

Mansur ibn Fadl al-Baghdadi

by Niall Christie

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

Size: 0

Age: 28 (28)

Decrepitude: 0

Warping Score: 0 (0)

Confidence Score: 1 (3)

Faith Points: 1

Virtues and Flaws: Emir*; True Faith; Educated**, Enchanting Poetry***, Free Expression, Luck, Puissant Arabic, Warrior; Curse of Venus, Greater Malediction (Gets embroiled in life-threatening political struggles), Outsider (Arab); Obsessed (Get rid of malediction)

Personality Traits: Brave +3, Fatalistic +3, Just +3

Reputations: Devil-Worshipper 3 (Local)

Combat: *Fist:* Init -2, Attack +5, Defense +4, Damage +1

Kick: Init -3, Attack +4, Defense +2, Damage +4

Lance and Healer: Init -1, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage +6

Lance: Init 0, Attack +9, Defense +4, Damage +6

Long Sword and Heater: Init 0, Attack +10, Defense +9, Damage +7

Long Sword: Init 0, Attack +10, Defense +6, Damage +7

Short Bow: Init -3, Attack +4, Defense 0, Damage +7, Range 15

Fist:† Init -2, Attack +7, Defense +6, Damage +1

Kick:† Init -3, Attack +6, Defense +4, Damage +4

Lance and Heater:† Init -1, Attack +11, Defense +9, Damage +6

Lance:† Init 0, Attack +11, Defense +6, Damage +6

Long Sword and Heater:† Init 0, Attack +12, Defense +11, Damage +7

Long Sword:† Init 0, Attack +12, Defense +8, Damage +7

Short Bow:† Init -3, Attack +6, Defense +2, Damage +7, Range 15

Soak: +10

Fatigue levels: OK/0/-1/-3/-5/Unconscious

Wound Penalties: -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

Abilities: Animal Handling 2 (Horses), Arabic 5 (Poetry), Artes Liberales 2 (Rhetoric), Athletics 2 (Running), Awareness 2 (Alertness), Bows 3 (Short Bow), Brawl 3 (Punching), Carouse 2 (Staying Sober), Charm 2 (Being Witty), Chirurgy 2 (Binding Wounds), concentration 1 (Memory) Enchanting

*Middle Eastern equivalent of the Knight Minor Virtue.

**Reconceived for Middle Eastern characters as 50 exp that can be spent on Arabic, Theology: Islam, Islamic Law and Artes Liberales, due to a different education "system."

***As Enchanting Music Virtue, only applies to Mansur's Ability to sway others with his poetry (using Living Language skills).

†Totals while mounted (includes +2 bonus for Ride Ability)

§Islamic version of Civil and Canon Law

Poetry 3 (Calming), Etiquette 2 (Nobility), Folk Ken 2 (Nobles), Great Weapon 1 (Long Spear), Guile 2 (Elaborate Lies), Hunt 2 (Lions), Intrigue 2 (Gossip), Iraq Lore 2 (Personalities), Islamic Law^s 2 (Qur'anic Injunctions), Latin 2 (Hermetic), Leadership 2 (In Combat), Local Area Lore 2 (Geography), Ride 2 (Speed!), Single Weapon 4 (Long Sword), Stealth 2 (Deserts), Survival 2 (Deserts), Swim 2 (Long Distances), Theology: Islam 3 (Prophets)

Equipment: Long Sword, Heater Shield, Lance, Short Bow, Full Mail Armour (-3 to Per when helmet worn), Horse

Encumbrance: 3 (10) with lance & shield, to 2 (6) with just armour

Appearance: Mansur is of medium height and build, with brown eyes, black hair and a neatly curled goatee beard. He smiles frequently, and has a gentle but clearly audible voice with a discernable Middle Eastern accent. He usually wears baggy clothes: a white tunic and turban and black treads. When going into battle, he wears full chainmail constructed in Middle Eastern style.

Mansur is a wandering emir, the Muslim equivalent of a knight errant, who has found himself driven to seek help at the covenant. Born into a noble family in Baghdad, Mansur was raised to be a Muslim gentleman, a man of both war and culture. Like many of the educated Muslims of the time, he knows the Qur'an by heart and is familiar with a variety of Arabic literary and judicial texts. He is a skilled warrior and hunter, adept with lance, sword, shield and bow, and is also an unusually skilled poet; the latter would make him very popular in covenant, if only the other covenant-folk could understand Arabic! However, some appreciate the resonance and musicality of Arabic, so he does get called upon to perform on occasion.

However, Mansur has a problem. In his youth he confronted a witch whom he found practicing black magic in a graveyard. She cursed him with a tendency to get embroiled in political struggles, with the result that at every court he has attended, he has found himself becoming enmeshed in nefarious plots through no fault of his own. The end result of this has been a number of hasty departures from a variety of places, in order to keep his head attached to his neck! News of his seeming penchant for intrigue has spread, and

now he is unwelcome at any city or fortress where the great and the good interact with each other.

Mansur wants to return to the high society in which he was raised, and so he has come to the covenant, seeking the help of the magi to break the curse. So far their efforts have proved to be fruitless, but he hopes that someday he may be able to return to the company of noble Muslims. In the meantime, he attempts to be useful to the magi, training the grogs and assisting with the maintenance of the covenant's library.

Mansur is not an obsessively pious Muslim, but he does have an unshakeable faith in the benevolence of Allah, from which he believes he has benefited; after all, despite his curse, he is still alive, so he feels that someone must be taking care of him!

Note: Mansur is loosely based upon a real historical person, a Syrian emir named Usama ibn Munqidh (1095-1188). Usama's memoirs are well known to historians and strongly recommended for both their (admittedly at times questionable) historical information and their entertainment value. The latest English edition is *Usama ibn Munqidh*, trans. Philip K. Hitti, *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman & Warrior in the Period of the Crusades* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000).