

THE GEMPEST

by Stewart Wieck


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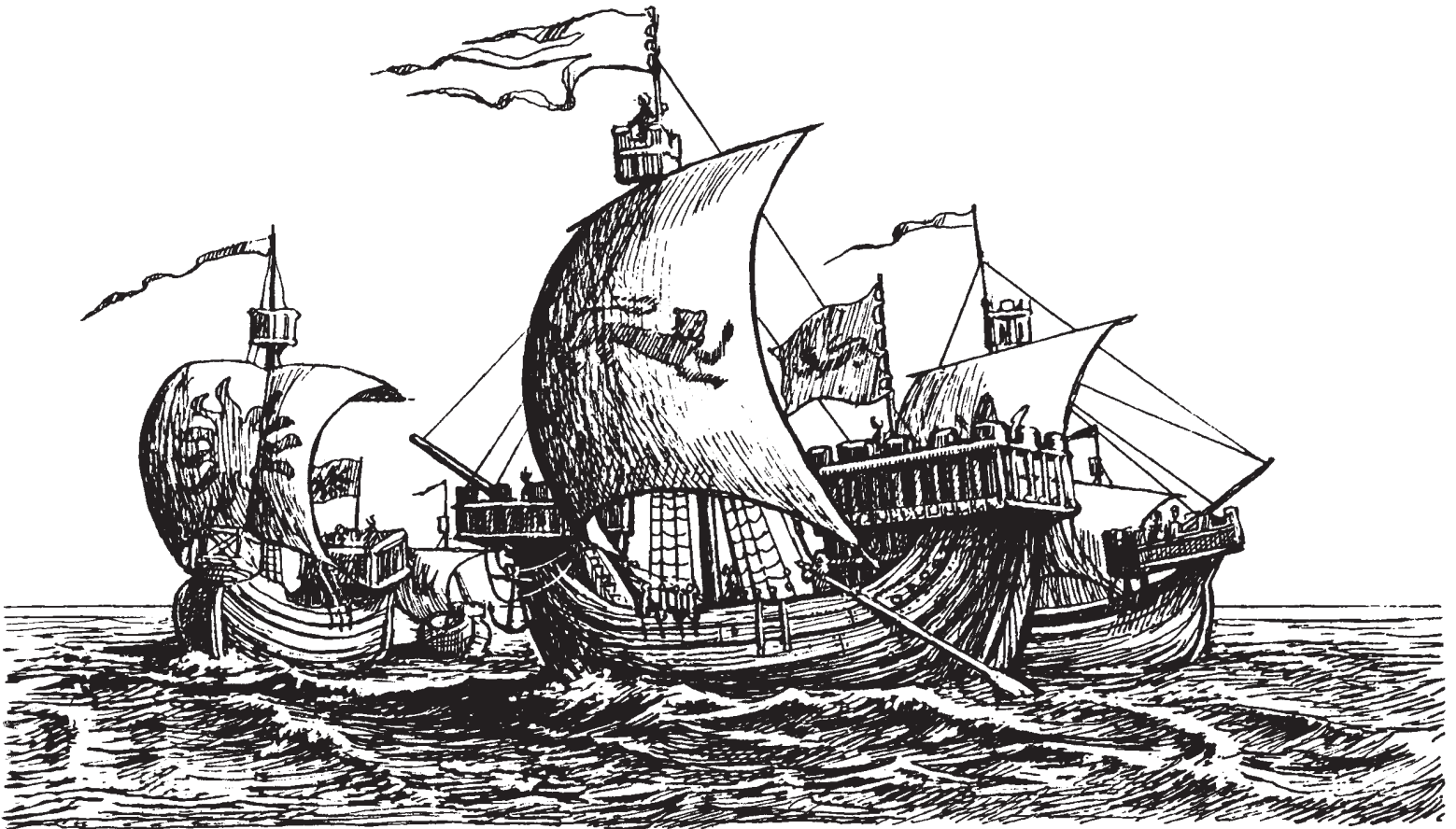


Lion Rampant

LR0501

The Tempest

A Saga of a Covenant's Journey from Summer to Autumn



by Stewart Wieck

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The Author extends special thanks to:

Kelly Golden and Stephan Wieck for years of exciting roleplaying and for inspiring some of the events of this supplement. Kelly's idea of a covenant built on the ground of a past great battle was the springing point for the entire supplement and Steve's interesting characters helped shape many of the roleplaying encounters.

The Tempest

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Lion Rampant would like to dedicate this supplement to all of our friends at White Wolf Publishing. Thanks for all the support over the last three years, the friendship you've shown, and the encouragement through both thick and thin. With friends like you guys, success is only a matter of time.

Look for articles on **Ars Magica** in future issues of *White Wolf* magazine. For more information, write to:

White Wolf Publishing
 1298 Winter Place
 Anniston, AL 36201

Special, special thanks to:

Mark "I'll just add some stuff in here about the Order of Hermes and change this to..." **Rein•Hagen** for opening up the **Ars Magica** world to out of house writers

Lisa "Hi there, Stewart. How would you like to write a supplement for us. Oh, by the way, it's due in a month." **Stevens** for raising AT&T's stock with all the calls to Carrollton, GA, trying to coordinate this project

John "Sure I'll make up an ancient druidic society. Give me a few minutes." **Brandt** for adding the historical details which make this supplement all the more enchanting and doing a fair bit of writing too.

Nicole "Order of Hermes is done. Give me a day to finish Tempest." **Lindroos** for dealing with a near impossible production schedule — and surviving!!

Bruce "How about a game of Around the World" **Tarnopolski** for allowing the staff to "shoot hoops" to relieve the tension and letting us win occasionally too.

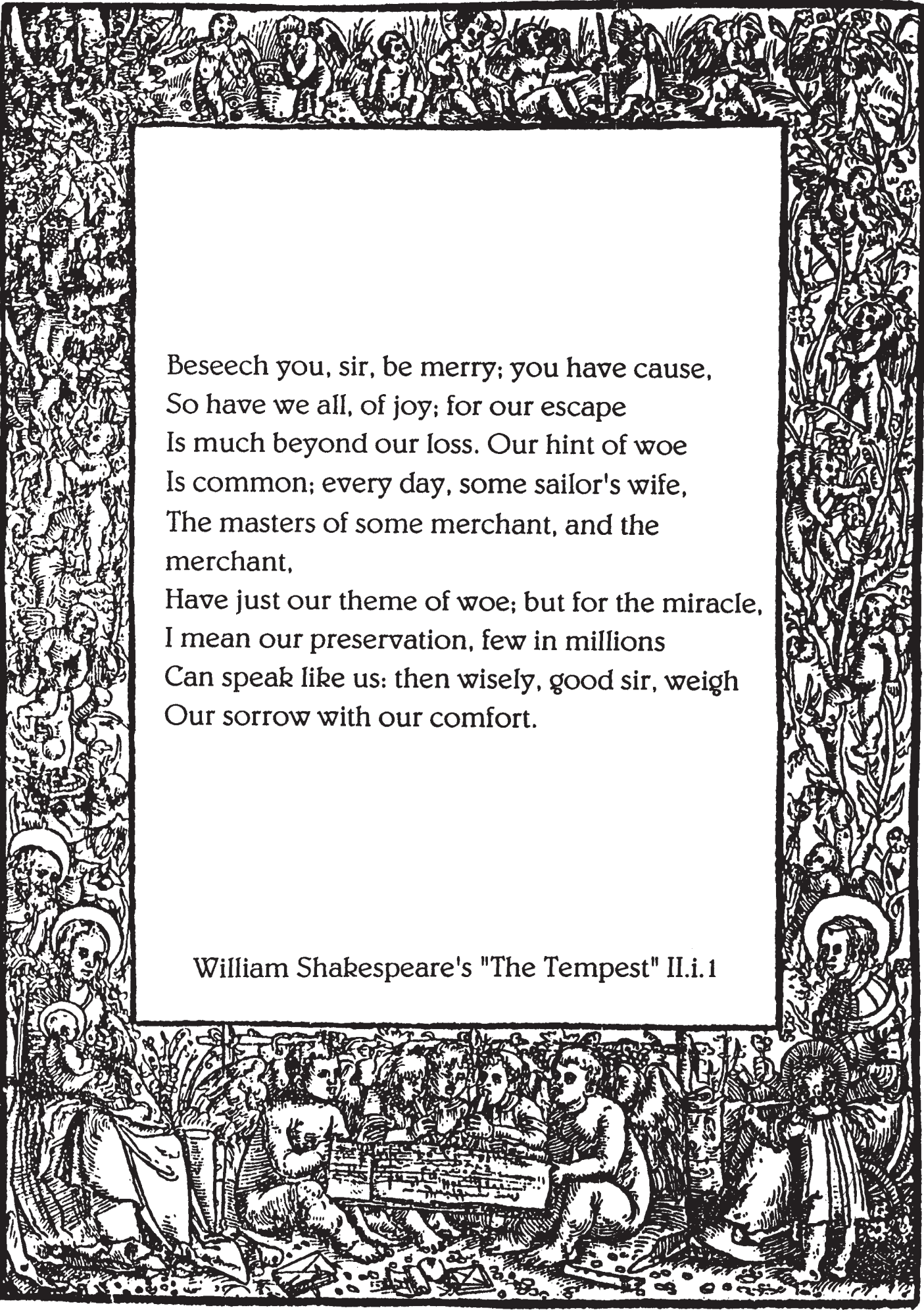
Stewart "Perhaps I CAN review this product." **Wleck** for putting up with a lot of crap on this project and bringing roleplaying back into our lives again (next week, Stewart?).

