into the wrong hands? Come to that, as the magus visited a rival covenant the previous season, how can the magi get a look at his notes themselves?

his Folk Ken for gaining an intuition of what troubles his flock, Leadership to maintain his position as a pillar of the community, and various Lores for his village, the covenant, and the local area to keep abreast of all the current events.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

The following training packages help to describe a typical Christian priest: Student (parish school),

Churchman; Covenfolk, Local, Leader, Public Official.

The Student training package is required to give the Confessor knowledge of Latin, key to his other Academic Abilities, but is generally not used more than once. The Covenfolk, Local, and Leader packages provide knowledge of and a connection to the Confessor's parish. The Churchman package is the core package and should be taken at least once out of every three packages taken for this character.

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

The following Ability scores have been generated based on the suggested training packages earlier after taking a Mischievous Childhood package to describe the Confessor's ill-spent younger years. The Abilities are appropriate for a Christian priest in the role of Confessor, but Islamic or Jewish characters will have a different focus, in addition to the extra 50 experience points they receive from their Educated Virtues.



**ABILITIES AT AGE 25:** Area Lore: Village 2 (personalities), Artes Liberales 2 (rhetoric), Brawl 2 (Fist), Charm 3 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 3 (local laws), Folk Ken 3 (magi), Guile 2 (keeping confessional secrets), Latin 4 (church ceremonies), Leadership 3 (inspiration), Living Language 5 (local dialect), Order of Hermes Lore 1 (practices), Organization Lore: Church 4 (own diocese), Organization Lore: Covenant 2 (personalities), Stealth 2 (hide), Theology 3 (biblical knowledge)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 40:** Area Lore: Village 3 (personalities), Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Brawl 2 (Fist), Charm 4 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 4 (local laws), Folk Ken 4 (magi), Guile 3 (keeping confessional secrets), Latin 4 (church ceremonies), Leadership 4 (inspiration), Living Language 5 (local dialect), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (practices), Organization Lore: Church 4 (own diocese), Organization Lore: Covenant 3 (personalities), Stealth 2 (hide), Theology 6 (biblical knowledge)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 55:** Area Lore: Village 4 (personalities), Artes Liberales 3 (rhetoric), Brawl 2 (Fist), Charm 5 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 4 (local laws), Folk Ken 5 (magi), Guile 3 (keeping confessional secrets), Latin 5 (church ceremonies), Leadership 5 (inspiration), Living Language 5 (local dialect), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (practices), Organization Lore: Church 6 (own diocese), Organization Lore: Covenant 4 (personalities), Stealth 3 (hide), Theology 6 (biblical knowledge)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

If the Confessor has taken the new Uncertain Faith Flaw, he has a Personality Trait of the same name with a

score of at least 1. As for other traits, he is likely to be a Good Listener, which helps further define his role in the saga. A third trait says more about the Confessor as a person, who may be Compassionate, Duty-Bound, or Strict.

## The Corpse-Thief

*Yes, my lord, guaranteed fresh. It was procured from the bishop only this morning...*

A despicable character hated and feared by good Christian folk, the Corpse-Thief lurks around graveyards and gallows, seeking to steal ingredients to sell to witches and warlocks

alike. He knows that the bodies of suicides, murderers, and unbaptized children fetch the highest prices among his clientele. Naturally, a Corpse-Thief plies a highly specialized trade, and both his customers and his raw material are usually spread far and wide, occasioning him to travel extensively.

A Corpse-Thief is likely to pick up a good knowledge of occult matters. Having the Penetration Ability gives him a working knowledge of arcane connections and sympathetic connections. Magic Lore or Infernal Lore, or more rarely Faerie or Divine Lore, tell him to what use each type of material can be put, and cover matters such as Shape and Material bonuses and Enrichment of Objects of Virtue (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 124). A Corpse-Thief with the appropriate (Realm) Lore also understands

## New Arcane Ability: Craft Poppets

The character can make effigies of individuals out of wax, straw, and cloth that house an arcane connection and simultaneously act as a sympathetic connection to the people they represents. A simple effigy is good for one use, takes an hour to make, and requires a Dexterity + Craft Poppets roll against an Ease Factor of 9. A permanent poppet takes a week to make, and

has an Ease Factor of 12. Permanent poppets can accept a new Arcane Connection once the previous one has expired; naturally, this must be to the same person. Unlike other symbolic representations, a poppet made with this Ability may be used by any person, not just the character who made it. **Specialties:** a particular type of target — women, magi, dragons, kings, etc.

## Preserving Arcane Connections

As detailed on page 64 of *Art & Academe*, an apothecary can extend the lifespan of an Arcane Connection by preserving the material correctly. This can only be done for Arcane Connections of human, animal, or vegetable origin, and cannot be repeated to extend the duration further. Make a Dexterity + Profession: Apothecary roll, and consult the following table:

ORIGINAL EXPIRY	EASE FACTOR	NEW EXPIRY
Hours/Days	3	Weeks
Weeks	6	Months
Months	9	Seasons
Seasons	12	Years
Years	15	Decades
Decades	18	Indefinitely

what vis is, for what uses it might be employed, and where it tends to be found. Should the character also have Magic Sensitivity, he can locate vis himself, even if he cannot use it.

In addition to collecting body parts of the dead, a Corpse-Thief usually also specializes in taking arcane connections from the living. A Corpse-Thief might steal to order, or else obtain material from prominent townsfolk, then offer them to the highest bidder among his usual contacts. Combining the skills of a burglar with his occult lore, he can creep into a house or workspace, and knows which objects and body exuviae tend to form the best arcane connections. Furthermore, he recognizes the importance of handwritten documents, names, and personal data, such as birth dates, to the exercise of magic.

Typically, he crafts an effigy of his victim called a "poppet" or "witch doll," which takes advantage of sympathetic bonuses. Embedded in the poppet is an arcane connection, and it is sold along with the name of the victim, an example of his handwriting, and possibly (if the Corpse-Thief is educated) a horoscope, all of which increase the efficacy of the poppet

to his client (ArM5, page 84). If the character has the professional skills of an apothecary, he can even extend the life of the arcane connection; this is useful if he cannot find a seller immediately (see insert).

A Corpse-Thief may even be skilled in petty magical practices himself. He may have inherited some minor magical item, or have an intrinsic magical power from a Supernatural Ability. Due to the personality of a typical Corpse-Thief, such abilities are often malicious in nature, or at least used maliciously. For example, the thief's demon Valefar (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 57) can teach a person how to make a Hand of Glory from the hand of a hanged murderer.

## General Background

It takes a special sort of person to be a Corpse-Thief. Even the most inveterate, hard-bitten criminal generally shows respect for the dead. Furthermore, the knowledge of forbidden things hints at a dark past. A Corpse-Thief could have been the child of a witch or warlock, but showed no talent for sorcery at an early age, and so

was put to work in a useful trade to support his parent. Alternatively, the Corpse-Thief could have been an initiate of a diabolic cult, who practiced his trade at the bidding of his infernally tainted masters. The indoctrination that accompanies either of these backgrounds sets a twisted sense of morality that allows the character to do the horrible things that he does.

## THE VIATICARUS

Another path to such a questionable career is rooted in a superstition of the age: occasionally a person is given the Last Rites because he is near death, but then recovers. This is an exceptionally rare occurrence; indeed, the sacrament of Extreme Unction is supposed to guarantee death. Nevertheless, in Mythic Europe there are forces that can bring people back from the brink of death, not least of which is Hermetic magic. Far from being considered a second chance at life, such a circumstance is considered to generate a living corpse: neither truly alive nor properly dead. The *viaticarus* ("one prepared for the journey") is legally separated from society, and theologically separated from the Church. He is denied further sacraments; this is the point behind the Last Rites. He cannot attend church, get married, or enter Holy Orders.

Most significantly, he cannot perform penance for any sins he commits henceforth. Common superstition holds that nothing he does now can affect the placement of his soul in the afterlife, and he is free to sin without consequence. Church doctrine says otherwise, and suggests that the viaticarus should keep himself obsessively free from sin since it cannot be expiated. Legally, the bonds of marriage are dissolved, and the "widow" is free to marry again. Viaticari may not write wills, since dead men technically do not own property. By many local





traditions they cannot eat meat, have sexual intercourse, or walk in bare feet.

It is perhaps no surprise if one of these "living corpses" takes on a morally repugnant role, if they consider themselves beyond morality and immune to the burden of sin. As literal outcasts from society, they struggle to find a means by which to earn a living, making them easy prey for unscrupulous warlocks and magi. Unlike some grogg, a viaticarus might willingly work for Gifted individuals without reservation, eager for any acceptance, even if it is for what they do rather than for who they are.

## Character Creation

Players may use the following notes in the creation of corpse-thieves.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

A Corpse-Thief probably lurks on the fringes of society, so Social Status Virtues such as Wise One or Wanderer are appropriate, as is the Outcast Social Status Flaw. Essential to this character is an understanding of esoteric lore, and he needs a Virtue which grants the capacity to take Arcane Abilities at character creation, such as Arcane Lore. Magic Sensitivity proves very useful to a character such as this, and Social Contacts allows him to have a wide client base among the hedge witches of the region. He also benefits from Virtues that permit him to gain his raw ingredients more easily, such as Puissant Stealth and Light Touch. He may have the Minor Enchantments\* Virtue to represent some of the magic he has acquired from his clients.

The Tainted with Evil Flaw is highly appropriate, as is the Viaticarus Flaw\*. Thanks to his usual working hours, the Nocturnal Personality Flaw is suitable.

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

## Corpse-Thief Story Seeds

The following suggestions give some ideas for stories involving Corpse-Thieves.

### THE CAT'S-PAW

A player maga involved in a feud with a non-Hermetic wizard becomes the target of the Corpse-Thief's attention when he is commissioned to make a poppet of the player character. Having studied his target for a while, he decides to infiltrate the covenant as a day laborer or new servant, but through diligence or sheer good luck, he is caught in the act of retrieving his arcane connection. The temptation to kill the Corpse-Thief immediately is likely to be great, but more could be learned if he is captured and questioned. With the right incentive, the Corpse-Thief will sell out his employer, and perhaps be able to supply a poppet of her that he made as insurance.

This story works equally well with a magus opponent who has declared, or is about to declare, Wizard's War against a player magus.

### POACHER TURNED GAMEKEEPER

A Corpse-Thief who works for the covenant has a good professional knowledge of the local hedge wizards, and perhaps knows some of them personally. He may even be aware of their powers and weaknesses. When the magi hear of a particularly troublesome non-Hermetic wizard, they come to the Corpse-Thief for information. He can give them a list of names who it might be, and where they each can be found. The magi may be surprised — dismayed, even! — by how many minor magical practitioners live in the region right under their noses. Why are there so many, what are they up to, and how did they remain unnoticed for so long?

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

A Corpse-Thief needs the same Abilities that a regular thief benefits from: Stealth, Awareness, Athletics, and Legerdemain. Knowing what to steal is covered by Magic Lore and Penetration; the latter is also useful for any magical abilities the character possesses. In the preparation of material for sale, the Profession: Apothecary and the Craft: Poppets Abilities are also highly useful. Area Lore and Organization Lore are important Abilities in developing a client base from which to earn a living.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages include: Footpad, Apothecary, Magician, Craftsman, Cultist, Local.

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

This character must be able to take Arcane Abilities at character creation.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 24:** Area Lore 3 (graveyards), Athletics 2 (running), Bargain 1 (corpses), Brawl 3 (getting away), Concentration 2 (at night), Chirurgy 2 (crushing injuries), Craft Poppets 2 (5) (wizards), Folk Ken 2 (customers), Guile 3 (feigning innocence), Legerdemain 2 (acquiring locks of hair), Magic Lore 3 (undead), Native Language 5 (obsequious), Organization Lore: Apothecary Guild 2 (corruption), Penetration 2 (poppets), Profession: Apothecary 3 (preserving arcane connections), Stealth 4 (at night)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 35:** Area Lore 3 (graveyards), Athletics 2 (running), Bargain 2 (corpses), Brawl 3 (getting away), Concentration 2 (at night), Chirurgy 2 (crushing injuries), Craft Poppets 3 (wizards), Folk Ken 2 (customers), Guile 4 (feigning innocence), Infernal Lore 3 (undead), Legerdemain 3 (acquiring locks of hair), Magic Lore 4 (undead), Native Language 5 (obsequious), Organization Lore: Apothecary Guild 2 (corruption), Penetration 3 (poppets), Profession: Apothecary 4 (preserving arcane connections), Stealth 5 (at night)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 50:** Area Lore 3 (graveyards), Athletics 2 (running), Bargain 2 (corpses), Brawl 3 (getting away), Concentration 3 (at night), Chirurgy 4 (crushing injuries), Craft Poppets 4 (wizards), Folk Ken 3 (customers), Guile 5 (feigning innocence), Infernal Lore 3 (undead), Legerdemain 4 (acquiring locks of hair), Magic Lore 5 (undead), Native Language 5 (obsequious), Organization Lore: Apothecary Guild 2 (corruption), Penetration 4 (poppets), Profession: Apothecary 5(10) (preserving arcane connections), Stealth 5 (at night), Teaching 2 (Craft: Poppets)

## Corpse-Thief as Companion

Were the Corpse-Thief to be conceived as a companion character, the most obvious change to make to this character is to give him some overt Supernatural Abilities of his own. Particularly appropriate are Entrancement (*ArM5*, page 65), Cursing (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 35) or Hex (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 92). Combined with his ability to generate high Penetration totals from effigies and stolen arcane

connections, these Abilities can even be useful against a magical opponent. The Diabolic Past Story Flaw is ideally suited for a Corpse-Thief companion character, as is the Enemy Story Flaw, representing former victims of his craft.

A grog character can be converted into a companion character through Initiation into a Folk Witch coven (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 33) or an infernal tradition (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 126).

## The Craftsman

*Imagine the wonders that I could create in this place!*

### General Background

From the opulent coronation robes of a king to the simple milking stool used by the farmer's daughter, everything in Mythic Europe passes through the hands of a craftsman. They are the lifeblood of trade and commerce, but all too often they are of low status, forced to eke out a living by crafting the same items day after day, while others profit from their work.

Life in a covenant offers great opportunity. Covenants are often relatively wealthy, which is shared by all the covenfolk by way of a higher standard of living. Covenants also have access to strange and unusual materials, which provide challenges and interest to eager craftsmen. And the presence of magi means that craftsmen are able to work on items and devices with qualities far beyond those found in the mundane world.

More than perhaps any other grog, the role of the Craftsman is one that can evolve through the life of a saga. Assuming that the Craftsman

isn't noteworthy enough to be given a longevity ritual, you can expect the son to take over from the father, or indeed the daughter from the mother, during the course of a saga. This may happen more than once over the period of a particularly long or fast-moving saga.

Craftsmen may be particularly important in covenants home to one or more Verditius magi. They have an immediate use as forge-companions, providing assistance in the laboratory that translates into more efficient work, providing a bonus to Lab Totals. And a range of skilled craftsmen can provide training to the generalist Verditius keen to explore more than one craft.

## Character Creation

The following notes will help with the creation of a Craftsman.

### AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

More than other types of grog, there's a reason to advance the Craftsman from his young apprenticeship years through to being a master craftsman in his own right, with apprentices of his own. The growth of the Craftsman mirrors the growth of the magi and the covenant, and the handing of the workshop from the master to the younger journeyman marks the passage of time in the saga. An apprentice should start around age 15 and progress to journeyman by age 30. In another 15 years, he is likely to be a master craftsman at the top of his game, and will hang up his tools by the age of 60.

Characteristics should suit his craft, so Strength for a blacksmith, and Dexterity for most other crafts. Craftsmen should have a bias toward the physical characteristics.



## SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

A covenant blacksmith is likely to have a different set of Virtues and Flaws at the beginning of his career to those at the end.

**APPRENTICE VIRTUES AND FLAWS:** Guild Apprentice\*\*, Improved Characteristics, Puissant Blacksmith, Independent Craftsman\*\*, Necessary Magic Aura for Craft: Blacksmith\*, Animal Companion

At some point in his career, he establishes himself as a craftsman in his own right. Given that the character may take only one Social Status Virtue, he may become a Craftsman, Journeyman\*\*, or Custos. Taking Custos represents his increased status and connection with the magi, and represents the opportunity for additional training and practice in Finesse, the control of enchanted tools and devices, and in Latin. Once the character enters open play, however, the covenant may train him in whatever they see fit, regardless of his Virtues or Flaws.

**JOURNEYMAN VIRTUES AND FLAWS:** Custos, Improved Characteristics, Puissant Blacksmith, Independent Craftsman\*\*, Necessary Magic Aura for Craft: Blacksmith\*\*, Animal Companion

The life of a Craftsman can often be a grind, either confined to a workshop all day, or out on the road traveling between jobs. So an Animal Companion, as per the Flaw, is common. It might be the butcher's dog, the seamstress' cat, or even a succession of pet rats that have made the thatcher's wagon their home.

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

\*\* See *City & Guild*, page 53

## SUGGESTED ABILITIES

A Craftsman learns his trade from his years as an apprentice through to his position and rank as a master. Those in the outside world, especially those who live in towns and cities, may find themselves becoming more involved with the respective guilds for their profession or craft, but those who live and work in a covenant are less likely to develop in this way. They are more likely to be one of a handful of craftsmen looking after the needs of the covenant, their fortunes tied to those of their masters.

One skill that a covenant-trained Craftsman may develop that others won't is Finesse. While an Arcane Ability, Finesse governs the use and control of enchanted items. These are specifically useful for Rego Craft Magic (*Covenants*, page 49).

## TRAINING PACKAGES

The following packages support a covenant-based Craftsman: Covenant, Craftsman, Local, Trader, Trainer

It is also likely that the Craftsman will pick up some knowledge of supernatural creatures, such as faeries curious about his work. Experience points from the earlier packages can be used to improve (Realm) Lore Abilities.