Jeff "I should be able to fit you in here somewhere" **Menges** for doing another beautiful cover and being patient with a young, and many times imperfect, company.

Richard "You need the logo done by WHEN?" **Thomas** for once again fitting us into his hellacious schedule and getting us the art when we needed it.

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Beseech you, sir, be merry; you have cause,
So have we all, of joy; for our escape
Is much beyond our loss. Our hint of woe
Is common; every day, some sailor's wife,
The masters of some merchant, and the
merchant,
Have just our theme of woe; but for the miracle,
I mean our preservation, few in millions
Can speak like us: then wisely, good sir, weigh
Our sorrow with our comfort.

William Shakespeare's "The Tempest" II.i.1

Preface

Ars Magica, more than most other RPGs, lends itself to true campaign play. While other RPGs certainly allow for campaigns, the kind provided is very different from that available in *Ars Magica*. Most of the time, what gamers term a "campaign" is simply a series of interconnected adventures, where the only continuity is the identity of the characters.

Covenants in *Ars Magica* make a Saga-type campaign possible. The covenant is a permanent fixture in the characters' lives and helps maintain focus within an *Ars Magica* Saga. As the seasons pass, the covenant grows and the characters age. The depth of realism this provides allows the creation of a believable yet playable campaign.

This supplement for *Ars Magica* is intended to emphasize the campaign environment of your current Saga. The events and adventures detailed herein will provide a complete background around which other "one-shot" adventures can be played. These events are not intended to be played one after the other until finished. Rather, the events should be interspersed with stories such as *The Broken Covenant of Calebais*, *The Stormrider*, "The Golden Ship" from *WHITE WOLF Magazine*, or something of your own creation. After one such adventure is played, another step in the unfolding drama which this supplement describes should be revealed.

Used properly, this book can add depth to your *Ars Magica* Saga which isn't possible by simply alternating seasons of research and adventure. It will also help maintain the players' interest as they wait to learn what is going to happen next. In fact, their search for more information about the events of the campaign will certainly lead to many unplanned and exciting game sessions.

While the timing of the events detailed in this supplement may be altered to suit the current status of your players' covenant, the events are intended to take place during a covenant's Summer (as described in the Covenants supplement). At the end of the campaign, the covenant will achieve the pinnacle of its power and enter the period of Autumn. With that in mind, you may only now begin to understand the scope of what this supplement attempts to provide. The journey from Summer to Autumn could take centuries and if that's what you desire, then the events of the campaign should be introduced throughout a two hundred year span of time. Alternately, because the time it takes for covenants to mature is highly variable, Summer may last only a score of years. In this case, the events of the campaign will unfold much more quickly.

Choose a length of time appropriate to the style of Saga you are telling, but I recommend a period of forty to fifty years for the maturation to Autumn. The actions of the players could hasten or slow the introduction of the events, but that's as it should be. A covenant is a representation of the magi who dwell within it and it can develop only as fast as they allow. However, some of the events are outside the control of the characters, for the magi cannot control every aspect of their existence, even in cases where magic is concerned.

Why choose a campaign detailing the progression from Summer to Autumn? You may disagree, but I feel that the first Saga of players new to *Ars Magica* should begin in a Summer covenant. This setting allows the players to learn the game without their characters having too much initial responsibility. It is unlikely that new players could effectively manage a covenant with the demands of one in the Spring-phase of its existence. Autumn is a poor choice as well because the characters would begin with too much influence and power. Winter is simply too strange to expect new players to comprehend.

In Summer, players have the opportunity to see their characters work hard and achieve the rewards of Autumn, and thereafter (and perhaps with the help of later supplements similar to this one) slowly lose power and prestige to newer covenants during Winter. They may even feel the ultimate satisfaction of rebirth during Spring. It is the changing of the seasons which makes this supplement unique more than anything else; travel through them well.

Stewart Wieck
May 1990



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Introduction

Background Information about Hermetic History

This section relates all of the historical information with which you must be familiar in order to properly integrate the events of this campaign into your Saga. You may be surprised to discover the magnitude of the situation in which the characters will become involved, but imagine the delight of the players when they learn the significance of the history they have touched. Do not reveal its true scope to the players until it arises as a natural part of the story.

This campaign is based on situations and events which occurred prior to and during the formation of the Order of Hermes. In fact, the beginning of the tale is as old as the ancient rock of Stonehenge. Much of what is described below in these background notes is either denied or belittled by many of the older members of the Order. The suggestion that druidic magic had an influence on the formulation of Hermetic magic is openly derided. It is not likely, at least initially, that the characters will know anything of it. By the end of this tale, the characters should, hopefully, come to understand the magical roots of their Order in a vastly different light.

Most Hermetic scholars who investigate such histories feel that, before the Golden Age of Greece, another complex society existed outside the influence of Mediterranean civilization. For dozens of centuries before the glory of Athens, a primitive race inhabited the limestone caverns of western Europe. The paintings which can be found in these caves are evidence of how deeply attuned these people were with nature. This harmony soon grew into religion and ultimately a tradition of magic. Though Hermetic magi know of these cave paintings and their supposed magic powers, few realize that they greatly influenced the Kymryc and Celtic civilizations of Britain.

A thousand years before Alexander the Great, descendants of the cave painters erected Stonehenge on the misty, green lands of the British Isles. Called the Kymry, they were a cairn-building civilization of peaceful, nature-worshipping people. In the tradition of their ancestors, the Kymry continued to capture the magical essence of nature in their paintings and engravings. The most powerful of these pictures directly controlled many natural phenomena and could be found upon the sacred isle of Cimbrinsula. Located midway between the islands of Britain and Hibernia (Ireland) in the Irish Sea, Cimbrinsula was isolated and not as famous as the other achievements of the Kymry, such as Stonehenge.

As Gaelic culture infiltrated and dominated Europe, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Danube River and the Baltic Sea, the Gaelic warriors stumbled across the wonders of the magical cairns of Brittany. The Kymryc priest-magicians who tended these mystical sites, excited by contact with the vibrant and colorful Gaelic civilization, led them across the sea to Britain, the center of Kymryc power. Once there, the Gaels discovered the wonders and power of Stonehenge, the groves of Angelsey, and even the paintings of Cimbrinsula. The Gaels, who had vanquished all within their path from the Pyrenees to the Alps, craved to possess these wonders for themselves.

The ancient magicians of Cimbrinsula were surprised when their Gaelic guests returned with military hoards and attacked. Too quickly overwhelmed to prevent the capture of their sacred island, they utilized the power of their magical land to destroy Cimbrinsula (and themselves) as well as the invading army of Gaels which was upon it. Having eliminated the main contingent of Gaelic military power while sundering the basis of their own magical might, the remaining Kymryc priests had little choice but to join their Gaelic conquerors in order to defend their remaining magical sites, for neither group could hold them alone.

The culture which flowered from this union, known to Europe as the Celts, still drew great power from the magical nature of the Isle of Angelsey. Thus, the Kymry became the druids of Celtic society, using this far-flung people to protect the remnants of their power. Just as the



philosophy and methods of ancient Grecians were used as models by the Romans, so the ancient, nature-oriented civilization of the Kymry influenced the Celtic Britons. The roots of Druidic magic can be found in the ancient stone cairns and cave paintings of northwestern Europe.

A group of Celts, strongly supported by their druids, sacked Rome in 390 B.C. Because of this continuing threat to the city as well as a rivalry with Carthage, the Romans looked eastward for magical help in their struggles, just as they looked to Greece for culture and philosophy as well. In Greece, a religious group very different from the Druids had evolved from the mists of time, perhaps even pre-dating ancient Mesopotamia. The worship of Hermes, the Greek god of magic, was adopted by Romans looking for power over and protection from their hated enemies. As related in various texts prepared by Vernasius (see *Saga Pack*, "The History of the Order"), this Cult consisted of priests of Mercury (the Roman equivalent of Hermes) who worked elaborate ritual magics requiring a large group of priests. Primarily, the magic performed either benefited the Cult of Mercury or protected the glory of "eternal" Rome.

When the Romans, supported by the rituals of the Cult of Mercury, expanded into Celtic Gaul, these two powerful

traditions of magic clashed along with the foot soldiers of their civilizations. The highly organized Cult had developed elaborate rituals which gave them great advantages over the disparate groups of druids. The Celts and their druid allies lost their continental possessions, beginning with Cisalpine Gaul (northern Italy) and not ending till the Roman legions marched to the Atlantic Ocean.

From their stronghold in Britain, the druids rallied their brethren in Transalpine Gaul (France) in a massive rebellion. Although this was crushed by Julius Caesar, the druids continued to harass the Romans from the safety of their enchanted island whenever they could. Immediately after Caesar's victory, the Cult of Mercury began a complex ritual which would destroy the druids'

sanctuary on Angelsey. For over a century, the Cult gathered the means necessary to destroy such a potent mystical target. Finally, in A.D. 61, a massive strike was launched by the Cult, and the Roman General Suetonius Paulinus sacked Angelsey, putting many druids to the sword and scattering the rest.

However, the Roman Empire did not last forever either. As its western half disintegrated and Christianity began to spread from the cities of Europe, members of the Cult were forced to travel further from the centers of

power in order to continue their magic. Secluded in the forests of central Europe, the members of the Cult were largely forgotten by those in power in Rome. By the time the Western Roman Empire finally fell to the assault of Germanic barbarians, only a small group of those who had experienced the glory of Rome survived. These last few "priests of Mercury" became increasingly interested in personal power and knowledge over "religious" pursuits.

However, this new breed of magi had a problem. All of the magic of the Cult of Mercury was based on elaborate group rituals, procedures the magi no longer had the supplies or personnel to perform. In order to continue using magic, the magi had to learn the means to cast individual, if less effective, enchant-



ments. Fortunately, there was an answer. The guides to the solution were the few remaining druids who managed to survive the Roman occupation of Gaul and Britain. These druids, magi in their own right, were on the other end of the magical spectrum. The only magics they could perform were short, but highly varied enchantments cast intuitively and spontaneously by an individual. While there was no written record of Druidic magic, this tradition had been passed from master to student for centuries. The long ceremonies for which the druids are now noted were not magical at all, but rather they were a means of showmanship to impress others — a tactic first developed by the druids' shamanic ancestors.

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Bonisagus, a magus from the Cult of Mercury, was the first to combine these two traditions of magic into the system of magic now commonly practiced in the Order of Hermes. Along with a group of ten Latinate magi, one druid (Díedne), and one Germanic magus, Bonisagus established the Order of Hermes during a gathering at Durenmar in the Black Forest. As word of this spread, magi of all traditions from throughout Europe journeyed to Durenmar to become part of the Order of Hermes. Other magi were coerced into joining, for some of the Founders were intent on eliminating all magicians in Europe except for members of the Order. Facing such hostility, many druids joined House Díedne simply to avoid lethal hostilities and became part of the Order.

The plan for unification was not met wholeheartedly by all of the wizards of either magical tradition. A few members of the Cult of Mercury felt that they were above associating with the "savage" druids and clung to many of their old ways of doing magic. Likewise, some druids resented the Romans, because their Empire had banned their religion and forbidden the practice of their traditions. This persecution had been increased when the Roman Empire brought Christianity to western Europe. Christianity was a force which the druids could not overcome and it pushed them completely out of their homelands. They neither trusted nor liked the Roman magi, but joined their Order to gain both equal status with and protection from their Latin counterparts, as well as some aid in resisting the Dominion.

During the Schism War, these antipathies flared openly and House Tremere declared war on House Díedne. Many in the Latin Houses had never fully given up their Mercurian magic. Since they could not halt the further merging of the two disparate traditions, they sought to take advantage of this last opportunity to prove their dominance and aligned themselves with House Tremere. There were many small skirmishes and battles, and many magi from both sides were killed. With the aid of both House Flambeau (who had a strongly Mercurian contingent within their ranks) and even House Quaesitor, however, House Tremere slowly overcame the druids of House Díedne.

After two years of war, only the nucleus of House Díedne was left, the rest of its members either killed or fled to far distant lands. Its Primus and its most powerful leaders were driven back and forced to make their final stand.

After a month of magical combat, they had battled to a standstill, but the fury of the conflict affected the countryside for miles around. The druids called upon many powerful beasts and the awesome powers of nature to destroy their enemy. Using ancient rituals contributed by the die-hard Mercurians in their House, the Flambeau magi summoned forth great energies which not only destroyed most of the druids' beasts but affected the minds of the druids themselves as well.

Eventually, the druids concluded that they could neither win nor survive the battle, so they decided to take their enemies with them. They likened their decision to one of their oldest legends, where their ancestors, the Kymryc magicians, sealed their own fate by calling upon the ocean to overwhelm their sacred island, Cimbrinsula. By calling forth all of the magical resources of their own bodies, they managed to create a tremendous storm and a thousand bolts of lightning crashed down simultaneously over the battlefield while a great wind swept everything away. Only a few combatants on each side survived for any length of time thereafter. A druid was stunned and flung into a nearby body of water where he drowned, and a Roman magus, though gruesomely injured, slipped away but was presumed destroyed in the explosion. Neither side actually won the battle, but since most of the remaining druids had now been killed, their tradition of magic was almost entirely lost. Because of the lack of survivors and an unwillingness on the part of the Order of Hermes to document it, this battle has been largely forgotten and ignored. Most magi only know that House Díedne was destroyed because it was "an enemy of the Order."

The members of the Order of Hermes who were not involved in the combat could only watch in horror at the destruction caused by the battle. The few records which even refer to this battle call it "The Tempest" and remark that it was the primary reason the Schism War came to an end (and, incidentally why *certámen* became the predominant means for settling disputes). Those who had refused to change to the new system of magic were mostly gone, so within years the situation was diffused and events returned to a semblance of normalcy. The Druidic and Mercurian traditions were no longer a force within the Order.

How could all of this possibly affect the characters a century or more later? Little do they know, but their covenant is built on the site of that ancient battle. The magical aura is strong here because of the residual energy from the battle and the founders of the covenant, unaware of the site's history, have unwittingly made themselves a part of that history. The conflict is not yet entirely concluded and champions of the two traditions of magic will meet once again on the battleground. The events leading up to and including the final stages of this climatic battle are the plot of this strange tale. May you find it enjoyable.

The Campaign

The events of the campaign in this supplement are presented in a manner which does not lead the players, much less the characters, to the realization that all of the scenarios they play are actually part of a connected campaign. However, assuming your players are familiar with the purpose of this supplement's content, the mere fact that you are utilizing this material may indicate to them that a Saga-long story is in progress. You should make an effort to prevent the players from realizing which adventures are integral pieces of this story. Part of the fun of this campaign will be the hindsight of seeing how supposedly unrelated episodes actually fit together to form the basics of the Saga. Let them look back on it later and understand how it all works together — until then, keep it a mystery.

As you may have guessed from the history given in the proceeding section, the main factors of this campaign are the "presumed dead" magus of House Flambeau, Marlowe, and the "drowned" druid, Herrick, of House Díedne. It is around these two characters that the principle events of this Saga are based, so the better you understand and roleplay them, the smoother your storyguiding will go.

In order to fit your covenant into this Saga, you may have to change some of the ideas to mesh better with the terrain and political structure of your covenant. For instance, even though this supplement indicates that Herrick was thrown into the sea during *The Tempest*, it could have as easily been a river or lake. The names of the various characters described herein also have a noticeable English flavor to them. Change them to fit your Saga.

Theme

The theme of this Saga is not as easily explained as most themes for *Ars Magica* Sagas are, for it is a combination of many disparate elements. Though the characters will, in the end, probably be forced to fight Herrick the druid (for he is an "enemy of the Order"), they are likely to have sympathies for him regardless of his Renounced status. During the course of this story, they should learn that they are members of an Order that is impure and fallible, with a history of violence and destruction. Yet they must continue to support it and even fight its battles, for without the Order, there would be even more chaos and death than there already is. The characters will learn, and hopefully the players as well, that not everything is as cut and dried or black and white as they might sometimes expect. Friends, allies, and even the characters themselves sometimes must carry out questionable, if not very objectionable, actions to set everything right. What exactly they decide to do is part of the moral dilemma posed by these stories. The magi must, of course, protect their covenant, but how they do so and what gamut of thoughts and emotions they run is the true test of their characters.

The Course of the Saga

After several centuries of lying at the bottom of the sea (where he was kept alive only by the powerful protections he prepared prior to *The Tempest*), Herrick returns. At first, he is not very coherent and is barely aware of his surroundings (see "The Druid Rises," p.17). Over the course of a few years, he regains his wits and is finally able to examine the world around him. What he finds causes much chagrin — not only has the Order of Hermes founded by "deluded" Bonisagus survived, but some of his wizard followers have built a settlement on the very spot of the druids' defeat centuries ago. In his eyes, the covenant where the characters live was erected as a monument to the success of the Order of Hermes and is a celebration of his failure to stop the tyranny of the Order.