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

The sample Abilities listed later include Finesse. Any character can learn Finesse in the normal run of play if he is given the chance. Characters may gain Finesse at character creation if they have an appropriate Virtue granting access to the Ability, such as Custos.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 15:** Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 1 (goods), Craft: Blacksmith 3 (fine work), Brawl 3

(Fist), Carouse 3 (stories), Charm 1 (first impressions), Chirurgy 1 (burns), Guile 1 (tall stories), Living Language 5, Organization Lore: Covenant 1 (names), Single Weapon 2 (Hammer), Stealth 1 (sneak), Survival 2 (camping out), Teaching (blacksmith) 3

**ABILITIES AT AGE 30:** Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 3 (goods), Craft: Blacksmith 5 (fine work), Brawl 4 (Fist), Carouse 3 (stories), Charm 2 (first impressions), Chirurgy 3 (burns), Faerie Lore 1 (fire sprites), Finesse 3 (enchanted items), Guile 2 (tall stories), Leadership 2 (craftsmen), Living Language 5, Organization Lore: Covenant 3 (names), Single Weapon 3 (hammer), Stealth 1 (sneak), Survival 2 (camping out), Teaching (blacksmith) 3

**ABILITIES AT AGE 45:** Awareness 3 (alertness), Bargain 4 (goods), Craft: Blacksmith 7 (fine work), Brawl 4 (Fist), Carouse 3 (stories), Charm 2 (first impressions), Chirurgy 3 (burns), Faerie Lore 2 (fire sprites), Finesse 3 (enchanted items), Guile 2 (tall stories), Latin 3 (hermetic usage), Leadership 4 (craftsmen), Living Language 5, Organization Lore: Covenant 4 (names), Single Weapon 4 (hammer), Stealth 2 (sneak), Survival 2 (camping out), Teaching (blacksmith) 3

## THE WORKSHOP

A Craftsman without a workshop cannot conduct his business. It is assumed that all Craftsmen have a basic workshop equipped with tools and supplied with materials sufficient to support his trade. What actually defines the workshop varies according to the craft. For instance, a blacksmith needs a forge to contain the intense heat he works with, a tinker needs a handcart on which to carry his simple tools and wares, while a thatcher has little more

than his tools and a wagon on which to carry his raw materials. The *City & Guild* supplement provides additional rules for representing and advancing workshops (page 65 onwards).

Each workshop is described through two characteristics, Innovation and Raw Materials, and by increasing these characteristics the the Craftsman can produce work of a higher quality. Workshop characteristics are improved through spending excess Labor Points (*City & Guild*, page 38) accumulated by the Craftsman.

Any advances in Innovation are retained by the workshop, able to pass to the next generation, but improved Raw Materials have an additional yearly Labor Point cost that the Craftsman must pay to maintain them, and the benefit is not passed on to the next generation. Increasing the Raw Materials characteristic decreases the number of excess Labor Points the Craftsman has available for other advancements.

### Craftswomen

Although the Craftsman grog archetype describes a craftsman, the covenant may have even more to offer the *craftswoman*. Crafts, trades, and their guilds are dominated by men in an atmosphere that doesn't necessarily put women on an equal footing. Even those crafts typically associated with women rarely organized into guilds, which prevented the status

of such trades from being raised. So what chance does the female silversmith have to practice her craft?

Thanks largely to the iconoclastic nature of the Order, where men and women are, nominally at least, afforded equal status without question, Craftswomen skilled in any craft may find employment as easily as any man.

As a rule of thumb, if you don't want to track grog Labor Points, you can assume the following workshop statistics:

**STANDARD WORKSHOP:** Innovation 0, Raw Materials 0  
**JOURNEYMAN WORKSHOP (AFTER 15 YEARS):** Innovation 1, Raw Materials 2  
**MASTER WORKSHOP (AFTER 30 YEARS):** Innovation 2, Raw Materials 2

Beyond adding to the Craftsman's Craft Ability for the purpose of producing quality goods, the workshop is something that can be handed on to the next generation and as such becomes a part of the covenant.

#### ASSISTANTS

A Craftsman may employ a number of assistants equal to his Leadership score, though he may always employ one apprentice regardless of his Leadership score. As well as helping in the workshop, these assistants may be the source of new grogs to replace the old over time, and may initiate stories of their own.

Each assistant adds half his Craft Ability score to the Craftsman's Workshop Total. If using multiple assistants, their Craft Scores should first be totalled and then divided by two.

#### PERSONALITY TRAITS & REPUTATION

A Craftsman supported by a covenant will doubtless be Hard-Working, but while some may be Kindly or Generous, others might be Strict or Miserly. The Craftsman should have one Personality Trait that determines his outlook on his work and another that shapes his relationship with his apprentices. A third trait can be se-





lected to round out the character.

It is most likely that a Craftsman living at a covenant will remain an unsung hero, the fruits of his labor obscured by the magical enchantments the magi bestow upon them. A grog Craftsman rarely generates a Reputation concerning his work. Craftsmen designed as

companion character, as discussed later, can acquire a strong reputation.

## Craftsman as Companion

Craftsman companions are less likely to be tied to the covenant and

may usually pursue their own goals, which means that progression into and through their craft guild is more likely. The *City & Guild* supplement provides a full treatment of playing through a guild career, for those with Craftsman characters.

## Craftsman Story Seeds

The following story seeds have a Craftsman at their heart, but they present challenges that magi and companions may face.

### THE APPRENTICE

A Craftsman approaches the covenant with something to sell: an apprentice. He considers the boy to be useless to him, but a wise woman told him that there was a touch of the magical about him. He wants five pounds for the boy to cover his lost earnings and his trouble. The apprentice doesn't have The Gift, but it is quickly apparent to the magi that his talents are linked to the Magic Realm, and that the covenant is the only place in which he will reach his potential.

### NEITHER APPRENTICE NOR MASTER

A new blacksmith comes to the covenant looking for work. The examples he shows are of the highest quality and he works far faster than the covenant's current blacksmith. With the magi keen to craft ever-better items and expend less on the upkeep of their covenant, do they accept this new blacksmith? And if they do, how can the displaced grog prove that the newcomer's smithy skills aren't all they appear? (See *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 87 for specifics on the Corrupted Abilities Flaw.)

### THE WORKSHOP

On venturing out to collect vis from a prime site on behalf of the magi, the grogs find that a blacksmith has built a small forge directly over the source of their Ignem vis. The forge is somewhat makeshift and hasn't been there for long. The blacksmith refuses to move on, claiming that this magical place is the only thing that helps him feed his family, and he is willing to defend himself if things get rough. Do the grogs deal with the issue and claim the vis or do they go back to their masters? Can the magi identify the blacksmith's supernatural Flaw, and do they offer him a solution that suits everybody?

### A NEW GENERATION

An aging covenant Craftsman, ailments weighing him down with each passing year, regrets never having taken an apprentice. These feelings are mirrored by one of the covenant magi. While the Craftsman and a few friends venture outside the covenant to find a youngster with an aptitude for his craft, the magus sets out to find a Gifted child. After false hope given by faeries, does the Craftsman finally find his apprentice? And can the magus overcome Infernal deception to rescue the Gifted child? The stories of both the magus and the Craftsman are mirrored in their searches, but perhaps the resolution lies in the same place.

### A GIFTED APPRENTICE

The problem with covenants is that the strange often goes unnoticed. One of the magi searches the local area for signs of a Gifted child that he can take under his wing and train in the Hermetic Arts. He learns of a craftsman who suspects the abilities of his own apprentice, but this craftsman is worried that, should wizards hear tell of this, the youth will be taken away and subjected to unbearable hardship and unconscionable danger. The trail leads back to the covenant itself. Why has the craftsman really kept this from his masters? Does the magus take the Gifted apprentice? How do the craftsman and the other covenfolk react to this?

### THE KNOWLEDGEABLE THATCHER

A humble thatcher approaches the magi with the aim of discussing and learning magic. The man is not Gifted and is not even educated, but he has been touched by magic. The thatcher explains that, while he is a simple craftsman, he is able to weave magic into the straw he uses. But he has ambitions greater than mere corn-dollies; he wants to enchant the thatch that is his daily trade, something that so far eludes him. Can the magi undertake research to help the man expand his power, or are there other Learned Magicians better suited? And where can they be found?

## THE SUPERNATURAL CRAFTSMAN

A companion Craftsman has access to the Touched by (Realm) Major Supernatural Virtue, which in turn allows him to craft Wondrous Items (as per the rules in *City & Guild*, page 70). These enchanted items are more limited in scope than Hermetic enchantments, but they allow the companion to develop his own career and reputation as a craftsman of note. And as the character is unGifted, he or she may be more easily accepted in society, opening up opportunities not available to magi.

## CRAFTSMAN AS ARTIST

Chapter 8 of the *Art & Academe* supplement provides rules for artists in Mythic Europe. Production Artists use their Craft Abilities, such as Craft: Stone Mason, Craft: Glazier, and Craft: Silversmith to produce works of art that have a value far beyond that of a mundane example of a craftsman's work.

This path opens up a whole new avenue for the Companion Craftsman, one which can take him into the richest and most volatile levels of society. It also opens up new rules for the creation of art and the acquisition of new benefits.

## SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Guild Craftsmen will want to look at the guild-related virtues and flaws in *City & Guild*, chapter 3. Those looking for a Supernatural Craftsmen should take the Touched by (Realm) Virtue presented in *City & Guild*, chapter 4. Production Artists are discussed in *Art & Academe*, chapter 8, and this includes new Virtues for the Maestro Mythic Companion character.

## Ex-Prostitutes

*I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.*

— *The Bible*, Luke 15:7

Prostitution is common in the urban areas of Mythic Europe. Many prostitutes have other professions, and supplement their income on fair days, or by soliciting business from traveling merchants when the harvest is poor. In cities, however, there are some women who work solely as prostitutes, and the Church continually exhorts them to stop their sinning. Some do.

## General Background

When a prostitute repents, she poses a problem for the Church. Her trade may have been sinful, but it provided an income. Lacking other skills, and not a likely prospect for marriage, an ex-prostitute often falls back into her old ways, begins begging, or becomes a petty criminal. Some sections of the Church have had success in resettling fallen women, using funds provided by noblewomen. There are two common schemes which may affect a covenant.

Some noblewomen found new nunneries with ex-prostitutes as the nuns. This sometimes works perfectly, sometimes fails due to recidivism, and in some scandalous cases, leads to well-disguised brothels. To improve the chance of the nunnery succeeding, it is often placed far from towns, in the wild places that attract spring covenants. The leader of a new nunnery for fallen women is usually a noblewoman retiring from the world. In time, ex-prostitutes may rise to senior roles in such nunneries, but rarely to governance.

A less expensive alternative is to give the fallen woman a little money,

and passage to a town so distant from her previous home that she has no reputation. This is thought to allow her to find a husband, and so fade into society. This seldom works perfectly, because few medieval people move towns, so the women seem suspicious, and a woman failing to rapidly catch a husband still has few skills and needs an income. Resettlement is, however, the cheaper method, and does give women a fresh start away from old acquaintances.

Joining a young covenant is a good option for women who want to leave the sex trade. Many of the people who work for spring covenants are already socially marginalized. In many spring covenants, people do not discuss their pasts. If they do, many have done things worse than sex work.

Magi ruling spring covenants are often concerned by a lack of gender balance in their servants. This occurs because the initial turb of grogs, taken to found a covenant in the wilderness, is comprised of experienced soldiers, usually male. To move from a military camp to a community, wives are needed. Women who are penitent petty criminals, including ex-prostitutes, can often be convinced to leave mundane society for a guaranteed job and a fresh start.

Magi may also accept fallen women into their community to seek favor with the Church and local noblewomen. Several older covenants have populations descended from an initial group of fallen women, brought to the site while the covenant was still in spring. These places are more welcoming to women who have recently left the sex trade than mundane communities.

Covenants that allow prostitutes to retire to them can develop poor Reputations in surrounding communities, if the members are not careful. Many have formal structures to smooth social integration. In one covenant, for example, each new arrival is



treated as the niece of a woman from the previous generation of adoptees, gaining a new extended family and place in the community.

## Character Creation

The following notes will assist in the creation of characters who worked previously as prostitutes.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Characters who have worked as prostitutes, and seek employment

with covenants, usually come from the lower classes of Mythic European society. Women of higher social standing tend to act as mistresses to a single powerful lord, and are supported by his arrangements, or by their own families. Choose Social Status Virtues appropriately.

Many of the other Virtues and Flaws appropriate for characters working in the sex trade — Gossip, Protection, Social Contacts — are lost before play begins, when the character leaves her hometown. Players should only select Virtues and Flaws that the character will use in play.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Most prostitutes are from the lower classes of urban areas, and have Abilities suiting this background. There are so many prostitutes, however, that characters from a wide variety of backgrounds, with a broad array of skills, are possible.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

If an Ex-Prostitute joins a nunnery, she may be a Lay Sister. If she has traveled to a different town, she might pick up any career: Laborer, Craftswoman, and Servant are the most common, but

## Ex-Prostitute Story Seeds

Ex-Prostitutes can stir up many kinds of stories.

### A TROUBLESOME FOUNDATION

The magi learn from local farmers that a noblewoman has sent surveyors to a site near the covenant. Their companions investigate, and meet the architect. He has been commissioned to design a nunnery. Few covenants want religious establishments nearby, so they send a party to investigate the noblewoman, and see if she can be convinced to halt or move her foundation.

The noblewoman is elderly and wishes to retire from the world, leaving her lands in the hands of her son. She will accept a portion of her lands as abbess of a new foundation for fallen women. She is motivated by a desire for a contemplative life, a need of something useful to do in her retirement, and a spirit of charity.

The characters can alter her plans in several ways. The simplest is to offer her financial assistance in exchange for selecting a distant site. This would allow her to create a larger nunnery, and aid more

fallen women. Player characters might, instead, recruit the noblewoman as an administrator, and her fallen women as covenfolk. If handled carefully, this could earn the covenant the gratitude of the nobleman, whose revenues would not be diminished by land grants, while still appearing as an act of charity, and so gaining the approval of the Church.

### THE WRATH OF THE LUSTY

Recidivism in ex-prostitutes has many causes, but one is that there are demons of lust who prefer they resume their role as snares for the souls of men. A covenant full of contrite women may attract the attention of many Tempters (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 42). Rules for designing succubus and incubi, a type of demon that often hides among sex workers, are found on page 55, with an example on page 52. They may also attract the attention of a more powerful sexual demon, who seeks to harm the covenant by acting as mistress to a local nobleman and seeding hatred against the magi.

The magi may be able to protect their covenfolk, but the women have a second patron Penitent prostitutes are guarded by Saint Mary Magdalene. Mary uses many of the tricks of medieval saints, like sending visions and nightmares, but is also particularly interventionist, and may cause shackles to fail, wounds to close, and faithful people to be mystically transported to safety.

### A CONSTERNATION OF FAERIES

Fairies are attracted to people who are moving from one life stage to another, and this includes penitents. The possibility of repeated recidivism, where women cross and recross the boundary of what is socially acceptable, is attractive to some types of faeries. A community of penitent prostitutes may draw in sexual faeries like satyrs, who, unable to cross the *Aegis*, trouble nearby villages. Centaurs, representing the division between the bestial and cerebral natures of men, may be attracted to the community to redefine their roles into fully anthropomorphic shapes.



many professions are open to a young woman with a clean start and good luck.

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

**ABILITIES AT AGE 16:** Area Lore 2 (seedy districts), Athletics 2 (run-

ning), Awareness 1 (when alone with someone), Bargain 3 (sexual services), Brawl 2 (grappling), Carouse 3 (intimacy), Charm 3 (licentious), Etiquette 1 (getting past guards), Folk Ken 3 (clients), Guile 2 (protesting innocence), Intrigue 1 (romantic), Native Language 5

(cursing), Profession: Prostitute 2 (collecting payment)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 30:** Area Lore 3 (seedy districts), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 1 (when alone with someone), Bargain 4 (sexual services), Brawl 2 (grappling), Carouse 5 (intimacy), Charm 4 (licentious), Etiquette 1 (getting past guards), Folk Ken 4 (clients), Guile 3 (protesting innocence), Intrigue 1 (romantic), Legerdemain 2 (coins), Native Language 5 (cursing), Profession: Prostitute 5 (collecting payment)

## Ex-Prostitute as Companion

Ex-Prostitutes who become companion characters differ from their sisters not so much in background or Ability, but in their fortune in their later career, and their influence in the troupe's stories. Characters who rise to a station that they could lose if their past were revealed may select the Dark Secret Flaw. Characters without this Flaw may instead have another Story Flaw, fleshing out the character's background further.

## Saint Mary Magdalene: A Note For Players

Discussing religious figures is always awkward. Troupes are encouraged to discuss their level of comfort both with the portrayal of ex-prostitutes in their game, and their relationship with Saint Mary Magdalene.

Saint Mary Magdalene is interesting, in that she appears so differently to the two halves of medieval Christianity. In the Catholic west in 1220, she is believed to have been an ex-prostitute, the "sinful woman" in Luke who anoints the feet of Jesus, and, on a separate occasion, anoints Je-

sus' head. This is not the belief of the modern Catholic Church, who sees these three as separate women. In medieval literature, she is the patron of penitent sex workers and grants miracles to aid them. She is also the patron of contemplatives, apothecaries, perfumers, hairdressers, reformed sinners, and women in general. In addition, she is also credited with the invention of Easter eggs.

In Mythic Europe, a cult in her service is spreading through Burgundy, but her cult in Provence has not

yet reached its historical heights. She is seen as the Apostle to the Apostles, and the first Christian to accept and announce the Resurrection.