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Herrick therefore embarks upon the task of destroying the Order of Hermes and he decides to start with that which is most offensive to him — the characters' covenant. Revenge is all he has left to live for, so he dedicates himself completely to the task. Though the druid's power is tremendous in terms of what magi of the characters' time are capable of doing, it takes him several more years to develop the complex rituals he requires. After all, the tradition of magic which his House practiced did not accommodate anything like the complicated, formulaic ritual which he has in mind.

As much as he abhors the idea, Herrick must learn more about ritual magic. To do so, he assumes the guise of a hedge wizard interested in learning the "true" way of magic and asks for admittance into the covenant where the characters reside. After a period of a few years, or once he feels his disguise is in jeopardy, the druid will mysteriously disappear from the covenant to gather the materials he needs to perform his ritual (see "The Hedge Wizard," p. 33). He also takes with him some of the more powerful items from the covenant's stores as well as any secrets he might have discovered.

Meanwhile, one of the characters will meet the other focus of this century-long conflict — Marlowe, the "Roman" magus of House Flambeau who managed to survive the battle. Marlowe almost perished in the magical fury, but after restoring himself to full health, he decided it was futile to maintain the Mercurian ritualistic tradition within the Order of Hermes. With most of his Mercurian allies from House Flambeau crushed by the magic of the druids, he realized the Order would maintain its impure, compromising ways. He himself had learned a good deal of non-ritualistic magic. Because of this, he was on the outskirts of *The Tempest*, "protecting" the die-hard Mercurians who were finishing their ritual in the center of the battle. Therefore, he felt he survived only because of his "impurity" and the constant reminder of his failure in an impure Order weighed heavily on his mind.

Marlowe lives a solitary life near the site of the ancient battle, *The Tempest*, and thus near the covenant where the characters live. When one of the characters' magi discovers him, Marlowe makes arrangements with the character which insures his secrecy while vastly benefiting the character (see "The Mentor," p. 22). They are given access to the wisdom of Marlowe as well as the lore he has accumulated and possibly even a few magic items.

Several years after the disappearance of the "hedge wizard," a very odd phenomenon occurs — the ground around the covenant and everywhere within the covenant's magical aura begin's to "bleed." At the same time, the magical aura begins to decrease. At first, only small puddles of blood appear, but over the course of months and years, the landscape will be dyed red. Events are nearing the final stages when feathers and scales begin to

poke up from the ground. All of this is the result of the druid's ritual (see "The Bleeding Ground," p. 37).

Eventually, the characters will learn both the history of the site and the identity of the solitary magus who lives nearby. When confronted by the characters, Marlowe will explain what the mad druid is doing and a possible means of defeating him. His idea to defeat the druid, however, requires that the characters travel to the sunken isle of Cimbrinsula to gather more information. Unfortunately, the druid is the only living being, except perhaps the High Sindorie of Britain (faeries the players have little hope of contacting), who Marlowe thinks might know the location of Cimbrinsula.

However, with some research, the characters will discover a possible solution — an ancient Viking longship which Norse legends claim was sailing to plunder the ruins of Cimbrinsula when it sank. It's a long shot, but the owner of the longship who, in Viking fashion, would have been on board, may have actually known the isle's location and be tempted to continue his voyage. Marlowe can teach a magus a powerful ritual to call the longship to the surface so the Vikings can resume their voyage, but this time with representatives of the Order of Hermes aboard (see "The Longship," p. 39).

The characters board the ship, and after a few harrowing encounters, they arrive at the location of the great isle of Cimbrinsula. The city, of course, is now beneath the waves, and without proper magic, an underwater journey is impossible. With the aid of merfolk, however, the characters are able to retrieve what they need, perform the necessary enchantments, and return to their covenant where an enraged druid has prepared a direct assault on their covenant (see "Beneath the Waves," p. 49).

Since Marlowe cannot leave his cavern, the fate of the covenant is in the hands of the the characters. If they cannot defeat the powerful druid, their covenant, and perhaps others across Europe, will be destroyed (see "Herrick's Assault," p. 53). Yet the battle of which they become a part is an extension of an unjust witch hunt and they are taking on the roles of the "bad guys." It will be a difficult and highly dangerous battle, many characters will likely die, and there will be little glory at its conclusion — only the bittersweet joy of survival.

If the magi succeed, the magical aura of the covenant will return two-fold. This, plus the gift of a number of magical artifacts and access to Marlowe's huge library, propels the covenant into Autumn and a position of power within the Order of Hermes. They will have gained great status and honor in the Order and may gain the opportunity to reopen the history books about that most misunderstood of events — *The Tempest*.

Two Traditions of Magic

The magic used by the members of the Order of Hermes is actually a marriage of two distinct styles developed independently long ago. The new Hermetic tradition is a compromise of the older traditions and combines them in a way that eliminates the inherent weaknesses of both. However, the strengths of the traditions were not reconcilable, so these were lost as well. These traditions are believed to have disappeared, though it is conceivable that a hidden enclave of druids in the mountains of Wales, for example, still practices this "pagan" magic.

The styles were called Mercurian and Druidic to distinguish them from that currently used by the Order, Hermetic magic. Mercurian was the tradition passed down through Egypt, Greece, and Rome, while Druidic was the tradition of the Celtic people as passed down from their Kymryc predecessors.

(Note: The two magi central to this campaign supplement each partially utilize one of these older styles of magic, therefore details are provided in this chapter and the next which will help you govern their use of magic. Techniques and Forms were not developed prior to the formation of the Order of Hermes, but the way they label magical effects provides a convenient means of describing the earlier traditions of magic.)

Druidic Magic

This tradition of magic stressed individual and self taught control over mystical powers. Students were instructed in methods of manipulating the various aspects of magic, but in a way which supplemented their native talents rather than dominating and controlling them as Hermetic magic does. The most important and common talents of these Druidic magi were similar to three Techniques found in Hermetic magic, albeit at a much more highly developed level. In particular, Druidic magi had an excellent capability to create (Creo), transform (Muto), and control (Rego). Most of the objects affected by magic (i.e.- Forms) were not stressed, for Druidic magi felt if a caster was a proficient creator, transformer, and controller, the actual target of the magic was secondary. However, because of religious duties later required of the druids, they soon became quite proficient at magically manipulating flora (Herbam) and fauna (Animál).

The highly developed Techniques of Druidic magi also imparted a greater ability to use spontaneous magic; in fact, almost all of the magic used by druids was spontaneous. On the other hand, Druidic magi very seldom used formalized spells for two important reasons. First, the Druidic tradition of magic was primarily an oral tradition, involving few texts. Specific spell formulae were not followed exactly as if they were read straight from a book, but were personally manipulated by the teachers, who verbally explained the basic ideas to their students. Also, their intuitive brand of spontaneous magic was so effective that formalized spells were considered superfluous.

Finally, druids were such self taught and intuitive practitioners of magic that Druidic magi were unable to perform any sort of group ritual spell or combine their powers such as by using the MuVi Wizards' Communion spell. In general, the druids were known for being able to cast spells as a natural part of their day, almost as if they did so without thought. Magic was a deeper and more intimate part of their lives than it was for the Mercurian magi or for the Hermetic magi of today.



Mercurian Magic

In many ways, Mercurian magic was the opposite of Druidic magic, which was one reason why the merging of the two was so hostilely opposed by some. Mercurian magic had important roots in ancient Greek society, which stressed intellectual achievement and higher learning. Therefore, this tradition was more scholarly and required much in the way of apparatus and memorized ritual in order to operate effectively. The devotion toward laboratories in the Order of Hermes grew out of the Mercurian tradition.

The scholarly investigation of the composition of reality in ancient Greece and Egypt placed an emphasis on the objects (Forms) affected by magic. Mercurian magi were not as interested in what can be done with matter and energy, but rather were curious about the inherent qualities of these phenomena. The four elements (Auram, Aquam, Ignem, and Terram), the body (Córporem), and the supernatural (Vim) received the most attention. If any magical action (Technique) was stressed, it was destruction (Perdo), for Mercurian magi were interested in the composition of matter and how it breaks down into smaller and smaller units.

The methodical Mercurian approach to magic also allowed Mercurian magi to perform extremely powerful rituals. In fact, through a complicated process not preserved in the newer Hermetic tradition, Mercurian magi were able to use the ReVi Waiting Spell and Watching Ward (Ars Magica, p. 99) rituals in conjunction with other rituals. Raw *vis* was not required to perform rituals in the Mercurian tradition.



As in the Druidic tradition, the Mercurian tradition made certain sacrifices to achieve prominence in its scholarly, ritualistic pursuits. Of major note was the Mercurian magus' complete inability to perform spontaneous magic. This manner of using magic was too loose for their precepts to accommodate; they required thought and study before they could cast a spell. Even formalized spells could only be cast from memory, if at least three magi were working in concert and all of them knew the spell. However, the benefits of the Wizards' Communion spell were automatically conferred when a formalized spell was

so cast (separate knowledge of Wizards' Communion was not necessary as the effects of that spell were duplicated in the group casting). Though many magi had learned spells which they could cast on their own by the time the Order was founded, many of those who attacked House Díedne were among the conservatives who had refused to change to new ways and insisted upon retaining their emphasis on group spells. Individual Mercurian magi could cast formalized spells from text.

Exempli Gratia — Marlowe adds 20% of his current strength to his standard Hermetic scores of the Forms Auram, Aquam, Ignem, Terram, Córporem, and Vim, as well as the Perdo Technique, when casting spells. A percentile bonus is given instead

of a "flat rate" to reflect a deepening understanding of the complexities of magical processes. Although he considers himself a traditional Mercurian magus, Marlowe is able to cast spontaneous magic in a limited manner due to his Hermetic training, as well as formulaic spells from memory. See his character description on page 15.

Exempli Gratia — Herrick, a Hermetic magus trained heavily in the Druidic tradition, has advantages and limitation due to his apprenticeship. He has a +4 when casting Creo, Muto, or Rego spells and is +2 when casting spells utilizing the Animál or Herbam forms. Herrick is not required to lose a fatigue level in order to earn the full benefits of a spontaneous spell. All totals are divided by two to determine the level of spell effect, not just those made under exertion. (see Ars Magica, p. 64) Herrick can only use a formalized spell after having previously allocated at least one experience point per five levels of the spell. (See the new Virtue, Druidic Magic, p. 14.)

The Magi

The Saga which can be told using this supplement revolves around the conflict between two magi — a magus of House Flambeau and a druid, an ex-member of House Diedne. Marlowe, the magus, has put memories of the battle called The Tempest behind him, but Herrick, the druid, awakens and seeks revenge for the destruction caused by the Hermetic magi.

Herrick the Druid

Characteristics

Int +4	Str +2	Prs -1	Dex 0
Per +4	Stm +2	Com -2	Qik +1

Magical Techniques

Creo	23 (includes +4 as a druid)
Intéllego	12
Muto	24 (includes +4 as a druid)
Perdo	18
Rego	28 (includes +4 as a druid)

Magical Forms

Animál	22 (includes +2 as a druid)	Ignem	13
Aquam	18	Imágonem	18
Córporem	17	Mentem	19
Herbam	28 (includes +2 as a druid)	Terram	14
		Vim	15

Virtues & Flaws

Common Restriction, -5 (magic does not affect females of any species); Druidic Magic, +1; Obsessed, -1 (vengeance upon the Order of Hermes); Rare Minor Magic Deficiency (Auram), -1; Self-Confident, +2; Ways of the Woods, +4 ;

Personal Characteristics

Confidence: 5 Age: ? Reputation: none

Personality Traits

Merciful -2, Patient +2, Vengeful +5,

Important Skills

Penetration (Rego) 8; Alertness (woodland sounds) 7; Scan (woods) 5; Dodge (missile weapons) 7; Certámen 2*; Survival (woods) 5; Track (woods) 6; Acting (hedge wizard) 3#; Staff—Attack 3; Staff—Parry 3; Hermes History 2*; Fantastic Beast Lore (motives) 9; Speak Anglo-Saxon 5; Speak (language of the area around the players' covenant) 3*

this skill is learned between the time Herrick awakens in Hapton and his arrival as a hedge wizard at the characters' covenant.

* these skills are learned during the time Herrick spends as a hedge wizard at the characters' covenant.



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New Virtue

Druidic Magic, +1: Druidic magi have +4 bonuses on Creo, Muto and Rego Techniques and +2 bonuses on Animál and Herbam Forms to represent the traditional fields where druids excelled. When casting a spontaneous spell, all totals are divided by two whether the caster expends a fatigue level or not, reflecting the immediate nature of Druidic magic. Formulaic spells can only be cast after the player has allocated enough experiences points to equal at least one-fifth the level of the desired spell. The player may allocate one experience point earned on an adventure towards this memorization.

Magi of the Druidic tradition may not utilize the benefits of mastering a spell (*Ars Magica*, p. 68). Druidic magi are unable to perform any sort of group ritual spell or combine their powers by means such as the MuVi Wizards' Communion spell.

Herrick as an NPC

Herrick survived The Tempest by means of powerful protections which he prepared before the final battle. For all practical purposes, he is dead, but a spark of life has somehow been magically maintained. Herrick's need for vengeance grows through the intervening years until he finally awakens near the village of Hapton.

Herrick is a large, weathered-looking man. Tall and thick, this druid seems perfectly suited to a rough life in the wilderness. Herrick is of necessity a strong-willed individual and it is this part of his personality which makes him so adamant in his stand against the Order of Hermes. Herrick wishes to preserve the purity

of Druidic magic and centuries ago felt threatened by the emergence of the Hermetic tradition. Because his ancestors had been beaten down so many times in the past, Herrick was determined not to let this happen again. Though he joined House Díedne, he never trusted the Latin magi and his suspicions were justified when his House was attacked during the Schism War.

Now Herrick is motivated purely by a desire for revenge. In his mind, the Hermetic covenant which stands on the ground where The Tempest was fought is a monument to the success of the Order of Hermes and the disappearance of the druids. It must therefore be destroyed.

When he does speak with his "enemies" (as he must

when he visits the characters' covenant), he does so with great self control, but the hostility is easily apparent through his good manners. As he discovers more and more about the Order that is different from how he remembers it (unjust, cruel, and violent), he becomes more and more dogmatic and eventually will refuse to speak with those who question his beliefs. Unfortunately, he can not and will not let himself be swayed; his need for revenge comes above everything else. The only way to stop him is to kill him.

Roleplaying Tips: Play Herrick as a type of hedge wizard — wild, untamed and definitely ill at ease with the comforts of civilization. Use a low, gravelly tone of voice when you speak, but generally speak very little.

Never look directly at someone while they are speaking to you, but when you speak to others, look directly into their eyes at times, yet look beyond as well — as if you are peering into their soul.



Marlowe, magus of House Flambeau

Characteristics

Int +5	Str -2	Prs +2	Dex +1
Per +3	Stm 0	Com 0	Qik 0

Magical Techniques

Creo	21
Intéllego	26
Muto	22
Perdo	30 (36 for a ritual spell)
Rego	17

Magical Forms

Animál	15
Aquam	25 (30 for a ritual spell)
Auram	25 (30 for a ritual spell)
Córporem	28 (33 for a ritual spell)
Herbam	16
Ignem	25 (30 for a ritual spell)
Imágonem	16
Mentem	20
Terram	25 (30 for a ritual spell)
Vim	28 (33 for a ritual spell)

Virtues and Flaws

Destiny ,+4 — Whatever works best for your Saga; Mercurian Magic, +1; Non-combatant ,-4; Dark Secret ,-1 (hiding from Order and House)

Personal Characteristics

Confidence: 3 Age: ? Reputations: none

Personality Traits

Cautious +2, Curious +3

Important Skills

Finesse (precision) 10, Penetration (Córporem) 3, Search (library) 5, Charisma (soothe) 7, Folk Ken 8, *Parma Magica* (Mentem) 5, Survival (woods) 3, Craft (glassblowing) 4, Hermes History 7, Hermes Lore 5, Magic Theory (inventing spells) 10

New Virtue

Mercurian Magic, +1: This version of Mercurian magic represents an influence of Mercurian traditions upon a Hermetic magus' magic, not the magic which would be found in a fully fledged Priest of Mercury in Ancient Rome.

Due to their strong intellectual interest in the structure of magic, Mercurian magi receive a 20% bonus to their current strength in the Perdo Technique and their favored six forms **only when casting ritual spells**. (These six forms are: Aquam, Auram, Córporem, Ignem, Terram, and Vim.) Mercurian magi in the Hermetic tradition have a limited ability to perform spontaneous magic. When attempting to cast a spontaneous spell, these magi automatically lose a fatigue level and must divide by five, not two. (See *Ars Magica*, p. 64.) If at least three magi are working in concert and all of them know the spell being cast, the benefits of the **Wizards' Communion** spell are automatically conferred when a formalized spell is so cast (separate knowledge of **Wizards' Communion** is not necessary).

Marlowe as an NPC

Marlowe was an apprentice of Apromor, the founder of the Perdo tradition within House Flambeau. He practiced magic more in the tradition of the Cult of Mercury than the principles of Hermetic magic. Apromor found the power of the Mercurian ritual spells especially useful with the Perdo technique. Preferring subtle and well-planned revenge to Flambeau's flashy and immediate combat, Apromor taught his apprentices the usefulness of cooperation, especially in rituals, to achieve the ultimate retaliation.

Though Marlowe was essentially a good natured magus, his loyalty to his House was firm and he took part in *The Tempest*, seeing it as more a test of Mercurian magic than a slaughter of innocent magi. By the end of the campaign, he had become somewhat disenchanting and he was at the periphery of the battle when the great storm was summoned by the druids. Because of this, he was the only one to survive (or so he thought). After the battle, he felt too shamed to return to the Order, so he began to live on his own. Putting his powerful ritual talents to work, Marlowe managed to completely stop the aging process, but the price was virtual imprisonment within his cavern, for he is required to live within its magical environment to maintain his youth.