In the Orthodox east, Mary is believed to have been a woman of such great piety that Satan misidentified her as the Mary who would bear Jesus, and sent seven demons to trouble her. She is seen as an equal to the apostles. She is a patron of women, but not of prostitutes in particular.

Her relics are found in Vézelay in Burgundy, and in Constantinople.



# The Failed Apprentice

*I could have been like them, you know. I should have been like them! But... that was a long time ago, and where else is there for me to go?*

It is the hope of every magus that the apprentice he trains embraces the magical teachings of Bonisagus, swears the Oath, and follows his master's path into the Order of Hermes. But for some, those hopes are dashed, and the apprentice proves little more than a broken vessel to be discarded and replaced. Where should these young students go, with the truth of the supernatural world revealed to them, and no place in mundane society?

## General Background

Robbed of his Gift, but with knowledge of the supernatural and Bonisagus' theories, the Failed Apprentice still has much to offer to a covenant. If taken from his parents at a very young age, life in a covenant is possibly the only life he has ever known. If he doesn't feel he can stay with his former master, he may seek out another covenant, either one that is friendly to his own, or one that he knows would offend the magus responsible for the loss of his Gift.

A Failed Apprentice may find himself busy in copying and preparing texts, assisting within the laboratory, or advising covenfolk both at home and on their journeys on supernatural matters.

## Character Creation

The following notes will help with the creation of a Failed Apprentice.

### AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Apprentices can be taken at any age, though magi work hard to find them in their youth, when they can be molded into the image of a magus. A Failed Apprentice joining the covenant upon losing his Gift will probably be younger than 25, while one who has traveled before finding his place will be older.

The Failed Apprentice is normally intelligent, so as to take the mental rigors of a learned life, and hardy to withstand the toll of working magic, so Intelligence and Stamina should be his primary characteristics. Positive Perception or Dexterity will also benefit him, depending on what Supernatural Abilities remain.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

The Failed Apprentice has a number of Virtues and Flaws that reflect his magical past, and perhaps hint at a magical future.

Failed Apprentice; Latent Magical Ability, Magic Sensitivity; Broken Vessel\*, Missing Eye, Offensive to Animals

\*See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

The Failed Apprentice Social Status Virtue is apt and gives the character access to both Academic and Arcane abilities. Latent Magical Ability and Magic Sensitivity are the remnants of the apprentice's Gift. The Flaws also represent these remnants, with the Missing Eye a lasting physical reminder, Offensive to Animals echoing the effect his Gift once had, and Broken Vessel a continuing threat of his magical powers slipping away from him. Alternatively, a Personality Flaw representing his continued bad feelings about the events that stripped his Gift from him would be entirely appropriate in place of a physical defect.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

A Failed Apprentice would have been tutored in academic and arcane knowledge until his Gift deserted him. Beyond that, he can take and improve any Abilities that his background suggests.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages include: Covenfolk, Failed Apprentice, Magician, Natural Philosopher, Teacher

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

The Ability scores later do not take account of the Broken Vessel Flaw, nor do they account for any time spent learning the Arts from former masters. The scores have been arrived at using the standard grog creation guidelines.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 15:** Area Lore 1 (geography), Artes Liberales 1 (astronomy), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Brawl 1 (Fist), Charm 2 (first impressions), Etiquette 1 (faeries), Faerie Lore 2 (faerie mounds), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Infernal Lore 1 (curses), Latin 3 (Hermetic usage), Living Language 5 (storytelling), Magic Lore 2 (regiones), Magic Sensitivity 2 (auras), Magic Theory 2 (learning spells), Order of Hermes Lore 1 (history), Organization Lore: Covenant 1 (personalities), Philosophiae 2 (experimental philosophy), Profession: Scribe 2 (copying)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 30:** Area Lore 1 (geography), Artes Liberales 4 (astronomy), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Brawl 1 (Fist), Charm 2 (first impressions), Etiquette 3 (faeries), Faerie Lore 3 (faerie mounds), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Infer-

## Failed Apprentice Story Seeds

The following story seeds originate with the Failed Apprentice and he certainly appears as a prominent character, but they are designed with magus and companion characters in mind.

### A GIFT RETURNED BROKEN

A magus Bonisagi has fostered his apprentice out to another magus, just as House Bonisagus tradition dictates. But the apprentice suddenly returns to the covenant with a letter from the fostering magus. It seems a magical experiment has robbed the boy of his Gift. What does the magus do now? Can he force compensation for the loss? How can he replace the apprentice? And what becomes of the young student with so much stolen from him?

### A NEW TRADITION

A wizard from a hedge magic tradition searching for an apprentice of his own hears tell of a student damaged by his association with the

Order. He offers to take the boy and teach him in his own way. But there's one problem: the wizard is under threat from an antagonistic Flambeau, and if the boy goes with the wizard, his life is at risk too.

### A SECOND CHANCE

A faerie fortune teller accosts the failed apprentice while at market and offers a chance to wield magic again. But three tasks are laid out, which the apprentice must complete. The first is to rescue the "pining heart of the unforgotten woman." The second is to "capture the tears of the resolute man." And the third is to "reunite the distant lovers, in marriage, before three moons are done." If these three tasks can be accomplished, then the apprentice will know magic again. The fortune teller offers little advice, except that the woman will be found in a castle, in Acre, far across the sea. And one last thing: the fortune teller gives the apprentice a golden ring, with the assurance that "by this ring will she know you."

### THE SEED

An ancient magus, known to have visions and premonitions, tells the covenant that a powerful Gift may soon be born to the covenant. Deciphering his visions, the magi discern that the bookish Failed Apprentice is to be the father, and the mother is to be the somewhat robust cook, widow to the former turb captain. Can the magi bring these two together? Is love even within the power of the magi? Or will they need expert faerie assistance?

### A MUNDANE MASTER

The old Failed Apprentice, finally tired of life at the covenant, leaves. Having taken minor orders and calling himself a clerk, he finds a position as an advisor on supernatural matters to a nearby noble. But then the old man sends word to his former covenant that the noble is a potential threat to them. How does the covenant investigate? And has the old man's disloyalty already been discovered?

nal Lore 3 (curses), Latin 3 (Hermetic usage), Living Language 5 (storytelling), Magic Lore 3 (regions), Magic Sensitivity 4 (auras), Magic Theory 3 (learning spells), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (history), Organization Lore: Covenant 2 (personalities), Philosophiae 3 (experimental philosophy), Profession: Scribe 3 (copying)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 45:** Area Lore 1 (geography), Artes Liberales 4 (astronomy), Awareness 2 (determining effect), Brawl 1 (Fist), Charm 2 (first impressions), Concentration 3 (academic work), Dominion Lore 3 (divine creatures), Etiquette 3 (faeries), Faerie

Lore 3 (faerie mounds), Folk Ken 2 (magi), Infernal Lore 3 (curses), Latin 3 (Hermetic usage), Living Language 5 (storytelling), Magic Lore 3 (regions), Magic Sensitivity 5 (auras), Magic Theory 3 (learning spells), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (history), Organization Lore: Covenant 2 (personalities), Philosophiae 7 (experimental philosophy), Profession: Scribe 3 (copying)

At the age of 45, the Failed Apprentice has also researched five Formulae, as described in *Art & Academe*, and gained one Enriched object of virtue as described in *Realms of Power: Magic*.

### PERSONALITY TRAITS

A Failed Apprentice may be Angry, Bitter, or Resentful over whatever took his Gift from him. The experience may have made him either Pessimistic or Resolute in the face of new challenges. But in either case, he may approach life with a new Worldly-Wise aspect.

## Failed Apprentice as Companion

Grogg have a limited number of slots open for Virtues and Flaws and so



have a limited range of Supernatural Abilities open to them. Companions and Mythic Companions may take more of these. They may also take Story Flaws relating to the events, perhaps Plagued by Supernatural Entity, or even Dark Secret, in addition to a Magical Air.

## The Farrier

Some say an army marches on its stomach. But an army of horses marches very poorly indeed without proper hoof care, or if not professionally shod. An expert in this field is a prized asset in any army, caravan, or covenant. The Farrier is an important professional, needed wherever horses are in use. He is more craftsman than animal wrangler. While regular stable boys and grooms take care of the day-to-day tending and the hard labor of fetching water and mucking out the stables, the Farrier has more specialized skills. His primary area of expertise is caring for horses' hooves and fitting horseshoes, as well as general equine veterinary skills. The village blacksmith might have wrought the shoe, and could shoe the horse, if need be. But the Farrier can adapt, modify, and fit it optimally. Where many horses need care, a specialized Farrier is of great value. Some people even attribute to a good Farrier supernatural abilities; this may or may not be the case.

### General Background

A wholly mundane Farrier could be the usual misfit or tragic figure, a person having lost everything or fallen to the bottom rung of society. Alternatively, he could be a person who has made enemies of nobles or been shunned by the craft guild. Such a

character could easily be lured by a secure, free, and comfortable position at a well-off covenant.

A supernaturally aligned Farrier could either be shunned by society in general and by the Church in particular, or be harassed or sought after by magi, hedge wizards, or supernatural beings. And as such, only a covenant with a fair *Aegis of the Hearth* offers any real sanctuary. Depending on the supernatural abilities of the Farrier, covenants and magi could be anything from mildly to very interested. Small, mundane enhancements of quality, or even magical abilities, are great boons to the riders of a covenant turf. And this is nothing to the advantages a Mercer House could gain for their Redcaps.

### Character Creation

The following notes provide guidance on creating a Farrier.

#### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Virtues might include: Animal Ken, Craft Guild Training\*, Mythic Farrier\*, Puissant (Craft: Farrier)

Flaws might include: Curse of Slander\*, Imagined Folk Tradition Vulnerability\*, Independent Craftsman, Necessary (Realm) for (Ability), Vulnerable to Folk Tradition

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

#### SOCIAL STATUS

Craftsman seems the logical choice, although Wanderer or Outcast is appropriate for a newcomer or a troubled individual, or Covenfolk for a long-term employee.

#### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Suggested abilities are: Animal Handling, Craft: Farrier, Craft: Blacksmith, Bargain.

### New Ability: Craft: Farrier (General)

This is the professional skill of hoof care and shoeing horses. It differs from Animal Handling by focusing on horses, and by expanding the knowledge of serious care of hooves, teeth and legs. It is also more craft-oriented, as it includes the skills needed to modify and adapt horseshoes made by a blacksmith. It may be used instead of Animal Handling or Medicine to cure equine disease; the farrier has a +1 bonus to resolve it, increasing to +3 if it concerns the feet, compared to somebody using Animal Handling. Many farriers also have Craft: Blacksmith, expanding their expertise to making horseshoes from raw iron as well as other iron-

working skills.

Note that the rules from *City & Guild* for craft quality (page 67) allow for the farrier to make high quality horseshoes. A Craft Total of 12 makes Superior items, giving a +1 bonus for a single feature. This could cover only some of the typical Riding specialties: speed, sureness of foot, trample damage, jumping skill, etc.. Horseshoes cannot by mundane means affect other specialties, like ease of control or endurance, but a Mythic Farrier could work magic into the shoes. A Craft total of 15 or more makes Excellent items, giving a bonus to all uses of a single Ability of +1 or more, limited to [Craft Ability]/3.

## TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages include: Athletic or Social Childhood. Craftsman, Farmer, or perhaps Animal Trainer. Covenfolk or Trainer for an experienced specialist.

The Craftsman package should use Craft: Farrier for Craft Type A, and Animal Handling or Craft: Blacksmith for Craft B.

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

These suggested Abilities can be used for any Farrier.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 15 (APPRENTICE):** Animal Handling 1 (horses), Area Lore 2 (local), Awareness 3 (animals), Bargain 3 (equine), Brawl 2 (grappling), Carouse 1 (stories), Craft: Farrier 4 (shoes), Native Language 5 (peasants), Organization Lore: Farriers' Guild 2 (regulations), Ride 3 (jumping).

**ABILITIES AT AGE 25 (JOURNEYMAN):** Animal Handling 3 (horses), Area Lore 2 (local), Awareness 3 (animals), Bargain 3 (equine), Brawl 2 (grappling), Carouse 3 (stories), Craft: Blacksmith 3 (15) (horseshoes), Craft: Farrier 5 (15) (shoes), Native Lan-

guage 5 (peasants), Organization Lore: Farriers' Guild 2 (regulations), Ride 3 (jumping), Swim 2 (diving).

**ABILITIES AT AGE 40 (MASTER):** Animal Handling 5 (horses), Area Lore 4 (local), Awareness 4 (animals), Bargain 3 (equine), Brawl 3 (grappling), Carouse 3 (stories), Craft: (Blacksmith) 5 (horseshoes), Craft: Farrier 6 (shoes), Guile 4 (fraud), Native Language 5 (peasants), Organization Lore: Farriers' Guild 3 (regulations), Ride 3 (jumping), Swim 2 (diving).

## Farrier Story Seeds

These story seeds feature a Farrier as a central character.

### TIPPING THE SCALES

The covenant's scouts report that an ongoing, armed conflict is not only escalating, but the enemy is getting the upper hand. The turb is losing the battle due to the swiftness and responsiveness of the enemy's cavalry. Rumor has it that an excellent farrier moved to the neighboring village just last year, but strange things are said about him. Whether or not he is evil incarnate, he is said to possess almost supernatural abilities. The magi want to enlist his help, voluntarily or not. But he is not so easily coerced, and further study reveals that he is in fact in the employment of the enemy. Thus, his recruitment becomes doubly important; not only can he improve the covenant's cavalry, his services will also be denied to the enemy. But beware, as he is easily spooked and may bolt and all but disappear. Retracing his past steps shows that he moves yearly,

and always ends up with a poor reputation. Do the magi really want such a troublemaker in their midst?

### PLAYING THE PART

In the course of an adventure, a group of magi and their retinue come across a somewhat strange noble court, in the middle of the wilderness. The archetypical courtiers and retainers found there, as well as the flawless castle, quickly reveal out the fay. But it is too late, the characters are already caught up in a faerie story of court intrigue, romance and tragic dueling. Regrettably, the court is inhabited by dark faeries, who are sore losers indeed. Some of the lower-ranking fay even stoop to cheating, a thing immediately punished by the lord, but the setbacks to the player characters' situation remain. Eventually, one of the court servants turns out to be a faerie-touched human, serving as stable master. He has been held prisoner, but tolerated it, while learning from the faerie smith. But now he is fed

up, and wants to leave. He offers to help the characters to steal the fastest faerie horses, and hamper the lord's hunting party. However, the ensuing hunt is tricky, since the dark forest is still to a certain degree controlled by the faerie lord.

### A PAWN SAVED IS A PAWN OWNED

A maga is tasked with setting up a Mercer house at her covenant, in order to secure the best possible mounts for the Redcaps. The orders are clear, the task is rushed along, but the resources are lagging. The covenant lacks a great deal of the resources due to other pressing matters or vis shortages. However, the covenant has a Mythic Farrier in its service, and the maga sees great opportunities. Significantly, a lot of what she thought she needed magic and vis for can be done by this simple craftsman. Can he be convinced to do with his skills what might have needed Hermetic magic?



## Farrier as Companion

Using the Farrier concept as a companion gives even more reason to play with the supernatural side of it. The increased range of Virtues possible allows Mythic Farrier to be expanded with a second form, or even replaced by the Touched by [Realm] Major Virtue in order to avoid some of the restrictions of the Minor version (*City & Guild*, page 71). Furthermore, Piusant (Ability), Affinities, Increased, or Great Characteristic can boost the potential Craft Totals considerably. Various Social Status Virtues from *City & Guild* could improve the Farrier's place in society and his workshop, and possibly give him the benefits of assistants. But the main idea is making him a character worth playing and bringing along on adventures, instead of having him just hammer away in his shop. Investing in the Arcane Lore Virtue would make him a fine choice to bring along when investigating exotic locales for minerals — for him to use in his horseshoes — or for supernaturally aligned riding beasts.

## The Jack-of-All-Trades

*No problem at all. I was apprenticed to a mason before I went on campaign with Duke Tybol. Of course, that was after my brief stint in the circus. I'll soon have that bridge fixed, and we can be on our way.*

Everybody knows someone like this character. He is the sort of person who has never managed to hold down a single job for too long. He has no idea what he wants to do with his life, and he drifts from place to place, never remaining long enough to learn anything that might earn him a living. He might have begun as a baker's appren-

tice, but then enrolled into university dreaming of becoming a famous academician. Once those dreams fade, he enlists in the army, until his unit is disbanded and he is turned out penniless onto the streets. This prompts him to engage in a larcenous career until he has stolen enough to invest in a trade...and so on and so forth. Over the course of a life like this, a character can accumulate a vast array of dif-

ferent skills, but he will never be good enough in any one Ability to make a career out of it: a true jack-of-all-trades, but master of none.

## General Background

In Mythic Europe, only those from a moderately wealthy background have the option to choose a trade for





## Jack-of-All-Trades Story Seeds

A Jack-of-All-Trades character can end up embroiled in just about any kind of story. or extract information. Or maybe it is simply an accident.

### THE PERILS OF OVER-RELIANCE

A covenant has a contested vis source whose method of collection changes every year; for example, a magical sphinx poses a different challenge every year. The Jack-of-All-Trades can usually be relied upon to gather the vis, since he can meet most challenges. However, the grog fails to return from one of his regular trips from the covenant, and the covenant has a dilemma. If they go ahead with the yearly task, they have a higher probability of failure, and may well be too late to save their valuable grog from whatever peril he has found himself in. However, if they devote resources to his rescue, they might allow others to capitalize on their failure. And what predicament is the grog in anyway? Perhaps he has been imprisoned by the covenant's enemy in an attempt to weaken them

### A PROBLEM SHARED IS A PROBLEM INHERITED

The player characters first come across a jinxed grog as he struggles with a wagon that has broken an axle and is blocking the road. The quickest way to get by is to assist the flustered individual to reload his cargo and help repair his employer's wagon. However, the spilled load has angered a local faerie — perhaps it was a consignment of iron horseshoes for the local town — and the faerie is incapable of distinguishing the responsible individual (the grog) from those who help him (the player characters). Throughout the course of their shared misfortune, the grog proves himself to be resourceful, and since he is probably going to be out of a job anyway (he's frightfully late with this cargo), he asks if there is perhaps a job for him with the player characters.

themselves; most peasants take on their fathers' profession, or that of the master to whom they are apprenticed. For someone from a humble background to become a Jack-of-All-Trades, something else must have driven him from home and prevented him from settling down. This might be as simple as a wanderlust, a thirst to see the world and witness new experiences that drives him ever onwards. Alternatively, he might make others uncomfortable due to poor hygiene, odious personal habits, outspoken beliefs, or a general aura of wrongness. Finally, he may carry some sort of curse or bad luck that discourages anyone from wanting to become his friend, for fear of being caught up in the backlash. This could

be a very lonely or pitiful character.

Despite mundane society having little use for a character who cannot manage to master a single trade, such a character can prove a boon to a covenant. Here, his very lack of focus can be a blessing to a turb, and he can find himself being paid purely because of his eclectic collection of knowledge and skills. When on expedition, a soldier who has the Abilities of Single Weapon, Craft: Cook, and Etiquette, in addition to being able to speak French and Ancient Greek and debate Philosophiae, can be of great value to a magus. He might not be the best warrior in the world, but his other Abilities more than make up the difference in the eyes of the covenant.

## Character Creation

What follows are notes to help create Jack-of-All-Trades characters.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

First, decide why the character has been unable to stay in one place; this could be due to any of the following Flaws: Craving for Travel\*, Jinxed\*, Lesser Malediction, Unlucky\*, Social Handicap, or Tainted with Evil. The character should have at least one, and possibly two Virtues, allowing him to take Academic, Arcane, or Martial Abilities, and is likely to have extra experience points from Virtues such as Privileged Upbringing or Well-Traveled. The character probably does not have Piusant (Ability), Affinity with (Ability), or any other Virtue that indicates a particular focus, but the Jack-of-All-Trades\* Virtue is highly appropriate. A character like this could be totally Carefree about his lack of focus and direction, or he could be depressed and Pessimistic instead. The Master of None\* and Careless with Ability\* Flaws represent a character who is mediocre at a lot of things, but highly unspecialized.

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Just about any Ability suits this character concept, and he is likely possessed of a number of Abilities that are unusual ones for grogs to have, such as Etiquette or Artes Liberales. It is likely that he is a soldier at base, which would enhance his usefulness in a turb by being able to turn his hand to anything, in addition to being able to fight as part of the trained group.



## TRAINING PACKAGES

The character is likely to have taken several three-year packages, representing flitting from job to job in the course of his career. Just about any package is possible. He probably has spent the most time in professions providing Martial Abilities.

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

This character must be able to take Martial Abilities at character creation.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 22:** Animal Handling 2 (oxen), Area Lore 3 (jobs), Athletics 3 (climbing), Awareness 1 (being watched), Brawl 3 (punches), Chirurgy 3 (cuts), Craft: Wrought Iron 1 (nails), Folk Ken 2 (employers), Guile 2 (qualifications), Native Language 5 (wide vocabulary), Profession: Farmer 3 (plowing), Profession: Storyteller 3 (bawdy tales), Single Weapon 3 (15) (axe), Stealth 1 (inside), Survival 2 (on the road)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 34:** Animal Handling 2 (oxen), Area Lore 4 (jobs), Athletics 3 (10) (climbing), Awareness 2 (5) (being watched), Brawl 3 (5) (punches), Carouse 3 (drinking capacity), Chirurgy 3 (cuts), Concentration 1 (on watch), Craft: Wrought Iron 1 (nails), Folk Ken 3 (employers), Guile 2 (5) (qualifications), Hunt 2 (deer), Native Language 5 (wide vocabulary), Profession: Farmer 3 (plowing), Profession: Storyteller 3 (bawdy tales), Single Weapon 4 (10) (axe), Stealth 1 (inside), Survival 3 (on the road), Thrown Weapon 3 (dagger)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 46:** Animal Handling 2 (oxen), Area Lore 4 (jobs), Athletics 4 (climbing), Awareness 3 (being watched), Bargain 2 (clothes), Brawl 4 (punches), Carouse 3 (drinking capacity), Charm 3 (women), Chirurgy 3 (cuts), Concentration 1 (on watch), Craft: Wrought Iron

1 (nails), Folk Ken 3 (employers), Guile 3 (qualifications), Hunt 2 (deer), Intrigue 1, Leadership 2 (10) (in combat), Native Language 5 (wide vocabulary), Profession: Farmer 3 (plowing), Profession: Merchant 2 (cloth), Profession: Sailor 2 (rivers), Profession: Storyteller 3 (bawdy tales), Single Weapon 5 (axe), Stealth 1 (inside), Survival 3 (on the road), Swim 2 (rivers), Thrown Weapon 3 (dagger)

## Jack-of-All-Trades as Companion

A companion character might have a Story Flaw that prevents her from settling down, such as Enemies or Plagued by Supernatural Entity. With more Virtue points available, a companion character might be able to get a score in all possible Abilities, and can pick multiple Virtues that offer extra experience points to represent the wealth of experience that she has gathered over her years of wandering.

A grog Jack-of-All-Trades could easily blossom into a companion character by finally settling down into a trade — and discovering that she is remarkably good at it. This sort of Inauguration transformation might bring with it a number of Virtues which describe one's new-found excellence in a particular Ability, such as Puissant (Ability) and Cautious with (Ability).

## Misguided Mystic

*I'm getting a letter 'D'...it's an old man... does that have any meaning to you, dearie? He's holding his chest, as if it hurts...was he elf-shot perhaps? No? Not familiar?...maybe the spirits are saying 'B,' not 'D'...*

Not everyone who claims mystical insight has actually been touched by a higher power. True prophecy is exceptionally rare, and most street-corner "prophets" are charlatans or mentally deranged. Religious zealots might undergo ordeals in order to gain a glimpse of the Divine Plan. Occasionally, however, individuals arise who did not seek out their visions, and are neither mad nor attempt to make a profit from their predictions. Such individuals often reject their unnatural insights, and keep them hidden from their families and friends for years. Alternatively they may have a single confidante, who unwittingly lets slip his friend's miraculous abilities, and she becomes a minor local celebrity. Of course, occasionally even con men and madmen can have real powers of prediction.

The form that these visions takes varies from individual to individual, and there are many types of "mystical" powers available in Mythic Europe. Seeing the unseen (Second Sight) is perhaps the most common ability, and the finding of lost things (Dowsing) and prescience of danger (Premonitions) are nearly as common.

Perhaps the most pitiful — and potentially dangerous — of characters is one who has a definite mystical power, but misunderstands it. A character might see the impressions from her Second Sight as hallucinations warning of danger. If she is sensitive to magical impressions, she can easily misinterpret these impressions as an ability to sniff out evil, particularly if she encounters Gifted characters. If she is known for her abilities among her neighbors, this could cause great troubles for a group of magi.

Eventually, the Misguided Mystic can get into trouble when others discover her powers, real or imagined. If they appear benign, she might be hounded by those seeking predictions and asked for things that she cannot provide. If her powers have had a more negative reception, she may be chased

out of town as a witch. A covenant can offer refuge to one with these talents.

## Character Creation

These are suggestions for the creation of Misguided Mystic characters.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

This character is likely to have the Wise One Social Status, unless she has kept her "powers" a secret. The Misguided Mystic could have actual oracular powers in the form of Supernatural Virtues, of which the following are particularly appropriate: Dowsing, Magic Sensitivity, Premonitions, Second Sight, and Sense Holiness & Unholiness. When taking one of these Virtues, the player should decide to which Realm of Power the Ability is aligned and describe why. Aligning to the Di-

vine Realm is perhaps the most useful, but this would require the character to be pious, at least. Aligning to a Realm of Power could result in the (Realm) Stigmatic\* Flaw. A character with more than one Supernatural Virtue need not align them all to the same realm.

Rather than any actual power, the grog might instead have a Latent Magic Ability, and her prophetic abilities might develop over time. Alternatively, she could be afflicted by the Hallucinations\* Flaw, and her powers wholly delusory. A character who has made correct prophecies in the past that had some major impact on the local landscape might have the Famous Virtue, or else the Infamous Flaw, if things did not go so well.

A Misguided Mystic might be confused as to what her visions are telling her. She might have both Magic Sensitivity and Sense Holiness & Unholiness, but be unable to tell them apart, or have both the Visions and

Hallucinations\* Flaws. Characters afflicted with the Falling Evil\* are commonly believed to be touched by a supernatural power when they have a fit, although this Flaw is not available to grog characters. A Misguided Mystic may have other Personality Flaws that hint at mental instability: Compulsion, Fear, Obsessed, or Weakness. All Virtues and Flaws marked with an asterisk are described in this book.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

This character can probably take Arcane Abilities at character creation, and usually has a decent score in a particular (Realm) Lore. Leadership is a useful Ability for expounding one's prophecies to the masses, as is Folk Ken. The character does not need Guile unless she is deliberately deceiving her audience. Apart from these Abilities, and any Supernatural Abilities she might have, the Misguided Mystic has Abilities appropriate to the career she followed before her visions started. It is wise to pick Abilities that make the character of sufficient use to the magi for her to be employed by them.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages for Misguided Mystics include: Local, Cunning Man, Conman, Mystic, Storyteller.

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

This character must be able to take Arcane Abilities at character creation. No Supernatural Abilities have been included; increase her age to get sufficient experience points.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 21:** Area Lore 3 (personalities), Charm 3 (sincerity), Concentration 2 (visions), Domin-





ion Lore 3 (visions), Folk Ken 4 (10) (cold reading), Guile 2 (hiding ignorance), Native Language 5 (religious language), Organization Lore: Church 1 (visionaries), Organization Lore: Town Council 4 (feuds), Profession: Servant 3 (5) (cooking), Survival 2 (hills)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 30:** Area Lore 3 (personalities), Bargain 1 ("gifts"), Charm 3 (15) (sincerity), Concentration 2 (visions), Dominion Lore 3 (10) (visions), Faerie Lore 2 (prophecy), Folk Ken 5 (cold reading), Guile 3 (hiding ignorance), Intrigue 2 (rumors), Native Language 5 (religious language), Organization Lore: Church 1 (visionaries), Organization Lore: Town Council 4 (feuds), Profession: Servant 4 (cooking), Profession: Storyteller 3 (plausible tales), Survival 2 (hills)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 42:** Area Lore 4 (personalities), Bargain 2 ("gifts"), Charm 4 (sincerity), Chirurgy 2 (bruises), Concentration 2 (visions), Dominion Lore 4 (visions), Faerie Lore 3 (15) (prophecy), Folk Ken 5 (cold reading), Guile 3 (hiding ignorance), Infernal Lore 2 (visions), Intrigue 3 (rumors), Native Language 5 (religious language), Organization Lore: Church 1 (visionaries), Organization Lore: Town Council 4 (15) (feuds), Profession: Servant 5 (cooking), Profession: Storyteller 4 (plausible tales), Survival 2 (hills)

## Misguided Mystic as Companion

The Misguided Mystic can be made into a companion character by putting her in touch with a higher power. The Visions Story Flaw is an excellent way to achieve this; not only are the visions true, but they also drag the character into stories. True pro-

A character who regularly misinterprets genuine signs of the supernatural is likely to complicate many stories, even when she doesn't cause them.

### LET IT BURN

The player characters are passing through a town one day, and they witness a woman being placed into the stocks. If they ask about her, they'll be told she has been spouting nonsense about the town burning down. If the characters need help in paying attention to this event, then she might shriek out a random piece of "prophecy" that strikes a particular chord with one of the magi. Sure enough, later that day the town starts to burn, and the characters might become involved in saving it. However, the fire was set by the woman's grown son, who has been secretly fulfilling her prophecies so that she does not seem to be a fool. He may have gone too far this time; the townsfolk who have lost their homes are clamoring for the woman

phetic power only comes from the Divine (*Realms of Power: The Divine*, page 54), but there are non-Divine powers that could be useful to an oracle, such as Divination and Augury (*The Mysteries Revised Edition*, page 58) and the Dream Power (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 126). Even without overt powers of prediction, there are several Supernatural Abilities that fit very well with this character concept, and a companion character could take two or more of the Abilities listed earlier.

A grog character — particularly one with Latent Magic Ability — could transform into a companion character through some sort of mystic revelation, or exposure to a source of powerful magic.

to be tried as a witch. Should the characters step in to save her, then she will have no place in the town following her rescue, and her skills could prove useful at the covenant.

### CRY WOLF

After a while, the magi grow used to the misguided mystic's frequent and inaccurate predictions of doom. However, she suddenly acquires an infallible sense of the future, correctly predicting that the cook will spoil the dinner, that the chambermaid's cat will be found in the chimney of the great hall, and that the seamstress is having an affair with the doorward. The magi might be interested in her new-found prophetic ability; could it be the stars, or the influence of faeries — or worse, demons — or something else? While they are investigating, she predicts that the covenant will burn, and an unspecified magus will perish in the blaze. Can this prediction be thwarted by discovering the source of the oracular knowledge?

## The Murderer

*I know they say what I done was wrong, but I'd do it again, I would. An' I'd look into 'is eyes while doin' it too.*

The covenants established and managed by magi of the Order seem to suspend some of the normal rules of the world around them. Whether by negotiated charter or the power to impose their will, covenants manage their own affairs within their own walls. And this de facto sanctuary attracts those that the outside world might dispose of, those like thieves and murderers.

## General Background

This grog is an unrepentant murderer. He sought sanctuary in the covenant having heard of a place where secrets stay secret, and where a man's worth is measured by what he does today, and not the crimes of yesterday. Whatever the reason for his past crimes, a crime of passion, an argument that turned to violence, or an act of vengeance, deep down he knows that he would do it again in the same situation. And this prevents his true repentance. He has had to flee those he once knew, unable to return for fear of being caught and punished for what he has done. The covenant is his only hope.

The Murderer works hard to make himself useful in the covenant,

taking on every job and chore that he can, trying to secure a position for that fateful day when his secret is finally discovered.

## Character Creation

These notes will help in creating a Murderer character.

### AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

A man may be driven to murder at any age, and *any* man may be driven to it. Because of this, there is no particular age or set of characteristics that define him. However, a man looking to extend his sanctuary will find a way to make himself useful around

the covenant, probably taking on any menial tasks that present themselves. So he'll probably have a high Dexterity so that he's good with his hands, and at least a positive Strength and Stamina, representing his determination to work hard.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

While the Murderer has found a place for himself within the covenant, he is still damned for the crimes that drove him there, and a reputation has followed him. The Virtues and Flaws that follow are appropriate for a Murderer working as a jack-of-all-trades at the covenant: Covenfolk, Good Teacher, Puissant Brawl, Tough, Manifest Sin\*, Infamous, Master of None\*

## Murderer Story Seeds

A Murderer character is sure to cause trouble wherever he goes.

### SANCTUARY

A local knight comes to the covenant looking for a man fleeing justice for a murder. The man has been spotted and the knight demands that he is handed over. The Murderer, who by this time has become a useful and popular member of the covenfolk, pleads for sanctuary. The magi and their deputies must balance external politics against the opinion of their own people.

### VENGEANCE

After all these long years, a sin thought forgotten is revisited upon the covenant. The victim's son comes looking for the man who did him such wrong. And he brings allies. The allies he rides with are rivals to

the covenant, looking to use the situation to force a minor victory over the covenant. Do the magi turn the killer over to his accuser, or risk further political problems at the hands of their enemies?

### THE MIND OF A KILLER

A magus has reached a plateau in his study of the Art of Mentem, or the knowledge of Philosophiae. To push his work onwards, he has decided he needs to examine a damaged mind, and he has heard of a murderer given sanctuary in a nearby covenant. Can the magus gain access to the murderer? And how does the season of study affect both the magus and his subject?

### PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY

A guild master in the nearby town seems to know too much

about the magical crafting of the covenant's magus of House Verditiis and is bringing unwanted attention to the covenant. As fortune would have it, there is a man living in the covenant who has the dark streak necessary for the job. The magus' venditor has planned the hit, and the Murderer must carry it out. But have the magi really ordered this, or is there something else influencing the venditor?

### REPENTANCE

The Murderer contracts a disease that rapidly delivers him at death's door. With so little time left to him, the unrepentant killer must now find a way to cleanse his soul. With all the power at their disposal, will the magi help him? If all the ministrations of the Church cannot save the man, can they attract the attention of a higher power?



\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

This suggests a character with a dark crime in his past, not made for a martial life, but who nonetheless knows how to take care of himself.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

A killer on the run may come from any background, but a grog is most often of a lowly status. As such, he may have any Abilities his Virtues allow, but his reputation and confinement to the covenant may limit the Abilities he can advance. In later years, he makes a good teacher, passing on his numerous skills to a younger generation.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

The following packages are appropriate for hard-working covenfolk with particular trade: Brawler, Covenfolk, Craftsman, Laborer, Local, Servant, Tinker.

However, the Murderer, with his Master-Of-None Flaw, must apply his experience points to a different Ability each season of the year. This means that the packages must be adjusted so that they each put experience into four different Abilities rather than the more usual three.