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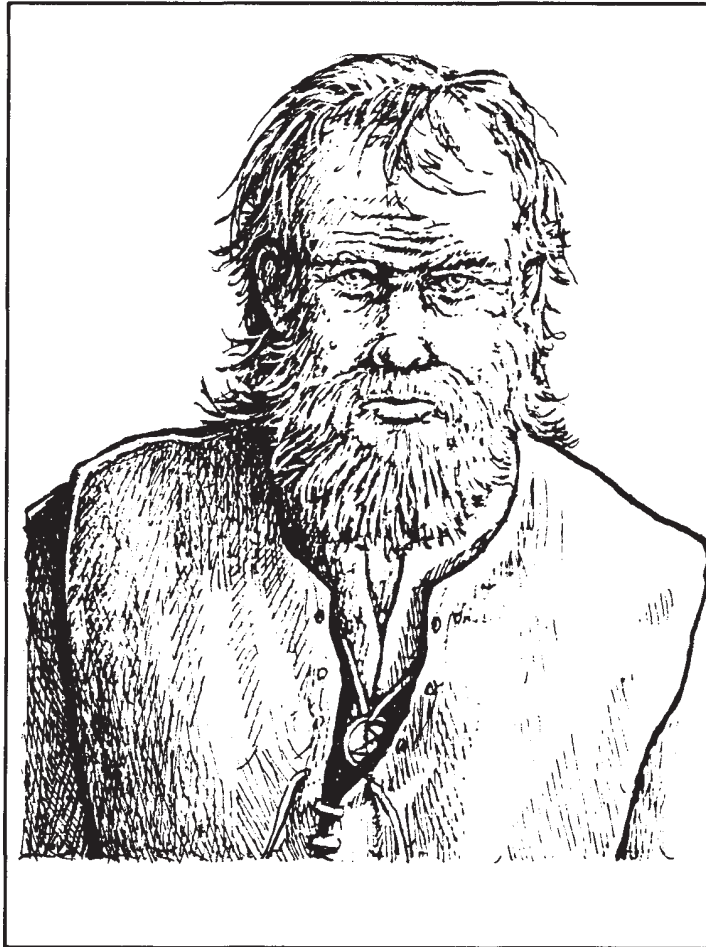
As the centuries passed, civilization closed in on Marlowe, so he took measures to insure that he would never be troubled or have his experiments interrupted. He bribed a young dragon to act as a guardian. By the time men move too close to the cave, the dragon will have grown into a huge terror that would easily scare them away.

Unfortunately, the dragon swallowed the first magic item which Marlowe gave to it in exchange for its loyalty. Years later, when the Faerie Stone began to change the dragon and inhibit its growth, the dragon felt that Marlowe tricked him into swallowing the item so the magus could control him, and their relationship has not been the same since. Though he seems

gentle and good natured whenever he speaks of the druids, he uses terms so out of date and disrespectful that it is easy to discern how isolated he really has been. He calls them barbarians, Kilts, or dirt-eaters without thinking twice, yet claims he holds no grudge against them. He is still deeply saddened by his participation in The Tempest.

Roleplaying Tips: Speak with a tone of authority and a tinge of pompousness in your voice. You are proud to be the apprentice of Apromor, and may mention it (just by chance) in a conversation. However, you are very old and

tired and are probably caught off guard by the first visitors you have had in a century. Play up your attempts to clear through your confusions and trust those who help you do so.



The Druid Rises

William Gill hung his legs over the edge of the rickety wooden dock and kicked them slowly back and forth. The magus Tiberius didn't want warriors around while he was speaking with the merchant, so William could relax after the long journey to town. He inhaled and smelled the rich, salt-heavy smell of the sea blowing in from the ocean.

Tiberius was aboard the boat just over the way, so he didn't relax too much — the magus would not be pleased to find him day-dreaming. William just watched the lazy rocking motions of the fishermen's boats as they came back to shore after a long day of casting nets. It looked like a good haul; maybe Tiberius would purchase a few for dinner.

William's well-trained eye tracked over to one boat in particular. An older man and young boy, probably a father teaching the next generation his trade, sat in the small wooden boat. The man was rowing vigorously, but the boy held a hook and string in the water. At that moment, the string jerked and the boy cried with glee.

The father was obviously anxious to reach the dock, but he stopped to coach his son on how to drag in the catch. However, the catch started to haul the boy out of the boat. The man quickly grabbed his son, who stubbornly had wrapped the string around his wrist. Holding his son around the waist, the man pulled the boy to the center of the boat, but whatever was held fast by the hook was stronger than both fishermen and they began to slide to the edge of the boat again. The man pulled his legs up and braced them against the inside of the boat.

The man's face bunched with exertion, but he managed to keep them from being pulled overboard. William was on his feet now and shouted at a few other fishermen who had not yet seen the struggle. They heard and turned their boats toward the laboring pair.

Both father and son still clung tightly. Maybe they had dreams of boiled swordfish for dinner. But then the boat itself began to move. The man was struggling so hard that he apparently didn't even realize this. The string now stretched into the water about eight feet from the boat. Something big was pulling hard.

William had another shock when he realized that the boat was being dragged directly toward the dock. What if it were a shark, the kind he had heard so many stories about? It might dash the dock's supports to pieces and send him tumbling into a set of open jaws. But he was also curious. He inched forward to the lip of the dock.

Several other fishing boats drew near the first boat. The fishermen were ready with ropes in case the first boat capsized and spilled both father and son into the water. The visible end of the string slowly drew closer to the dock. William watched it intently. Suddenly, he felt that he was in more danger than the fishermen. He heard the father speak to his son, "It'll tire soon and then we'll have it."

Soon the cord disappeared into the water only a few feet from the dock. William backed away but craned his neck to see over the edge. And then it stopped. William took another step back. He couldn't see over the edge, but he watched the gathered fishermen.

William was horrified when their faces went white a second later, but he couldn't move his feet; he could only look at the side of the dock. A human-like hand grasped the edge of the dock and pulled the rest of the body up and out of the water. It was a sickly blotch of yellow, white, and green. Another hand joined the first and a hideous creature heaved itself onto the dock.

William thought it could have been a man, but the creature's flesh was too bloated and discolored. There was a metal hook poking through the creature's shoulder, but it did not seem to hinder its movements. Choking, the creature opened its mouth and a half-gallon of water poured out. A fetid odor washed over William's nostrils.

Then the creature went crazy. A rock hard arm bashed William into the water and the creature staggered into the town.

As he fell, William managed one last shout, "Tiberius!"



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Summary

After an expected shipment of covenant supplies is weeks overdue, the magi become concerned that something is amiss. At least one magus must make the two day journey to the seaside town of Hapton to discover what's wrong. Once in Hapton, they find that the Church now controls the business the covenant once worked with and has cut the covenant off. The characters may decide to investigate the mystery of why their former supplier, a critic of the Church, would leave his business to a priest. While in Hapton, an event takes place which is ultimately of more importance to the covenant — the druid Herrick is awakened.

A Shortage of Supplies

Though most food can be purchased from neighboring landowners, the characters' covenant is not self-sufficient and depends on supplies from other regions to remain stocked with certain necessities like wine, glassware, clothing, and precision laboratory equipment.

Periodic shipments from the town of Hapton (or any large waterside town in your established campaign) keep the covenant fully stocked with such items. The magi correspond with Daniel Draytin, a ship owner from Hapton, and contracted him to retrieve a large order of glassware over a year ago. Normally a very reliable supplier, Draytin said he expected the shipment "when the *Sea Farer* returns" in his last correspondence, a season ago. Grogs sent into Hapton on other errands have reported that the *Sea Farer* entered the harbor weeks ago and that Draytin's shop is always locked so they are unable to relay any messages. The magi are anxious for the materials to arrive because the glassware (beakers and more for the magi's laboratories) was expected and stores of such goods are practically gone. Non-player magi will want to have this checked into right away, but won't insist a trip be made immediately if others favor patience.

In Hapton

Devise any events or encounters for the trip to Hapton which you desire as this adventure is only concerned with the town itself. The magus in charge likely knows where the merchant's place of business is, so once in Hapton he may go directly there. However, the magus will find Draytin's Shipping House locked even though it's already late morning.

Questioning a passerby will do no good — Hapton is too large and growing too quickly for anyone to really know who goes where or why. The owners of adjacent shops can at least provide a lead. Harold Johnson, a baker, can tell the characters that Daniel Draytin died

about two weeks ago after a week-long fit with the pox. He also knows where Draytin's widow now resides and asks (if they seem trustworthy) that they take a bag of his baked goods to her if they intend to visit. He sullenly admits he has sent such presents regularly, but says "tis only because no one else il' help er, the old woman needs someone." He will grow frightened if the characters persist and will refuse to speak any more.