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

The Abilities listed later are appropriate for a menial jack-of-all-trades trying to prove his value to the covenant any way he can.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 20:** Animal Handling 2 (sheep), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 1 (food), Brawl 2 (bludgeon), Carouse 1 (staying so-

ber), Charm 2 (first impressions), Climb 2 (hills), Concentration 1, Craft: Cooperage 1 (oak barrels), Craft: Furniture Maker 1 (chairs), Craft: Masonry 1 (repairs), Craft: Woodworking 2 (treating wood), Fishing 1 (rivers), Folk Ken 2 (peasants), Guile 2 (concealing his past), Hunt 2 (rabbits), Intrigue 1 (people interested in him), Living Language 5, Organization Lore: Covenant 1 (jobs that need doing), Profession: Farmer 1 (harvest), Profession: Laborer 1 (digging), Profession: Tinker 2 (tin), Stealth 2 (hiding), Survival 2 (on the road), Swim 2 (rivers), Teaching 1 (Craft: Woodworking)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 40:** Animal Handling 2 (sheep), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 3 (food), Brawl 5 (bludgeon), Carouse 3 (staying sober), Charm 2 (first impressions), Climb 2 (hills), Concentration 2, Craft: Cooperage 2 (oak barrels), Fishing 2 (rivers), Folk Ken 3 (peasants), Craft: Furniture Maker 2 (chairs), Guile 3 (concealing his past), Hunt 2 (rabbits), Intrigue 2 (people interested in him), Living Language 5, Organization Lore: Covenant 2 (jobs that need doing), Profession: Brewer 2 (saving materials), Profession: Laborer 3 (digging), Profession: Farmer 2 (harvest), Profession: Tinker 3 (tin), Craft: Masonry 2 (repairs), Stealth 2 (hiding), Survival 2 (on the road), Swim 2 (rivers), Teaching 2 (Carpentry), Craft: Woodworking 3 (treating wood)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 60:** Animal Handling 3 (sheep), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 2 (alertness), Bargain 3 (food), Brawl 5 (bludgeon), Carouse 4 (staying sober), Charm 2 (first impressions), Climb 2 (hills), Concentration 2, Craft: Cooperage 3 (oak barrels), Craft: Furniture Maker 3 (chairs), Craft: Masonry

4 (repairs), Craft: Woodworking 3 (treating wood), Fishing 3 (rivers), Folk Ken 4 (peasants), Guile 4 (concealing his past), Hunt 2 (rabbits), Intrigue 2 (people interested in him), Living Language 5, Organization Lore: Covenant 2 (jobs that need doing), Profession: Brewer 4 (saving materials), Profession: Farmer 4 (harvest), Profession: Laborer 4 (digging), Profession: Tinker 4 (tin), Stealth 2 (hiding), Survival 2 (on the road), Swim 2 (rivers), Teaching 4 (Carpentry)

### PERSONALITY TRAITS & REPUTATIONS

The Murderer may be conflicted, feeling Guilty and Unrepentant in equal measure, but a character fleeing his crime to the safety of a covenant is likely to have overcome his guilt and be more Self-Preserving. He may be Brave, but not the extent that he will face up to his crimes.

He also has a Local Reputation as a murderer. If the Infamous Flaw has also been taken, this starts with a score of 4.

## Murderer as Companion

A grog created using this archetype does not have access to the Dark Secret Story Flaw, so his crime(s) are known from the outset. A Companion character has the option to hide his crime and have the secret revealed over the course of play. There is also more scope for Companions to take other Flaws that represent the mundane and supernatural repercussions of his crimes, such as the Enemies Story Flaw.

# The Parent of a Gifted Child

*Where he goes, I go.*

The potential for a child to be born with The Gift within the mundane populace is vastly higher than among the relatively small numbers of magi. Children with The Gift are rare, and they are born to parents who come from all walks of life, social backgrounds, and abilities. It is safe to say that most apprentices will come from the peasants, as they are more numerous than the other social classes.

Raising a child with The Gift is a difficult task. The Gifted child might be fully formed, and well-presented in all ways, but The Gift still has a

negative effect on people and animals. While not immune to The Gift, loving parents may grow to be used to the Gifted child's strange air. People who are close to the family may accept the child with all his strangeness, but there are always strangers who feel repulsed in some way or another. There may even be rumors of witchcraft and demonic possession. This causes the parents of the child no end of discomfort. On the one hand, they love their child. On the other, their child is inadvertently causing trouble in the community. The parents may move around the country if they have the freedom to do so, but many do not due to their social status.

It then comes as a relief when a learned scholar comes by, and wants the child as an apprentice. The scholar, who also has The Gift, promises to keep

their child safe as well as feed, clothe, and educate him. He even offers to buy the child. The parents, while happy with the idea of the apprenticeship, are still under the effects of The Gift, and don't fully trust the magus. So they choose to join the covenant.

The new apprentice's parents benefit most covenants. New covenants gain at least one new grog, and an older covenant has the benefit of an all-purpose grog to free a specialist grog from general duties. Within the covenant, the parents continue to care for their child outside his periods of study. It may well be that the care of the other apprentices will also fall to them. In addition, while having no combat skills at all, they make adequate guides from having traveled extensively throughout at least two regions, and may add some vital skills

## Story Seeds for Parents of a Gifted Child

Parents of a Gifted Child are generally involved in stories surrounding their child.

### HIDE AND SEEK

Someone out in the populace is spreading the word about the evils of the Order of Hermes. The words "child sacrifice" and "murder" are used. He is building a following of torch-wielding peasants, and it is only a matter of time before he turns on the covenant. There is also a rumor that the peasants have captured a young mage. The magi and companions are too obvious to try a rescue. The magus' mundane parent and the other grogs must try their best.

### THE BAD MASTER

Characters hear the story of a pair of distraught parents. Their child had been stolen by what sounds like a fel-

low magus. Upon hearing the magus' name, however, the characters know that the magus is infamous for misusing his apprentices by teaching them little, and using them as virtual lab slaves. Rescue may be a relatively easy task, if there is a Bonisagus in the covenant. However, on hearing the intentions of the characters to keep the child after rescue, the parents insist on coming along to stay close to the child. Also, the characters have made a powerful enemy of the magus.

### THE PEDDLER'S GIFT

Working as a purchase agent for the covenant, the peddler-grog can deal in all sorts of interesting trinkets, and would be particularly interested in magical goods. With his own money, the peddler buys a gift for his child from a mysterious man, thinking the Gifted child

would be happy with such a gift from the once-impoorished father. However, the gift is in fact a device from an enemy, designed to annoy, scry, or even put the covenant in danger. Instead of attacking a magus as intended, the poor apprentice suffers the magical device's effects. If the peddler does not have a Gifted child, then normal business transactions could land the device in the covenant's hands, although full magi may be a little more wary.

### THE LOST PARENT

A character has just run his Gauntlet. While he undertook his challenge, his parent was sent with a group of grogs to a neighboring covenant, with a delivery of books to trade for vis. The grogs never returned, however. The magi of the covenant send the newly Gauntleted magi to investigate.



or even money-making abilities to the covenant. For example, an apiarist may add money, food, medicine, and possibly even unclaimed vis to the covenant.

The main role of the parents is that of support. They do the jobs that specialist grogs are too busy to perform, such as mending pots or fixing roofs. In lean times, they have the skills to assist the covenant hunters by foraging. In a covenant with a limited number of staff, they may double as personal servants or housekeepers. These grogs would really shine as the covenant's main provider of food. Depending on space, and some general labor, they can raise crops, and animals for food or trade. They are also equipped to bargain for food from the local peasantry.

## Character Creation

The following notes will assist in the creation of a Parent of a Gifted Child character.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

The parents of a child with The Gift can come from a wide variety of backgrounds. They are just as likely to be an annoyance to the covenant as a boon, but will most likely have skills and attributes that can be set up or packed up easily for a life of travel. As such, the Craft and Profession abilities have been left open for customization.

**ABILITIES AT AGE 20:** Animal Handling 2 (farm animals), Area Lore: Area A 1, Area Lore: Area B 1, Athletics 2 (chasing children), Awareness 2 (location of child), Bargain 2 (food), Carouse 2 (staying sober), Charm 2 (peasants), Concentration 2 (background noise), Craft A 2, Craft B 2, Craft C 2, Chirurgy 2 (childhood illnesses), Etiquette 2 (peasants), Folk Ken 2 (peasants),

Guile 2 (lying for child), Hunt 2 (rabbits), Living Language 1 (trading), Native Language 5 (scolding), Profession 2, Survival 2 (near settlements)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 35:** Animal Handling 2 (farm animals), Area Lore: Area A 2, Area Lore: Area B 2, Athletics 2 (chasing children), Awareness 2 (location of child), Bargain 4 (food), Carouse 2 (staying sober), Charm 2 (peasants), Concentration 2 (background noise), Craft A 4, Craft B 3, Craft C 3, Chirurgy 3 (childhood illnesses), Etiquette 3 (peasants), Folk Ken 3 (peasants), Guile 2 (lying for child), Hunt 2 (rabbits), Living Language 3 (trading), Native Language 5 (scolding), Profession 2, Survival 4 (near settlements)

## The Refugee Librarian

*Listen to me, we're here now and there's no going back. Just be thankful we have a home again and serve these new masters as they deserve, for they have taken us in when no one else would.*

When a magus or a covenant falls, the loss is not only one to the Order but is most keenly felt by the covenant folk. Suddenly, they find themselves without their masters, without protection, and without income. Those serving a fallen covenant face finding new mundane lords, or trekking out to join another covenant.



## New Spell: The Librarian's Buckle

ReCo 25

Pen +0, 24/day

R: Touch, D: Concentration,  
T: Individual

This enchanted buckle allows the wearer to move with freedom in any direction, even unsupported into the air. It was designed for and awarded to the librarian of a now-dissolved covenant and became a symbol of the office, passed down

through generations of librarians. That covenant had a library built in a tall narrow tower, with the most valuable books and scrolls stored in a chamber near the roof that was inaccessible without using the buckle.

(Base 5, +1 Touch, +1 Concentration; +5 for 24 uses per day; +5 levels to allow the device to maintain concentration)

## General Background

Magi, covenants, and practitioners of hedge magic all have secrets, and their servants are likely to acquire some of the more peripheral knowledge over time. In particular, grogs who accompanied their magi to the secret sites of initiation, or to collect vis, or consult powerful supernatural spirits are immediately useful. And those tasked with less adventurous duties, such as librarians, scribes, stewards, and forge companions, may also have valuable information, such as cyphers to the personal codes used by their magi, records of meetings and agreements made by the covenant, and details of mundane entanglements that a new covenant could exploit. The fleeing covenfolk may also bring enchanted items with them; indeed, for some kinds of the dissolution, this is quite likely.

Accepting refugees from another covenant may cause friction with the existing covenfolk, and this may impact their loyalty. The first year after accepting refugees, the covenant suffers a Loyalty penalty of -3, as though suffering a Severe Hardship (see *Covenants*, Chapter 3, for more on governance in general and loyalty in particular). After that, each story that is told in which the two communities are brought closer together reduces

this penalty by one. This means that tension within the covenfolk may impact loyalty for far longer than the initial year.

But the situation could worsen, which could see the covenant riven with jealousy and resentment. The Divided Loyalty Major Residents Hook (*Covenants*, page 19) is appropriate for troupes wanting to highlight these problems.

## Character Creation

As a group of grogs now stripped of their covenant, any of the other archetypes can be applied, and all the reasons for wanting to live within the protection of a covenant still apply. The additional motivation is clear: to carry on living life in perhaps the only way they know.

Many understand the routines and needs of magi, others may have supernatural Virtues or Flaws that make them useful to magical scholars, and some may have mundane connections within other covenants, and be able to bring information with them.

## AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Refugees can clearly be of any age and have a range of character-

istics. The example used here is for a Librarian already well-practiced in his profession.

## SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Virtues and Flaws might include: Custos (granting Academic Abilities), Magic Items\*, Puissant Profession: Librarian; Stuck in his Ways\*, Ability Block (Martial), Covenant Upbringing

\* See Chapter 6: New Virtues and Flaws

The example refugee whom we're following is a Librarian, a valued and trusted role, so the position of Custos is appropriate, as is Puissant Profession: Librarian. His service may also have awarded him an enchanted item, covered by the Magic Items Virtue. As for Flaws, coming to a new covenant may take some adjustment, so he has the new Stuck in his Ways Flaw. He is completed by a Martial Ability Block, due to years of doing little beyond his academia during his Covenant Upbringing.

## SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Grogs coming from another covenant are well trained and practiced in their given trades. The following abilities are typical of a specialist Librarian coming from a covenant background.

As his career progresses, he develops other skills related to the texts he manages and maintains, including Profession: Calligraphy to help draft documents at the covenant's behest, and Academic Abilities through years of studying the books that he cares for.

Importantly, as he spends longer at his new covenant, he learns more about the people, ways, and traditions of his new home.



## TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages include: Covenfolk, Craftsman\*, Leader, Trainer

\* The experience points against the various Craft Abilities should be assigned to the Bookbinder, Librarian, and Scribe Professions.

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

**ABILITIES AT AGE 30:** Artes Liberales 4 (grammar), Profession: Bookbinder 2 (academic), Charm 2 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 2 (laws and customs of a specific

area), Concentration 2 (reading), Etiquette 3 (Hermetic), Folk Ken 3 (magi), Intrigue 2 (rumormongering), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 1 (junior librarians), Living Language 5 (expansive vocabulary), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (personalities), Organization Lore: Former Covenant 3 (resources), Philosophiae 2 (natural philosophy), Profession: Librarian 4 (ensuring order), Profession: Scribe 3 (copying)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 45:** Artes Liberales 4 (grammar), Charm 2 (first impressions), Civil and Canon Law 3 (laws and customs of a specific area), Concentration 3 (reading),

Etiquette 3 (Hermetic), Folk Ken 3 (magi), Greek 3 (academic usage), Intrigue 3 (rumormongering), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 3 (junior librarians), Living Language 5 (expansive vocabulary), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (personalities), Organization Lore: Former Covenant 3 (resources), Organization Lore: Current Covenant 3 (customs), Philosophiae 3 (natural philosophy), Profession: Bookbinder 4 (academic), Profession: Librarian 5 (ensuring order), Profession: Scribe 4 (copying)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 60:** Arabic 3 (academic usage), Artes Liberales 5 (grammar), Charm 3 (first im-

## Refugee Librarian Story Seeds

This particular option has enormous potential for story. Covenfolk provide obvious witnesses to the events that befell a magus or a covenant, and their testimony could be troublesome to the guilty. The knowledge they bring with them also provides seeds into numerous treasure-hunting opportunities, as new vis sources, auras, and regions are disclosed. And the prescient among the grogs may take such books and devices as they can before finally abandoning their home.

### INFLUX

A handful of refugees arrives at the covenant offering service and asking to be taken in. They are the covenfolk of a nearby covenant, almost forgotten by the Order and home to an elderly magus and his loyal filia. The refugees tell how a magus arrived and killed their masters before claiming their tower, their village, and all within it. These covenfolk are the ones who ran. There are others still back at the

covenant, forced to do their new master's bidding. Is this violent magus a threat to the covenant? Who is he and under what grounds has he taken this small covenant? More importantly from the refugees' point of view, can they stay or will they be turned out?

### AN UNNATURAL DIVIDE

Ever since the refugees arrived at the covenant all those years ago, the community has been on the brink of division. Over the years, the covenfolk have split into those who live in the Upper Village and those who live in the Lower Village. And when a girl from the Upper Village is murdered, the magi must find the killer before revenge is taken against the Lower Villagers.

### THE ENCROACHING WINTER

The dissolution of the covenant draws close. The signs are there; the covenant's enemies are circling, no apprentices have been taken in years,

and vis sites have fallen to nobles as they build their estates. The magi seem not to have noticed the growing weight of troubles, but there are those who have lived through this before, many years ago. Only they can rouse the magi from their complacency and make them learn the mistakes of a former generation, and only they can save the covenant.

### A COVENANT WITH NO MAGUS

When the last magus of a winter covenant dies, the covenfolk agree to continue operating the covenant as though nothing has changed. The covenant, after all, has mundane sources of income, enough land being farmed to feed the covenfolk, and more. The books in the library describe where the vis sites are and how the vis can be harvested, so a faux trade in vis is started with the visiting Redcaps, and secretaries to the old dead magus maintain his correspondences. And so the great deception begins. But what happens when the Order finds out?



pressions), Civil and Canon Law 3 (laws and customs of a specific area), Concentration 4 (reading), Etiquette 3 (Hermetic), Folk Ken 3 (magi), Greek 3 (academic usage), Hebrew 4 (mystic texts), Intrigue 3 (rumormongering), Latin 5 (Hermetic usage), Leadership 4 (junior librarians), Living Language 5 (expansive vocabulary), Order of Hermes Lore 3 (personalities), Organization Lore: Current Covenant 5 (customs), Organization Lore: Former Covenant 3 (resources), Philosophiae 4 (natural philosophy), Profession: Bookbinder 4 (academic), Profession: Librarian 5 (ensuring order), Profession: Scribe 4 (copying)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

Refugees who have been forced to leave a failed or destroyed covenant may retain a Loyal to Former Covenant Personality Trait, which comes into play when dealing with connections to their former covenant, such as other covenfolk, magi, or apprentices. This loyalty may work against the character, as there may be a perception of bias which his new colleagues may resent.

Those who have been forced to leave through the actions of their former masters may instead have an Anger at Former Covenant Personality Trait. Again, this can be brought into play during stories concerning that covenant.

Other Personality Traits should be taken as appropriate for the individual. In the example here, the Librarian is Respectful and Keen to Impress, in addition to his Loyal to Former Covenant trait.

## Refugee Librarian as Companion

Whatever cataclysm befell the former covenant, the same mindset applies to the former companions of those magi as to their grogs. Indeed, some of those companions may now be looked to for leadership. It may be one of those companions who leads the convoy of displaced grogs to their new covenant.