The Widow

Mrs. Draytin's home is not easy to find, but after a short time the characters will locate the correct townhouse. The home is narrow, but three stories high. If they ask anyone for directions, they will look frightened and are not likely to point out the way.

Mrs. Draytin personally answers any summons at the door, but does not immediately let her guests inside. She keeps the door closed until she is sure the characters are friendly. When she finally invites them in, they see an old, friendly-looking woman with red eyes and a blotchy face. She looks quite sad, but brightens up a little when she realizes that they actually want to talk with her. The characters may be hesitant to identify themselves, but if they do, Mrs. Draytin will become even cheerier. She recalls her husband speaking of the "strange mystics" he had business with. She never felt secure about the arrangement, but welcomes them happily because her departed husband seemed to think highly of them. The inside of the house, though clean, is remarkably barren as Mrs. Draytin has been forced to sell furnishings to pay for food.

She offers the characters some of the food they brought over from Mr. Johnson (it would be polite to decline, for this is all the food she has) and answers any questions they might put forward. She verifies that her husband died about two weeks ago of a strange illness, but she's surprised that Father Fulke didn't contact the, as all of Mr. Draytin's customers were supposed to be informed.

If the characters make any inquiry about Father Fulke, Mrs. Draytin will admit that her husband willed the shipping business to the Church, but left her enough money for the townhouse. She'll add bitterly that she would have been much more comfortable if she could have kept the shipping business running instead.

The fact that Mr. Draytin willed his business to the Church should surprise any of the characters who knew the man (the magus leader definitely met him), because he was fervently anti-papist and opposed to many of the Church's abuses (such as the selling of forgiveness). That's one reason he so amiably accepted the business of the covenant even after he discovered what the magi were all about.

Mrs. Draytin, who says her husband was a good Christian and "must be in heaven," is also surprised, because he never had a great love for the Church, espe-

cially the Monsignor, Father Fulke. Now resigned to the issue, she says that after the bondsman showed her the will, there was nothing she could do. She might add that the worst thing about the whole affair is the way her neighbors have begun to treat her, shunning her and refusing to speak or look at her. Not understanding why they would do this, she explains it away as fear of contamination from her husband's illness.

Mrs. Draytin says with disgust that her old home and store, which also now belong to the Church, are closed, but Father Fulke is often at the docks aboard one of her husband's old merchant vessels.

The Truth of the Matter

While Father Fulke did connive to gain ownership of Daniel Draytin's shipping business (see "The Pardoner"), he had nothing to do with Draytin's death. On a recent voyage, the *Sea Farer* passed a body floating in the ocean. Draytin ordered the corpse taken aboard so it could receive a proper burial — to do otherwise would have angered his God-fearing crew. The corpse was that of the druid Herrick which had recently been dislodged from its centuries-old resting place and drifted to the surface. After the ship made port, Draytin was afflicted by a deadly pox while examining the fetid corpse and was ill within the hour. He died some days later. In the turmoil caused by Draytin's sudden illness, Herrick's corpse was forgotten.

When Father Fulke gained possession of Draytin's business for the Church, he found the body and secretly had it tossed overboard into the river. Bloating from days in the heat, the body sunk like a rock, but the time out of the water was just enough to rekindle Herrick's consciousness. Over the next few days, the druid slowly awakened until the time of this adventure, when he recovers enough coherence to attempt to flee into the forest.

Father Fulke, however, did doctor the will, which left the ships and the building (the Shipping House and the Draytins' home) to the Church (thus him), and spread rumors about the manner of Draytin's business to prevent others from investigating the matter further. Presently, the entire town thinks that Draytin and his wife consorted with demons and that his sickness was divine punishment. These rumors are supported by the sermons Father Fulke constantly preaches about the power of Satan and the evil of those who allow themselves to be corrupted by him.



The Next Step

The characters may just look for another merchant to do business with, but it's likely that they will investigate this strange matter. If they opt for a low-profile resolution, they may easily find other merchants at the docks. Any merchant, however, will want to deal with the magi in secret and, unless the whole matter with Draytin is cleared up, will insist on double the prices the covenant is used to. They will not bargain very much on this point as they are endangering their position and wealth by even speaking with the magi.

If the characters are not satisfied with excusing from their minds the mystery of Mr. Draytin's legacy, they should attempt to find either Father Fulke or the bondsman who handled Daniel Draytin's will. (See the sections entitled "The Bondsman" and "The Pardoner.")

The Bondsman

Sidney, one of the most prominent bondsmen of Hapton, was the gentleman who had Draytin's will in his charge. Sidney's office is manned by himself, a young apprentice, and an elderly journeyman who is an expert on law. A group of up to three people will be admitted to

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Sidney's office by the young apprentice. The characters will find Sidney to be a middle-aged but hale-looking man, with enormous sideburns but no beard.

If questioned by the characters about Draytin's will, he will excuse himself for a moment to go check the records room to refresh his memory. He will retrieve a copy of the will, signed by Daniel Draytin, but Sidney mostly needs to steal himself a moment to lie, as he is essentially an honest man. Perception + Folk Ken rolls of 10+ will cause a character to notice the worried looks on the apprentice's and journeyman's faces when they hear Draytin's name brought up, and the looks of panic when they hear the word "will."

Showing the will to the characters, he will say that everything is in order and try to dismiss the characters quickly as he is "very busy right now." If the characters force Sidney into a confrontation, he resolutely denies any accusations the characters make. However, an Intimidate of 10+, plus some good forceful words and the prying of Sidney's hands from his ears (metaphorically speaking) will force him to tell the truth. Alternately, an appeal to his conscience or the manipulation of his guilty feelings could also work. However, if the characters do or say anything to make him think they are diabolists, he will panic, begin to scream, and attempt to run from the office.

He will admit altering the will, though he claims that Father Fulke forged Draytin's signature. He'll complain that his immortal soul was in jeopardy and he had to take any action which would save him. According to Father Fulke, the only way to receive forgiveness was to make a gift of the shipping business. In retrospect, Sidney may realize that Fulke never told him what he had done to make his soul vulnerable (Father Fulke is a skilled manipulator), he simply assumed that his connection with Draytin meant he had done something terribly evil.

Even if Sidney admits his deed to the characters, he will never volunteer the information in public. It simply would not do to speak against an official of the Church. In fact, even the characters should hesitate at being part of a public attack on the Church, even if only a corrupt pardoner. Sidney will advise them to leave town immediately, "The folk here aren't too patient with your kind right now, especially not if Father Fulke starts to speak against you."

However, Sidney will agree to supplement Mrs. Draytin's income substantially with funds from the shipping business and assures them that she will be taken care of until the end of her days.

The Pardoner

Father Fulke, as corrupt a churchman as will ever be found, is behind the scheme which put Daniel Draytin's shipping business into the hands of the Church — and in

Hapton, Father Fulke is in charge of the Church. Apart from being the Monsignor of the local parish, Father Fulke also has received the power from the Pope to grant dispensations. Basically, he sells people pardons for their or their deceased loved one's sins.

His plan is simple: over the years he has gathered a large collection of valuables, given as donations to the Church as well as the various cons he has perpetrated (e.g. the sale of false relics). He has kept most of these valuables for himself, storing them in a secret trunk in his home, but has always been looking for a reliable way to smuggle them out of town. When he learned that Daniel Draytin had become ill, the plan came to him. If the Church owned the shipping company, then no one would be suspicious if they saw him on the docks with many crates of goods.

Father Fulke is not hard to find on the docks as everyone knows of the Church's two new ships and the black cloaked Fulke is directing everything at the site.

Unless they are very well disguised, Fulke will recognize the magi for what they are after a moment of conversation. Thereafter, he will be much more comfortable and obviously haughty. He will dismiss any accusations in a casual manner, which suggests that even if he did do something underhanded, there's absolutely nothing the magi can do about it. As soon as possible, he will bring townfolk into the conversation and use it as an opportunity to show his power and bravery, and to preach yet again against the sins of demonic corruption.

If the characters pester him about the covenant needing supplies, Fulke will comment that only by starving the body will their souls become free of the demonic work they have done for so many years. He will refuse to sell goods to them (though he offers them some religious relics with the promise that the items could save the characters' immortal souls) and informs them that all other merchants have been told of the dire penalties in the afterlife for assisting a servant of the devil. However, he will mention that Noriss Caylithe's business is going badly and he is likely to ignore the Church's advice, but if he does so the curse will affect him as well.

Incident at the Docks

The first time the characters are at the docks, or whenever you feel a dramatic moment is due, a gruesome "monster" will arise from the sea. Perhaps while the magi are engaged in discussion with Father Fulke, the grogs will have a chance to relax on the docks. Then they will see the fisherman's son catch "something" with his hook and string. Soon, a hideous monster walks ashore near the characters, setting off chaos amongst the townfolk. Herrick, the druid has awakened.

After centuries in the water, the druid is completely insane and will react to situations by instinct alone. His

goal is to reach a safe spot in a forest and he will battle his way through Hapton if he must in order to reach it. When he reaches a forest, Herrick will disappear very quickly due to the use of Animál and Herbam spells.