Companions, by their role in the saga, are those who are more likely to take important roles within the covenant, including leadership roles. Additional Virtues and Flaws may be taken to reflect this, including Difficult Un-

derlings, representing the resentment and distrust of the new interloper, or the trouble he faces trying to keep his old covenfolk under control. Companions may also know more about the fall of a previous covenant, and may even have played a greater role in that fall than they would care to admit, and so may take the Dark Secret Story Flaw.

## The Role-Bound Ferryman

*There's only one way onto the island. And only the ferryman knows the way. But do not bother the ferryman lightly, for he sees what's in your heart and it may not be to the island that he takes ye.*

## General Background

There are no records of the ferryman's arrival, no records of his name, and nobody knows why he never leaves his ferry. He just silently stands. And silently waits. And silently does his job. The Role-bound Ferryman



and grogs like him are characters who are not designed to grow over time. Instead, they are designed as mystic forces present in the covenant since before anyone can remember.

The definition of a role-bound grog is one who can serve no purpose other than the role he currently occupies. A role-bound watchman cannot leave his post to accompany a magus on a long journey. Nor can he take messages far from the covenant at the behest of his captain or the steward.

For this reason, grogs like this tend to play fleeting roles in stories, but they are open to all and may be played during stories closer to the covenant or involving their particular role.

## ALTERNATIVES

These strange warped creatures, gone beyond human and now made something "other," can be found performing a number of roles, not just the role of ferryman.

While the characters suggested here do not have Magic Might, chapter 4 of *Realms of Power: Magic* provides full rules on designing and creating Magic Human characters. Characters bound to a device or to their role can be considered some kind of halfway point between mortal or human and faerie or magically transformed.

Such characters are always too limited to be played as companions and so take the grog role within the saga.

## Character Creation

There are a number of special considerations in creating these characters.

### AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

Role-bound characters can be of any age and there is story potential both in the younger and older age

ranges. Younger characters may experience the event that binds them to their role during play, gaining the Flaw that defines them (see later) as a story event, while older characters may have been at the covenant for a long time with seemingly nobody now questioning their origin or purpose.

The Role-bound Ferryman discussed in this section has a poor Communication, probably through years of near solitude, but high Stamina from his long service out on the marsh in all weather. Others unfortunate enough to be bound to their role may have higher Dexterity, as befits a dedicated craftsman.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

The ferryman is bound to his role, unable to change beyond its confines. But though he is defined by his role, he has other gifts. His unearthly demeanor is represented by the Piercing Gaze Virtue, but his true gifts are the Premonitions of harm that threaten the covenant, and his Second Sight with which he scans the horizon looking for ghostly visitations. His chief Flaw is Bound to Ferryman Role and because few know of or understand this supernatural curse, he is also Judged Unfairly. Perhaps through the same effect, he has lost much of his ability to communicate, represented by the Poor Communication Flaw.

This gives the ferryman the following Virtues and Flaws: Covenant; Piercing Gaze, Premonitions, Second Sight; Bound to (Ferryman) Role\*, Judged Unfairly, Poor Communication

\* See Chapter 6: New Virtues and Flaws

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

The usual rules regarding limits on starting Ability scores and childhood experience apply to these characters,

just as for other grogs. In addition, role-bound grogs must have a Profession or Craft Ability that defines them. Martial or other abilities may be substituted with the troupe's agreement.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

The ferryman most likely has had an athletic childhood spent out on the marshes, so this package is used as the base. Abilities are then bought to suit the character. Once play starts, the Role-bound Ferryman uses the following Training Packages with alterations based on his situation and Abilities:

THREE YEARS (COVENFOLK): +5 (Area) Lore, +20 Covenant Lore, +15 Craft: Boatbuilder, +5 Order of Hermes Lore

THREE YEARS (LOCAL): +15 (Area) Lore, +15 Folk Ken, +15 (Organization) Lore

THREE YEARS (MAGICIAN): +15 Magic Lore, +15 Premonitions, +15 Second Sight

THREE YEARS (SAILOR): +5 (Area) Lore, +20 Profession: Ferryman, +5 Survival, +15 Swim

THREE YEARS (SCOUT): +15 (Area) Lore, +15 Awareness, +15 Stealth

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

ABILITIES AT AGE 35: Area Lore: The Marsh 5 (waterways), Athletics 3 (balance), Awareness 3 (searching), Brawl 3 (Dodge), Craft: Boatbuilder 3 (repairs), English 5 (regional dialect), Folk Ken 3 (peasants), Magic Lore 3 (creatures), Order of Hermes Lore 1 (personalities), Organization Lore: Covenant 3 (personalities), Organization Lore: Smugglers 3 (personalities), Premonitions 3 (threats to the covenant), Profession: Ferryman 4 (marsh ferries), Second Sight 3 (illusory disguises), Stealth 3 (sailing)

quietly), Survival 2 (marshland), Swim 3 (marshy water)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 50:** Area Lore: The Marsh 6 (waterways), Athletics 3 (balance), Awareness 4 (searching), Brawl 3 (Dodge), Craft: Boatbuilder 4 (repairs), English 5 (regional dialect), Folk Ken 4 (peasants), Magic Lore 4 (creatures), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Organization Lore: Covenant 4 (personalities), Organization Lore: Smugglers 3 (personalities), Premonitions 4 (threats to the covenant), Profession: Ferryman 5 (local waterways), Second Sight 4 (illusory disguises), Stealth 3 (sailing quietly), Survival 2 (marsh-

land), Swim 4 (marshy water)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 65:** Area Lore: The Marsh 7 (waterways), Athletics 3 (balance), Awareness 4 (searching), Brawl 3 (Dodge), Craft: Boatbuilder 4 (repairs), English 5 (regional dialect), Folk Ken 5 (peasants), Magic Lore 4 (creatures), Order of Hermes Lore 2 (personalities), Organization Lore: Covenant 5 (personalities), Organization Lore: Smugglers 4 (personalities), Premonitions 5 (threats to the covenant), Profession: Ferryman 6 (local waterways), Second Sight 5 (illusory disguises), Stealth 4 (sailing quietly), Survival 3 (marshland), Swim 4 (marshy water)

Excess experience points that do not reach a higher Ability score have been redistributed in the sample Abilities earlier to ensure that all have been spent with no remainders. In addition, the ferryman has acquired an enriched Item of Virtue by his 65th year, granted by virtue of the Magician training package.

## PERSONALITY TRAITS

Unless affected by other effects, characters bound to their role possess and express Personality Traits just as other grogs, but years of being restricted to one role, often unable to live a normal natural life, may take its toll on their personality. They may be resentful or resigned, bitter or accepting, searching for release or loyal to their covenant.

The Role-bound Ferryman discussed earlier has the following Personality Traits: Loyal to the Covenant +3, Taciturn +2, Reliable +1

## Role-Bound Ferryman Story Seeds

In many ways, the Role-Bound grog is a story seed.

### A DANGER TO THE COVENANT

A man has gone missing. He was last seen trying to reach the covenant, asking the ferryman for passage, but he never arrived. The covenant has always taken the ferryman for granted, never asking who he is or why he does what he does. But what has the ferryman done with the man and why?

### THE EXPERIMENT

The covenant awakes one morning to find something unheard of in living memory: the ferryman is not at his post. Not only that, but his boat is gone too. A magus of House Verditius, who visited the covenant some seasons before, has stolen the ferryman away. He recognized that the ferryman is bound to his role, and bound to his boat. The magus has taken him in order to experiment upon him, to find the secret

of binding devices to the living, or binding a living mind into a device. Can the covenant find their man before the Verditius experiments tear him from his boat?

### WHAT SORROWS HAVE BOUND THIS MAN?

Nobody has ever asked what binds the ferryman to his ferry, not really. Magi have wondered what magical force sustains him in all weathers, unchanging and unflinching. But nobody has ever wondered at the tragedy that turned him into the creature he is. Until now. An old text, written by a monk describing his journey through the region, has been found in a nearby church that tells of a man whose wife became lost and disappeared out on the marsh. The text describes how he waits for her to return. The text was written centuries ago, but the man it describes seems to be the ferryman. Do the magi search the text for clues? Do they find the ferryman's wife and set him free from his curse?

## The Street Thug

*See, them up there don't want to know what people like me do down here. But that don't mean they don't know where to find us when they want something done.*

There are times when the educated and the wealthy must give way to the unsophisticated and down-at-heel. In those times, the covenant would do well to have contacts with the underclass found in every town and city.

## General Background

Crime is an inescapable part of life, especially in the towns and cities of Mythic Europe. Several covenants



across the Order, especially those in Tribunals where city life is fast becoming more common, have explicit connections with street gangs. In some cases, the connections run far deeper than the covenant would ever publicly admit to.

Street gangs have several things to offer a covenant keen to maintain a presence within a city. Firstly, the gang, through its extended network of social contacts, can be an effective intelligence network. Information on the movement of specific targets can be tracked and fed back to the covenant; the mood of the city can be felt in the markets, taverns, and docks; and violence can be bought as easily as bread. The deeper the covenant goes with one or more street gangs, the more these can be used. Ultimately, the activities of a criminal network can be used as a source of income as described in *Covenants*, page 59.

But covenants wanting to use a street gang will need a man on the inside. A contact. A Street Thug. The Street Thug is any member of the street gang with the sense to see the magi as an opportunity. He may be a lowly petty criminal, or someone with brains enough to be running the outfit. He will know the streets of his city and have social contacts all over. He's not a thief in the manner of a cutpurse, confidence trickster, or palmist. He's a thug. He'll demand protection money in exchange for not burning down your workshop. He'll work the girls along the waterfront. He'll stab you in the legs and rob you while you're bleeding. There's nothing dashing or benign about him and he'll probably hang one day.

He is best suited to stories set within the town or city and can be used as an effective bodyguard, lookout, thief, or agitator. If the magi need a diversion to be created in the city, he's the man to go to. And if they need someone roughed up a little, they need look no further.

The Street Thug probably doesn't live at the covenant, even if that covenant is based within the city walls. In fact, when the Street Thug does spend time at the covenant, he probably causes disruption and upset. But he's a frequent visitor, coming to the kitchens to eat at his paymasters' expense; badgering their steward for new boots, cloak, or unspecified expenses; or just to hide out while the heat is on.

## Character Creation

The following notes provide some suggestions for creating Street Thugs.

### AGE AND CHARACTERISTICS

The Street Thug is really designed to either live fast and be hanged young, or to be a little more cagey and survive to run the joint. As well as making Aging Rolls for the Street Thug, storyguides may also want to decide whether the Street Thug has been caught in the act of committing a crime or targeted by his enemies, and whether there is a need for action from the magi to save him.

Regardless of this, life on the streets takes a heavy toll. The Poor Living Conditions Flaw (see Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws), on top of the base -2 Living Conditions Modifier for living in a town, means that the Street Thug can expect to have a Decrepitude Score of 2 and Characteristics totaling -5, rather than the starting 7, by the age of 50. An aging Crisis is only a few years away, most likely a Minor Illness as per the Crisis Table on *ArM5*, page 170.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Grogs can't take the Outlaw Leader Minor Social Status Flaw, but as a petty criminal, the Branded Criminal

Social Status Flaw is appropriate for the Street Thug character. It sets him out as recognizably unsavory, and gives him access to Martial Abilities from the outset. However, the Street Thug is a brawler used to bludgeoning his opponents with whatever comes to hand amid the filth of the alleyway. Years of violence have toughened him up, hence the Tough Virtue to provide that extra Soak bonus. The last Virtue is Social Contacts, representing the contacts he's made on both sides of law and order across the city.

The Street Thug has two Flaws left to take, and both of these are new to this supplement. The Fish Out of Water (Cities) Flaw shows how little of life outside the city the Street Thug has experienced, and how uncomfortable he feels without familiar surroundings. But despite being at home in the City, he has particularly Poor Living Conditions. This last Flaw comes mainly from the daily grind of petty violence that takes its toll on him.

The following Virtues and Flaws represent a typical Street Thug: Branded Criminal, Puissant Brawl, Social Contacts (street criminals), Tough, Fish Out of Water (Cities)\*, Poor Living Conditions\*

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws

Puissant Brawl and Tough can easily be exchanged for other Minor Virtues, such as Berserk for a more overtly dangerous fighter, and Large or Enduring Constitution.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

The Street Thug seeks experience in anything that helps him get through another day on the street. This is likely to be Brawl, Guile, Area Lore, and for intimidation, Leadership. Brawl is the Street Thug's combat Ability of choice as people in cities are rarely armed and even more rarely armored. He is also

backed up by a gang and will almost always be in a trained combat group when with his own people. When not using his fists, a bludgeon, or a knife, he prefers a hatchet for its small size and brutal simplicity.

As the Street Thug grows older, he gains more authority over his gang, learning more about its activities and members, represented by his growing Leadership and Gang Lore Abilities.

## TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages for Street Thugs include: Brawler, Footpad\*, Leader, Local, Soldier, Wastrel.

\* The experience points against Legerdemain in this package are more likely spent against Thrown Weapon

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

**ABILITIES AT AGE 20:** Area Lore 3 (geography), Athletics 2 (running), Awareness 3 (alertness), Brawl 4 (fist), Carouse 3 (power drinking), Charm 1 (being witty), Climb 1 (walls), Disguise 2 (townsfolk), Folk Ken 1 (townsfolk), Guile 1 (lying to authority), Leadership 1 (intimidation), Living Language 5 (slang), Single Weapon 3 (hatch-

et), Stealth 2 (streets), Thrown Weapon 3 (throwing knife)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 35:** Area Lore 3 (geography), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (alertness), Brawl 6 (fist), Carouse 3 (power drinking), Charm 1 (being witty), Climb 2 (walls), Disguise 3 (townsfolk), Folk Ken 2 (townsfolk), Guile 2 (lying to authority), Intrigue 1 (rumor-mongering), Leadership 3 (intimidation), Living Language 5 (slang), Single Weapon 3 (hatchet), Stealth 4 (streets), Thrown Weapon 5 (throwing knife)

**ABILITIES AT AGE 50:** Area Lore 5 (geography), Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (alertness), Brawl 6 (fist), Carouse 3 (power drinking), Charm 2 (being witty), Climb 2 (walls), Disguise 3 (townsfolk), Folk Ken 4 (townsfolk), Guile 3 (lying to authority), Intrigue 4 (rumor-mongering), Leadership 5 (intimidation), Living Language 5 (slang), Organization Lore: Gang 3 (politics), Single Weapon 3 (hatchet), Stealth 4 (streets), Thrown Weapon 5 (throwing knife)

## PERSONALITY TRAITS & REPUTATION

The Street Thug has three Personality Traits. Rather than having true bravery, the Street Thug is Aggressive, an important distinction. And he is also Ruthless, prepared to commit crime, to hurt and harm others, and to betray those in his way. He'll very rarely find himself as the vanguard in any combat group; while he's aggressive enough to start the fight, he's also ruthless enough to make sure other people get hurt first.

But ultimately, the Street Thug is Pragmatic. This pragmatism is what draws the Street Thug to the magi and their covenant, and it is this pragmatism that stands in place of loyalty; he

## Street Thug Story Seeds

The story seeds that follow use the city streets as a backdrop, and the Street Thug himself either as part of the lead-in or as a tool to be used in the in the story resolution.

### BLOOD ON THE STREETS

The streets are running with blood, the city watch just look the other way, and someone at the top is getting very rich. They say that there's magic at work and that's why nobody can touch these people. Well, magic you have. Now all you need is someone who knows the streets and can find out where the money's going. Then it can start coming to you.

### THE DEVIL MAKES WORK FOR IDLE HANDS

The Street Thug has a price on his head and is forced to lie low while the tempers cool and memories fade. The trouble is, he's hiding out in the covenant. It doesn't take long for his presence to become

disruptive. The magi need to find a job for him to do. It's either that or turn him into a tree for the next month. But as it happens, the magi have heard that a tax collector of ill repute is arriving in town in the next week, and the taxes he's collected will be stored in the sheriff's keep. There might be a way to keep the Street Thug occupied and make a little money after all.

### THE TAKEOVER

The magi receive an interesting offer from the leader of a group of street thugs. He knows that the magi provide a little backup to his rival gang leader, but he can cut them in for bigger stakes if they'll support him over their current associates. But this new face is harboring an Infernal secret, and the offer is a temptation to betrayal. The wheels are already in motion. Can the magi root out the demons before they take hold in the city, and can they stop the violence before it spins out of control?



can overlook their oddness if there's money to be made and protection to be gained.

An older Street Thug may have gained a reputation before being brought into the game, most likely among his underworld associates. This reputation might reflect a ruthless streak, or a the strength with which he runs his gang or holds his turf. If creating an older character from scratch, you might want to swap out one of his flaws for Infamous, which would give a bad reputation with a score of 4.

## Street Thug as Companion

The obvious Social Status for a companion made in this mold is the Outlaw Leader. This gives the companion a handful of loyal men to carry out jobs at his behest. As a result, a gang leader may well be Wealthy, as this represents the time he has available with his crew running operations on his behalf.

Street Thugs elevated to companion status have scope for Story Flaws, such as Enemies in the form of rival gangs (although Feud could easily be used for the same). For a different feel, the Difficult Underlings Story Flaw is also appropriate as running a gang of troublemakers is guaranteed to attract even more trouble.

There's also room to re-purpose the Minor General Temporal Influence Virtue. The intent of the Virtue is to give a character political influence through politically powerful connections. The same can be applied to the Outlaw Leader, though the nature of the connections is less socially acceptable.

There are a number of Story Flaws that are very useful to the Outlaw Leader character. Blackmail (as per the Story Flaw) is likely to be very common and will be used to great lever-

age. The flip side is that you may owe Favors to others for their help, either in gathering information, watching your back, or for releasing men they had every reason to hang.

While the Street Thug as grog is useful for his aggressive approach and knowledge of the streets, the Outlaw Leader, as leader of a criminal street gang, is able to draw upon more resources that the covenant could put to good use.

## Time-Lost Witnesses

"..."

Many medieval tales speak of people whisked away by the faeries, who dance for a few hours, and return to find that each hour in Faerie was a year, or a century. Many of these misplaced people perish; they break a taboo placed upon them as they leave faerie, and they are crushed as a lifetime of aging pours over them in an instant. Some discover that they have died and faded to dust in Faerie, becoming faeries themselves without noticing. Some begin their mortal lives anew, centuries after all that they know has fallen into ruin.

## General Background

Time-lost characters allow players to add anachronistic touches to their version of Mythic Europe. The time-lost characters described here are grogs, but companions are also easily accommodated in many sagas. Time-lost magi are more difficult to design. The Order of Hermes is a research-based institution, and there is no way to consistently model how its many breakthroughs have contributed to



the Art and spell levels in the standard setting. This means there is no way to handicap magi accurately for failing to share those breakthroughs.

Faeries may steal characters from any location, and from any historical era. People who witness momentous events are more likely to be stolen away, then returned, than others. House Merinita suggests that this is because such events enter human folklore and resound down the centuries.

Time-lost characters face many initial difficulties. They often have poor language skills, which may prevent

them seeking aid in mundane communities. Their Abilities may not suit the local economy, which may make it difficult to find work. They are unlikely to understand what has occurred, and may spend time on fruitless attempts to return home. Service to a covenant gives a time-lost character a chance to reorientate and learn local languages.

Magi interested in history desire time-lost people as covenfolk. Those who do not care for history know that many of their sodales do, and are willing to pay handsomely in vis and political favors for eyewitnesses to inter-

esting historical events. Magi can read the memories of these events and, using the correct spells, feel everything that the eyewitness felt, which is as close as possible to being there. On a less aesthetic level, Seekers can sift the memories of witnesses for clues to the location of magical devices and sacred sites.

## Character Creation

These notes will help you create a Time-lost Witness character.

### Time-Lost Witnesses Story Seeds

The following story seeds use people from particular places and times, but can be easily adapted to refuges from other fallen civilizations or historical eras.

#### THE MADWOMAN WITH THE PAPYRUS

A churchman contacts a redcap whom he knows collects rare books. On being invested in his office, the churchman took a tour of the facilities in his care. One is a home for demoniacs — people afflicted in the mind by the forces of evil. Within this refuge, he found a woman who speaks only gibberish, but seems lucid. The curate for the facility told the churchman that the demoniac was found wandering the roads, and had in her possession a curious scroll, filled with strange pictures.

Characters who investigate the scroll discover that it is made of plant fiber, but is not paper. This is highly unusual. It contains a series of pictures, but by their repetition, these seem to form a code. Characters familiar with the works of Herodotus (Intelligence + Artes Liberales against an Ease Factor of 15) may recall that

the ancient Egyptians wrote like this.

Characters who use magic to speak with the demoniac discover that her name is Sacmis, and she was a copyist at the Great Library of Alexandria. When part of it caught fire, as the Romans invaded the city, she was whisked away by a flying creature, and deposited on the roads in this chilly, savage country.

Sacmis is interesting to the player characters for several reasons. Magi engrossed by history would love to interview her. Seekers would like her aid to determine the locations of the great libraries of the ancient world, and as a translator for the text of the ancients. A handful of the spells held by House Bonisagus are from the period, but how the verbal components are incanted is not clear. Members of House Merinita value her scroll, because it contains the final copy of many ancient stories about magicians. One of these is the "Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor," which is the origin myth of the sorcerers of the island of Soqotra.

#### AN ACCIDENTAL INVASION

Alarming reports have reached the town of an army that has forti-

fied a mountain pass slightly to the northwest. The invaders have made no demands, and beyond levying a toll on passing merchants, they appear to be doing little. Noblemen and magi skilled in military matters are likely to guess, correctly, that the invaders have formed a defensive position, and are sending scouts into the nearby territory. This force is acting like the beach-head for an invader, and so the region prepares for war.

Characters who question the merchants who have paid a toll to pass the encamped army can gather some intelligence. The tax is in goods, and is requested from the merchants by a priest who speaks the local language. The priest says he is a captive of the invaders. The invaders speak Latin among themselves. Their camp is a wooden stockade with ditches around it. It has been laid out geometrically, like something from an ancient strategy manual.

Magi may immediately assume this is a Hermetic plot. Only members of the Order have sufficient interest in the ancient empire to recreate a section of its military. The disruption this is causing is



## SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Time-lost characters can come from any era, and so can have a wide variety of Abilities, Virtues, and Flaws. As examples, this section uses Roman legionaries lost in a faerie wood, who re-emerge in 1220. These grogs require the Warrior Virtue, and must take the Worthless Abilities Flaw.

## SUGGESTED ABILITIES

Time-lost Witnesses may come

from any background, and therefore may have any Ability. They are usually selected for abduction and return because their memories or skills will create interesting stories, so unusual skill sets are common among these characters.

## TRAINING PACKAGES

Time-lost characters may come from any social group, and so their careers following their return may follow any path.

## SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

Using Roman legionaries as examples, this set of Abilities requires the Warrior Virtue:

**ABILITIES AT AGE 21:** Animal Handling 1 (pack animals), Athletics 3 (marching), Awareness 3 (in battle), Bargain 1 (drink), Brawl 3 (grappling), Carouse 2 (looking sober), Etiquette 1 (military), Latin 5 (cursing), Profession: Legionary 3 (not getting caught), Organization Law: Roman Army

## Time-Lost Witnesses Story Seeds (cont'd)

enough to make it a High Crime. The magi might instead assume this is an elaborate faerie game, since a significant occasion has recently passed. In truth, the significant day weakened the barriers between Faerie and the real world, allowing this group to escape.

The Roman commander, noticing a sudden change in landforms, has encamped his eighty men in a well-defended position where they can get water from a stream. They have some supplies, which are extended by foraging and taxing passing traders. He is sending out scouts to get the lay of the land. Following this, he is going to march toward the largest city, to re-establish his connection with the army's command structure. This will be met, by the confused locals, as if it were an invasion.

Player characters can most easily intervene in this scenario by capturing and then negotiating with one of the Roman scouts. The Roman commander, if convinced the empire is gone, may wish to use his force to conquer a significant town, to supply his army and act as the kernel of a new empire. He may seek out the Emperor of Nicaea, to offer the

swords of his men to the leader of the modern Romans. He may accept the Order as the heir to the legacy of Rome, and enter service.

## CONFUSED FAERIES

Faeries love games involving social roles. The return of a character central to a great tragedy can allow them to play interesting games. In 1120, William Adelin, the only legitimate son of Henry I of England, vanished during a shipwreck. He was considered dead and, after his death, the realm fell into anarchy as his cousin and sister fought for dominance. Following this turbulence, a line of sacramentally-crowned kings continued until the incumbent king.

Henry III has not been crowned king of England in the correct way. His father lost the Crown Jewels during his wars with the nobility. At his father's death, Henry was hastily crowned with a piece of his mother's jewelry, by the Bishop of Gloucester. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who has the right and duty to crown the king, was supporting Louis of France, who had invaded England and held

London. Even the Pope says that Henry has not been crowned properly — there is no King of England, in a mystical sense.

This makes William Adelin the perfect pawn in a rags-to-riches story, but few faeries have the power to make kings anymore. What happens instead is that many faerie princes treat him as if he were King of England. They send him weird gifts, and they ask for strange treaties. The magi who control access to William have many opportunities for profit, but must act carefully: every gift must be matched with a gift of equal value, from the distorted perspective of the faerie that sent it, and every agreement made must be upheld, in some contorted way.

William's shipload of servants and warriors has difficulty interacting with the modern world. They speak a variant of French which is understandable, if accented. They are an older sort of Norman, ruthless Christianized Vikings, whose society is built around territorial expansion and plunder. Their society can't find victims in the rapidly urbanizing, heavily armed states of the 13th century.

# Horses & Hounds

Woof.

Virtually every covenant has animal as well as human inhabitants, and sometimes these animals have a large enough impact on a saga to become grog characters. It is not suggested that every chicken, plow-ox, and farmyard rat should have a character sheet; however, some characters may have Animal Companions or exotic pets, and it might be interesting for these animals to become player characters run by the same player, or by a different one.

Horses and hounds are common examples of animals that are suitable as player characters, but any animal is theoretically possible. As a guideline, creatures between the Sizes of  $-3$  and  $+2$  (from cat-sized to horse-sized) probably make the best animal grogs, but these shouldn't be seen as hard limits. *Lords of Men* (Chapter 5) has details of a number of animals that are found in noble households, from pets to hounds, hawks, and horses. Medieval bestiaries divide animals up into clawed beasts, hoofed beasts, birds,



3\* (own legion), Survival 2 (in a group), Swim 2 (in armor), Single Weapon 5 (gladius), Thrown Weapon 4 (pilum)

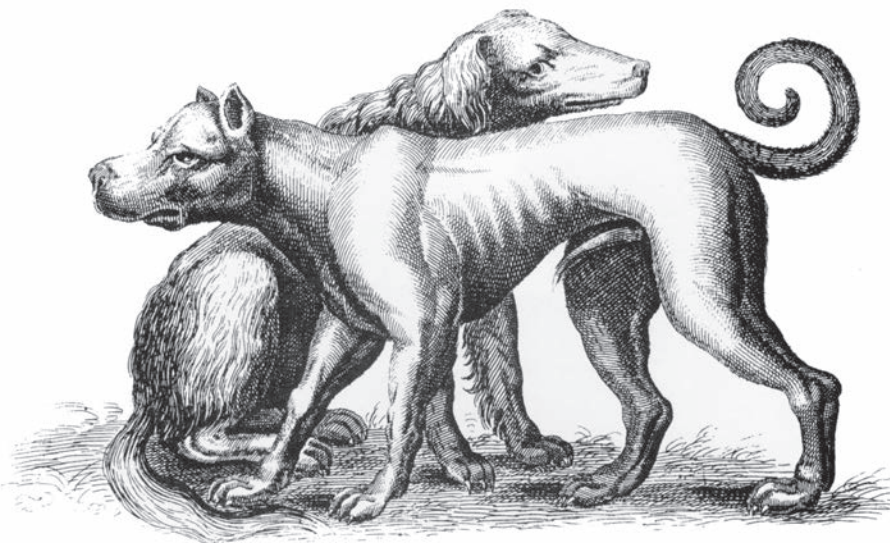
**ABILITIES AT AGE 30:** Animal Handling 1 (pack animals), Athletics 3 (marching), Awareness 3 (in battle), Bargain 1 (drink), Brawl 3 (grappling), Carouse 3 (looking sober), Etiquette 1 (military), Latin 5 (cursing), Profession: Legionary 5 (not getting caught), Organization Lore: Roman Army 3\* (own legion), Survival 3 (in a group), Swim 2 (in armor), Single Weapon 6 (gladius), Teaching 3 (Single Weapon), Thrown Weapon 4 (pilum)

\* See the Worthless Ability Flaw, in Chapter 6.

## Time-lost Witness as Companion

Time-lost characters have been personally selected by faeries to be

removed from time, then released, at a particular moment and in a particular place, to cause interesting stories to be told. They have, therefore, an unusual range of Virtues, and these may suit the covenant's needs in a particular saga with an eerie exactness. Time-lost characters may suffer a Delusion that they can return to their own time.





fish, serpents (including lizards), and vermin (insects, spiders, mice, and so forth); only the latter are not suitable as animal grogg due to their small size. See *Art & Academe*, page 29, for a longer discussion on animals in Medieval Europe.

## Disadvantages Inherent in Playing an Animal

There are several inherent problems with playing an animal grogg that are not represented by Virtues and Flaws. This places the animal grogg at a distinct disadvantage compared to human characters, which is only offset by the novelty of playing an animal rather than a human.

### PHYSICAL FORM

Most animals lack grasping hands, and even those that have them (such as monkeys and birds) lack the fine control and opposable thumbs of humans. This bars them from many simple tasks, and precludes the use of weapons or tools.

There are some advantages to having an animal's body. Most have a covering of fur, feathers, or scales, which grant an intrinsic Protection of at least 1. Further, animals usually possess at least one natural weapon such as claws, teeth, or horns. Some animals can fly or breathe water, and require no special Virtue to possess these abilities. For a list of the qualities that an animal's physical form can have, see the supplement *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 40. If using the system of mundane Qualities to describe the intrinsic features of animal forms, do not apply any listed modifiers to Characteristics or Abilities; instead use the system described later in this section.

## Horses & Hounds Story Seeds

Animals get involved in stories without realizing it, but can have a significant impact on events.

with this difficult task, then he will reduce his normal price for one of his three-year-old mares.

### A CALM-TEMPERED ROUNCEY

A magus at the covenant is a great traveler, and he has heard of a distant covenant that breeds horses that are immune to the effects of The Gift. The player characters set out to acquire such a beast, and perhaps negotiate the purchase of more than one. Naturally, the breeder of these horses sets a high price for them — more than the characters were prepared for — but he suggests a way in which they could earn a discount. Every year, he must round up the magical stallion that is the sire of his foals; if they assist him

### THE ANIMAL COLLECTOR

A covenant that has an exotic animal among its grogg comes to the notice of one of the king's agents. He is collecting animals on the king's behalf for a menagerie, and seeks to acquire the creature owned by the characters. If the magi want to hang on to their grogg, they must find some way to dissuade the king's man without directly interfering with mundane politics. Certainly, if the man does not return from his mission, the king will send further agents accompanied by armed men to discover what has happened.

### CUNNING RATHER THAN INTELLIGENCE

Animals do not have Intelligence, and are therefore bereft of the ability to reason. They are incapable of logical thought, or of drawing conclusions from evidence. For example, a dog that sees a hare dash into a thicket either chases in after it, or waits at the point its quarry entered the bush. It does not think to go around to the other side of the bush to the point where the hare might leave.

The Cunning characteristic possessed by beasts means that they act largely through estimation (also called instinct), and are ruled by their Personality Traits. However, they still possess the other components of a mind — cognition, common sense, memory, and imagination. See *Art & Academe*, page 31, for more details on these inner wits. However, animals are severely limited by their comparative difficulty in learning new things; this is represented by the Restricted

Learning Flaw (see Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws), which all animal grogg must take.

### LACK OF LANGUAGE ABILITIES

Animal characters cannot speak, but they can understand any languages they know. However, unlike human characters, they do not receive an automatic Native Language Ability. When earning experience points in a human Language, an animal always has a Source Quality of (4 + Cunning), meaning that they tend to learn more slowly than humans. Furthermore, if an animal has a negative Cunning score, it must reduce any human Language Score by a similar amount, to a minimum of 0. Thus a creature with Cunning -1 that knows French 1 can only understand a handful of words at most. Creatures with a positive Cunning receive no bonus to understanding language.

## Animal Aging

ANIMAL	AVERAGE LIFESPAN	STARTING AGE	BEGINS AGING	MODIFIER TO AGING ROLL	AGING ROLLS
Human	50	5	35	+1 per 10 years	1 per year
Clawed Beasts	9	1	6	+1 per 2 years	5 per year
Hoofed Beasts	27	3	20	+1 per 5 years	2 per year
Birds	81	8	55	+1 per 15 years	1 per 2 years
Fish and Serpents	243	24	170	+1 per 50 years	1 per 5 years

In Mythic Europe, animals are naturally capable of communicating with members of their own kind, and with closely-related kinds, so dogs have a Language Ability called Dog, horses speak Horse, and so forth. This Language Ability allows an animal grog to communicate simple concepts only, as if they had a Language Score of 2 (*ArM5*, page 66). They can talk to related species as if their Language Ability was one point lower, so a wolf, for example, can understand a few words of Dog. This Language Ability cannot be increased with experience.

### AGING RATE

*"...a hedge (lives for) three years, add dogs and horses and men, stags and ravens, eagles, enormous whales, the world: each one following triples the years of the one before."*

— Inlay around the pavement in Westminster Abbey, 13th century

Animals age at different rates to humans; most clawed and hoofed beasts have a shorter lifespan than humans, whereas birds and fish in Mythic Europe live about the same time or longer than humans. There are three things to be considered: the age at which aging begins, the adjustment to the aging roll due to age, and the number of aging rolls per year. A human, with an average lifespan of 50 years (ignoring lifestyle modifiers), begins aging at 35, adds 1 to the aging roll for every 10 years, and makes 1 aging

roll each year. The storyguide should decide upon the average lifespan of the creature and adjust these figures accordingly. Thus, a creature with an average lifespan of 10 years has a modifier of (50/10), or 5. It therefore begins aging at (35/5) 7 years old, adds one to the aging roll for every (10/5) 2 years of age, and makes (1 x 5) 5 aging rolls each year. If more than one aging roll is made each year, they should be spread evenly throughout the four seasons, with any excess occurring in Winter. Some example aging characteristics are given in the nearby table.

## General Background

A grog character that is a domestic animal is easy to integrate into any saga — horses, dogs, hawks, and other animals that frequently associate with mankind can be purchased from breeders by any character or covenant that desires them. Integrating wild animals can be similarly easy, depending on the species involved; a bear could have been found as a cub and trained as an entertainer, or a character with the Animal Ken Virtue might befriend a raven and keep it as a pet. A trained animal is capable of performing certain tasks — even complex tasks — at the command of its master, and you should be clear what commands you know and can complete without the barrier of language between you and your master. Rules for training animals are given in *Art & Academe* (page 119), and summarized under the Animal Trainer, earlier.

Playing a character without an intellect can pose a significant challenge. As a starting point, play careful attention to the human Language score of the grog (modified by Cunning, as mentioned earlier). If she lacks a Language score, or has a modified score of 0, then she can only understand direct commands in which she has been trained. Feel free to stare blankly at other players if they try to communicate with you beyond your understanding. As a creature ruled by instinct, an animal grog should act in accordance with her Personality Traits and Flaws as much as possible. They should dominate every judgment or decision the character makes; lacking free will, an animal feels neither restraint nor guilt over the actions it takes.

## Character Creation

Character creation of an animal grog is different in several respects from that of human characters. The reader is directed to *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, pages 38–43, for more information on this.

### CHARACTERISTICS AND SIZE

An animal grog has the Size of her animal form, which is normally a creature between Size –3 and Size +2. The Large Virtue or Small Frame Flaw can make the character an usually large or small specimen of her kind, and adjusts the normal Size of the creature by one point in the applicable direction.

Animal characters receive the same number of points to spend on Characteristics as humans. However, when dealing with human characters, rather than characters of their own species, they take penalties to Presence and Communication according to the following table:



TYPE	PRE	COM
Clawed Beast	-2	-5
Hoofed Beast	-4	-5
Bird	-1	-2
Fish	-5	-6

After Characteristic points have been decided, add twice the character's Size to her Strength, and subtract the character's Size from her Quickness.

### SUGGESTED VIRTUES AND FLAWS

Animal grogs suffer from the effects of the No Hands and Mute Flaws, but these are intrinsic to the character concept, and do not count toward the character's normal allotment of Flaws, nor do they provide points with which to buy Virtues.

Animal grogs are required to take the Restricted Learning\* Flaw. They generally have the Domestic Animal, Wanderer, or Companion Animal Social Status Virtues or Flaws. Other suitable Virtues and Flaws include:

Virtues: Berserk, Domestic Animal\*, Enduring Constitution, Ferocity\*, Improved Characteristics, Lightning Reflexes, Long-Winded, Pack Leader\*, Perfect Balance, Rapid Convalescence, Piercing Gaze, Reserves of Strength, Self-Confident, Tough, Wilderness Sense

Flaws: Clumsy, Companion Animal\*, Fragile Constitution, Fear, Noncombatant, Nocturnal, Pack Mentality\*, Poor Eyesight, Poor Hearing, Poor Living Conditions\*, Reckless, Reclusive, Weakness, most Major Personality Flaws taken as Minor Flaws.

\* See Chapter 6, New Virtues and Flaws.

Animal grogs cannot take Virtues and Flaws that involve interaction with human society. An animal grog with the Animal Ken Virtue can use it to communicate with unrelated

animal species, and, at the option of the troupe, with humans as well. This Supernatural Ability substitutes for a Language Ability, but can never be higher than the creature's native animal Language Ability.

### SUGGESTED ABILITIES

An animal grog receives 120 experience points for his pre-adult life; this leaves him at the starting age shown in the table earlier (under Aging). The character also receives a single Animal Language at a score of 2. This implies that some infant animals are particularly fast learners, which is true; by the time they reach adulthood, they have a fair complement of Abilities. Note that birds need no Ability to be able to fly, but could benefit from Athletics to perform unusual maneuvers. Likewise, all fish can swim, but may need to roll on their Swim Ability to escape predators or chase prey.

An animal grog subsequently gains the usual number of experience points per year (usually 15) beyond their starting age. However, an animal usually has to make Aging Rolls much earlier than a human, so players may wish to take care in applying too many additional years to an animal grog. The storyguide might want to restrict the maximum Ability scores of an animal grog based on his age, much like human characters are limited (*ArM5*, page 31).

Animal grogs typically possess the following Abilities: Area Lore, Athletics, Awareness, Brawl, Hunt, Leadership (for pack or herd leaders), Music (for songbirds), Stealth, Survival, Swim.

### TRAINING PACKAGES

Training packages are inapplicable for animal grogs, because of their restricted Ability sets.

### SAMPLE ABILITY SCORES

**DOG, 1 YEAR OLD:** Athletics 3 (chasing), Awareness 3 (scent), Brawl 3 (biting), Dog 2 (dominance), Hunt 3 (rabbits)

**DOG, 4 YEARS OLD:** Athletics 3 (chasing), Awareness 3 (scent), Brawl 4 (biting), Dog 2 (dominance), Hunt 4 (rabbits), Leadership 1 (dogs)

**HORSE, 3 YEARS OLD:** Area Lore 1 (5) (water), Athletics 4 (running), Awareness 3 (predators), Brawl 3 (kick), Horse 2 (food)

**HORSE, 10 YEARS OLD:** Area Lore 2 (water), Athletics 6 (running), Awareness 4 (predators), Brawl 4 (kick), Horse 2 (food), Living Language 1 (rider)

**HAWK, 8 YEARS OLD:** Athletics 4 (diving), Awareness 4 (prey), Brawl 2 (claws), Hawk 2 (mice), Survival 1 (mountains)

## Animals as Companions

An animal grog could easily become a companion by being transformed by powerful supernatural effects. As a result of warping, the creature could become infused with powers of its own, or else become corrupted by some hellish power. The most extreme form of this sort of transformation entails gaining a Might Score. The four *Realms of Power* sourcebooks include details for creating creatures that are either aligned to or are members of a given supernatural Realm.

## Brief Grog Concepts

Virtues and Flaws indicated with an asterisk are described in Chapter 6: New Virtues and Flaws.

## The Accursed

Some live within a covenant as it offers a way of life that can't be found elsewhere. But others have little choice but to seek out magical aid.

The Accursed is afflicted with a Supernatural Flaw, such as Lesser Malediction or (Realm) Stigmata\*, and the covenant is the only place where The Accursed feels safe. Either protected by the *Aegis of the Hearth* or held in check by the magic of the scholars he serves, The Accursed enjoys relief from his curse, until his masters have need of it. Other than this, the Accursed could have any complement of Abilities, Virtues, or Flaws.

TRAINING PACKAGES: any

## The Barbarian

Hermetic magi do travel a lot, and often they will visit remote areas in the farthest corners of Mythic Europe. Local guides or professionals may be hired on such journeys, and a bond may form or some beneficial agreement be made. These locals may choose to join the turb and accompany the magi home. Eastern or northern Europe should provide sufficient cultural differences from a saga set in Britain, France, or the Italian peninsula.

Once back at the covenant, these Barbarians often have a hard time adapting to the language, society, and even climate. They wear funny clothes, use odd weapons and tools, and in general do things differently — they might even be pagan.

Social Status like Outsider may apply, although it need not be a stigma. Foreign Upbringing\* and Primitive Equipment\* may be appropriate. His native language is one foreign to the local area of the setting, and he needs to learn a second language. Area Lore in his native area is a more

likely Ability than the covenant's locale. Barbarians often have good scores in Survival and Ride, and probably have an Organization Lore that matches their home culture.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Archer, Brawler, Rider, Soldier, Woodsman

## The Coastal Raider

A pirate, Berber, or Turk who takes to the sea to pillage and burn, this character is a sailor and warrior, nothing more, nothing less. For the right price, he'll paint his shield with whatever banner he's given — but he's not just out for himself; he knows the value of a good strong team. One man alone can't sail a ship, nor stand against a full town levy. Under the right captain, and for the right coin, he's as reliable as the most honorable soldier, though perhaps more savage.

Coastal Raiders usually perform the dual service of warriors and sailors, and thus must draw Abilities from both skill sets. Suitable Virtues and Flaws are similar to those of the Sailor, and also Berserk, Warrior, and Infamous.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Forager, Sailor, Soldier

## The Coward

Every turb has one: the unashamed Coward who never knowingly puts himself at risk. He's a work-shy, easily intimidated weak link, and you can never be sure of trusting him. But he earns his place through exceptional puissance with a single Ability. The unwilling Coward can be coerced into stories, usually through threats, but provides an easy target for enemies to exploit. Alternatively, the Coward could be utterly loyal to the covenant, but unable to force himself to face his fear.

The Coward is defined through

Personality Flaws to represent his cowardice, accompanied by a negative Brave Personality Trait. The defining Flaw of a Coward is Fear — probably of something major like "combat." These are balanced by both Affinity and Puissance in his key expertise, such as Legerdemain or Guile.

TRAINING PACKAGES: any

## The Disenfranchised Knight

This is a nobleman, trained to the saddle, sword, and lance, but with no land nor privilege. He may be the bastard son of a Lord, who will never inherit because he has too many legitimate brothers; he may have a reputation as a coward, so no one will meet him on the field at tournament; or he may be a knight of worth whose father's lands have been confiscated by a usurping baron. There are noblewomen equivalents as well: for instance, an educated lady whose father cannot afford her dowry might prefer to join a covenant than be consigned to the nunnery.

A true knight is a courtier as well as a warrior, learning Etiquette and Intrigue alongside swordplay. Ride and Great Weapon are essential Abilities for those hoping to win honor and reputation on the tourney field. Suitable Virtues and Flaws include Gentleman, Warrior, and any Flaw representing his dishonor (such as Infamous or Fear).

TRAINING PACKAGES: Courtier, Leader, Pikeman, Public Official, Rider, Soldier

## The Field Chirurgeon

The chirurgeon does his or her part to ensure the health and well-be-





ing of the covenfolk. A fighting force in particular has its life expectancy and efficiency increased by proper care. The surgeon may be a simple herbwife from the local village, or a formally trained nurse from a monastic hospital. Or he might be a combat veteran with a little training and a lot of practice. Any may work alone, or as the assistant to a doctor of medicine, depending on the covenant's size and funding.

Key Abilities include Chirurgy, Leadership if he manages a staff of helpers, Survival if he accompanies the turb into the field, and martial abilities if he is a combat medic. Folk Ken could be useful for putting his patients at ease. Suitable Virtues and Flaws include Puissant Chirurgy, Cautious with Chirurgy, Compassionate, and Surgical Empiricus (see *Art & Academe*, page 55).

TRAINING PACKAGES: Cunning Man, Cutter, Forager, Local

## The Fool

Fools and jesters entertain the lofty and the lowly alike, including magi of the Order. But a Fool may say things that others might not dare, perhaps

at the behest of his master seeking to spar with a rival.

The Fool entertains his audience with wit through Charm and feats of juggling through Profession: Jongleur. Profession: Performer represents his singing ability, while Legerdemain allows sleight of hand. Etiquette gives him knowledge of the acceptable boundaries while at court, all the better to break them. Appropriate Virtues and Flaws include Free Expression, Perfect Balance, Troupe Upbringing and Small Frame.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Conman, Minstrel, Storyteller, Tumbler, Wastrel

## The Ghost

Covenants see much of death, but in the Magical aura common to so many covenants, death may not be a final end. Ghosts haunt many covenants, and while magi may leave them to their ghostly hauntings, bind them to eternal servitude, or treat them as legitimate covenfolk, Ghosts that are able to leave the confines of the covenant make for unusual travel companions.

Ghostly grogs do not have a high Might Score and so are vulnerable,

but they may each have unique Powers and Abilities that mirror their roles in life.

For suitable Virtues and Flaws, see *Realms of Power: Magic*, Chapter 3. Most Ghosts who are grogs have the same Abilities as in life, even though some of those Abilities are no longer relevant. However, a good Awareness, Area Lore, and Organization Lore: Covenant can be useful to those who are sufficiently gifted to perceive the Ghost's presence.

## The Hero

Preternaturally drawn to danger, the first to volunteer when faced with overwhelming odds, and almost certainly destined for an early grave, The Hero is the consummate adventurer, always prepared for anything. He has a broad spread of Abilities, ensuring that he can climb the steepest slopes, swim the widest lakes, and ride the fastest horses. He is likely to be reckless in his approach to life, and have a lust for adventure. Others might find him tiresome or intimidating because he expects others to be as brave and adventurous as he is himself. A covenant is an obvious home for such a one seeking glory and renown, as it

offers challenges far beyond the mortal world.

The Hero usually has a good Athletics, Swim, Ride, and Survival Ability, representing his adventuring spirit. Appropriate Virtues and Flaws include: Affinity with Athletics, Warrior, Famous (or Infamous), and Reckless.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Athlete, Brawler, Leader, Soldier

## The Laboratory Assistant

While older magi have apprentices, familiars, and perhaps even a clutch of enchanted automata to assist them in the laboratory, younger magi appreciate the help of mundane hands. The Laboratory Assistant grog is well-educated and versed in Magic Theory and Magic Lore. The Laboratory Assistant cannot provide direct help to her master since she does not have The Gift, but she is a skilled craftswoman, repairing damaged apparatus after accidents. If her master is particularly terrifying, she may be very good at Stealth; he may not even know she exists, but marvels that his sanctum remains tidy despite the occasional destructive rampage. Because she is privy to her master's secrets, she has a great deal of authority over the "lesser" servants.

Suitable Virtues and Flaws include Arcane Lore, Affinity with Craft (any relevant), and Humble. Some Flaws might represent being caught in laboratory accidents (such as Missing Eye, Fragile Constitution, and Poor Hearing).

TRAINING PACKAGES: Covenfolk, Craftsman, Magician, Servant

## The Loyal Watchman

Always unnoticed and never catching the attention of the masters, the Loyal Watchman will never amount to much and he'd be surprised if the scholars even knew his name. He simply takes his pay, feeds his family, and raises the next generation of Loyal Watchmen.

The Loyal Watchman defends the covenant. He does not venture out with the magi and is nobody's custos. But he knows the covenant like the back of his hand; it is all he has known. Every covenant has these downtrodden nameless grogs, but once in a while they come into their own and show their worth. Awareness is the key Ability of the Watchman, and he may well have a good local Area Lore, thanks to long months of intense exploration. Having spent a long time at the covenant, he may have developed a good Organization Lore: Covenant. Appropriate Virtues and Flaws include Puissant Awareness and Nocturnal.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Covenfolk, Local, Sentry

## The Officer

Every fighting turb needs a leader, and most have one. Depending on the size of the turb and the level of organization, the Officer may be anything from the most-senior fighter to a knight or formally trained officer.

Custos is a recommended Virtue, as is Warrior. He needs access to Martial Abilities, and a higher officer needs to know Latin and be literate, in addition to basic arithmetic. Good Teacher or Puissance in favored abilities would help, or Inspirational for a captain. Key Abilities include Folk Ken, Leadership, Martial Abilities, Riding, and Teaching. Etiquette and various Organization and Area Lores apply as well.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Covenfolk, Leader, Public Official, Trainer, Soldier

## The Poisoner

The art of the apothecary is a subtle one, when the difference between harming or healing a client can be as simple as a minim's weight of a drug. It is not a career aimed at the clumsy or the careless, and yet sometimes individuals are expected to enter the family trade, no matter what their own wishes. However, the trade can also attract those individuals who enjoy the power over life and death that they hold in their hands, or whose morals around poisoning are up for negotiation, if there is financial gain in it.

Towns rarely tolerate an apothecary who poisons his patients, for whatever reason. After escaping from a lynch mob, the Poisoner can be of great use to bandits and other ne'er-do-wells who live apart from society. Life is harsh for such individuals, and an apothecary can double as a surgeon, as well as provide more effective ways of killing their marks. Similarly, a covenant can find a use for a disgraced apothecary incapable of setting up trade in town, but can they ever really trust his nostrums?

Naturally, Profession: Apothecary is an important Ability for the Poisoner, and some may know Medicine (or its folk equivalent) for making more potent poisons. Many have basic knowledge of Chirurgy. Legerdemain is suitable for slipping one's preparations unseen into another's food. Suitable Virtues and Flaws include Arcane Lore, Educated, Herbalism (*Art & Academe*, page 55), Puissant Profession: Apothecary, and Judged Unfairly

TRAINING PACKAGES: Apothecary, Cutter, Forager, Local, Physician



## The Robber

The roads of Mythic Europe are rarely safe, largely due to robbers who extract their own tolls and taxes from those who pass. As an outlaw, the Robber may look at the covenant as a place of sanctuary where his crimes might be ignored and his value recognized.

The Robber has exceptional knowledge of the local area and his activities ensure that he learns about all manner of goings on. But for all his value, the covenant must occasionally face the consequences of his actions while protecting their own secrecy and reputation.

In addition to Area Lore (and the Robber may have several different Area Lores), this character uses Stealth to lie in wait, and Leadership to intimidate his victims. Brawl is possibly more important than any Martial Abilities. Appropriate Virtues and Flaws include Warrior, Well-Traveled, and Branded Criminal.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Brawler, Footpad, Forager, Local, Soldier, Woodsman

## The Sailor

Many covenants earn income from the sea, through fishing or trade, and each ship needs a crew. While crews for these vessels have little to do with the Order, magi who undertake sea voyages would do well to retain a turb of Sailors.

The chief Ability is Profession: Sailor, but Area Lore for coastal areas is important. And for covenants that have built or bought enchanted vessels, Finesse is useful as it helps the Sailor to control the ship's enchantments. But the Sailor's loyalties are to his captain first, his ship second, and then to the covenant. Appropriate Virtues and Flaws include Cautious with Profession: Sailor, Wilderness Sense, and Craving for Travel\*.

TRAINING PACKAGES: Fisherman, Laborer, Sailor

## The Survivor

When covenants die, what happens to their grogs? In some cases, the

covenfolk remain in the ruins of the covenant long after the magi have left or been killed by some terrible disaster. Perhaps they are trapped in a regio, or have nowhere else to go. The grogs become warped over time by the aura, and after even a single generation are likely to be culturally different from their more mundane neighbors. For example, a simple desire that the magi will one day return and free them can be transmuted in later generations under the influence of Warping to a messianic cult that treats magi as demi-gods.

Characters rescued from the ruins of a covenant may share common Delusions, have unusual Prohibitions, and have extreme Personality Traits. They may also suffer inherited Flaws from Warping, such as Warped Senses or Environmental Sensitivity (both from *Realms of Power: Magic*, Chapter 4).

TRAINING PACKAGES: Covenfolk, Forager, Woodsman