Note that Herrick must escape if this campaign is to continue. He will be hard to kill and his magic makes it almost impossible to capture him. His insanity provides a tremendous amount of endurance and invulnerability, and Herrick will lash out at opponents with the instinctive use of spontaneous magic (remember that the effective level of a druid's spontaneous magic is always determined by dividing by two — no exertion is necessary). Simply make up interesting little spell effects as you go along.

If the characters exemplify themselves in the pursuit of this monster and suffer some sort of casualties (this is important), the townsfolk will be much more hospitable towards them and they will have no trouble finding a new source of supplies at a reasonable cost.

Investigation will reveal that several other people have the same sickness that Draytin did and they turn out to be crewmen aboard his ship. A little more probing reveals the whole story of the retrieved body which was picked up from the sea and how Father Fulke ordered it to be tossed overboard. If this story is heard by many townsfolk, they will become even more friendly and Father Fulke will not dare to speak against the characters for some time.

Herrick (incoherent state)

(Use the following statistics for Herrick in this crazed state. At all other times, use the statistics provided at the beginning of this supplement.)

Int 0	Str +5	Prs-5	Dex 0
Per 0	Stm +5	Com na	Qik +2

Personality Traits: _____

Persistence +3 Compassion -5 Confidence: 3

Skills: _____

He may not use any in this state.

This encounter should be very free-flowing and a challenge to your abilities as Storyguide because of the constant use of spontaneous magic. In case your imagination fails you, simply see if Herrick can generate a spontaneous magic total which will allow him to duplicate some of the spells in the rulebook.

Some suggested spells are listed below:

Animál: Create Wolf (Lv 30), Steed of Vengeance (Lv 25)

Córporem: The Chirurgeon's Healing Touch (Lv 20), Arm of the Infant (Lv 20), Spasms of the Uncontrolled Hands (Lv 5), Rise of the Feathery Body (Lv 15)

Herbam: Trap of Entwining Vines (Lv 15), The Traitorous Spear (Lv 20)

Imágonem: Disguise of the Transformed Image (Lv 15)

Terram: Stone of the Hundred Shards (Lv 15), Trackless Step (Lv 10)

Father Fulke

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

Confidence: 2 Age: 41

Personality Traits: _____

Prideful +3 Religious -2 Ambitious +2

Important Skills: _____

Alertness (hiding truth) 2 Subterfuge (bluff) 6
 Guile (emotional untruths) 4 Folk Ken (peasants) 3
 Dodge (unarmed attacks) 3 Pretend (passion) 2
 Church Knowledge (heresy) 7 Forgery (signatures) 3
 Diplomacy (Church politics) 3 Intrigue (plotting) 3
 Charisma (religion) 5

Reputations: _____

Knowledgeable/Hapton 2
 Corrupt/Daniel Draytin 1
 Angelic/Sidney 1

Father Fulke is the priest in charge of Hapton and is an extremely ambitious clergyman who sees little point in living in poverty when he has access to such wealth. With the fortune he has accumulated, he expects to live well and eventually rise to a position of real power.

Though he has sold or authorized the sale of numerous fake relics, Fulke does own a true relic himself. The medallion of a saint, the relic grants him 2 Faith Points. He has no innate Faith Points. The relic will no longer provide the Faith Points for him if he follows through with his plan to steal the Church's money.

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The Mentor

William Gill had been on guard duty all night, and though tired, was roused to full alertness about an hour ago when Vulcris emerged from her little hut. He had scooted down from the top of the tower and taken up a position on the balustrade half way down. Whenever he looked up, he found the beak-like face of Vulcris peering back down at him.

"The early bird gets the worm," William mumbled to himself. It was an old joke among the grogs, but still seemed appropriate, for it applied so particularly well to Vulcris.

It was only about another hour before Torlen would send Anton out to relieve him, so William spent the remainder of the time daydreaming. Vulcris' birds would squawk if they saw anything unusual, probably long before he'd see anything anyway.

William thought back to the smell of those disgusting boars in the Forest of Moaning Oaks. One had charged right through them and if the steady Thark had not been as quick to respond with his shield, then Tiberius . . . William shook his head to clear the thought.

That was when he saw the pigeon. It was flying slowly but it evidently had a destination in mind, for William saw a piece of parchment wrapped securely about its leg.

He shifted his gaze to see if Vulcris had noticed the pigeon. She was hunched over one of her many cages. With jerky movements she withdrew Skarce, her prize falcon. She flipped her arm and Skarce beat his wings rapidly, rising into the air. He floated up until he was thirty or forty feet above the pigeon.

The pigeon realized it was in danger and stroked its wings faster, but it was no match for the speed of the diving falcon. The bird-of-prey's talons flashed out and whipped the pigeon's neck, but Skarce lost his hold and the dying pigeon plummeted to the ground near the grog compound, but still within the walls of Mistridge.

Without thinking, William ran down the stairs and hurried toward the pigeon.

"Stop!" Vulcris squawked from her perch atop the tower.

William hesitated but picked up the pigeon anyway. "I can bring it up to you," he called to Vulcris.

"No," she chirped. "Put it down. Skarce will retrieve it."

William dropped the bird, but not before he pulled the parchment off its leg. Tiberius will want to see this, he thought, whatever it is. If Vulcris gets it then it will disappear into her nest.

He took a dozen steps backward and Skarce drifted down and settled atop the pigeon. His talons dug into the soft flesh and lifted the dead bird up to Vulcris.

Before Skarce was even airborne, William dashed into the tower looking for Tiberius. A moment later he heard a shrill call, "Thief, where is my prize? Bring it back!"

William hoped that the parchment had something important written on it. And he could only hope. For the first time, he wished he could read.

Summary

The characters receive news of a dragon which is ravaging the lands of a nearby landowner, Sir Hanson of Gern. Since the noble offers the dragon's treasure as the reward to any knight who slays the dragon, the characters decide to investigate, hoping, at least, for a quantity of *vis*. Once in Gern, the characters may be sidetracked by unfounded suspicions, but the dragon eventually attacks again. After a short fight, the beast escapes and must be tracked. Once at the creature's lair, the characters are surprised by a number of magical defenses, but they eventually face the dragon again, defeat it, and enter the chambers that lie beyond the lair. Inside, they encounter Marlowe, the magus of House Flambeau who survived *The Tempest*. Marlowe proposes a deal with a magus which could benefit the characters greatly.



The Invitation

This section of the campaign begins with the magi of the covenant discovering the troubles of a noble in the distant village of Gern. Whether the news is received by the method described in the preceding narrative or by a redcap is not crucial to the story. In fact, if the covenant has good relations with the surrounding nobility, they may be directly invited to investigate the trouble.

Sir Hanson, a landowning knight, complains that a fire-breathing dragon is ravaging the carefully tended fields of his serfs. Scared beyond belief by this ferocious, unpredictable serpent, many of the serfs have refused to tend the fields even though it means they will starve come winter. Too old to handle the matter himself, Sir Hanson has put out a call for assistance. He sent message-laden pigeons and mounted ambassadors to his neighbors. A recap may have heard of these tidings on the way to the characters' covenant from one of the messengers or by the sheer mountain of gossip such events would produce.

If the characters intercept a pigeon, they will acquire the following notice:

Attention bold knights and soldiers of song:

The prosperity of a land dedicated to the Lord God

is under siege by the malignant power of a serpent

from Hell. A wyrm which spouts flame from its lips

has ravaged the carefully tilled ground of my lands.

The brave knight who rids my land of this demon will be granted ownership of the hidden treasure of this beast, as well as my fiercest hound, my finest steed, and my noble title.

May a knight of unmatched bravery and daring hear my plea and come to aid of one of God's children in need.

Sir Hanson
Banneret of Gern

If the covenant decides to send magi to investigate, they will be told that Gern is about twenty miles away, a small agricultural village noted for its vineyards. Events during the journey to and from Gern may be created as you wish, however, an encounter with knights who have searched for the dragon, but failed, may be appropriate.

The Village

The village called Gern is on land which was granted by the Duke to the Knight Banneret Sir Hanson some thirty years ago. Sir Hanson has failed to produce an heir, so everyone who lives on his lands wonders who

will follow him as their liege lord. He has offered his title, upon his death of course, to the "knight" who can slay the dragon and protect his village.

Gern is a small, but prosperous farm village. The population is only about 140 people, but Sir Hanson has carefully expanded it over the years. Currently, it is known for producing the finest grapes in the region and the best wine to boot — of which the grogs are well aware.

A compact, attractive church lies a half-mile outside the village on top of a small rise. The people of Gern are very dedicated to their worship, due in part to Sir Hanson's own God-fearing ways and the honest services of a competent priest, Father Wilson. While they do

not despise magi, they do fear the use of anything which they label "witchcraft."

Gern has a Dominion value of 3, the area in and around the church rates a 6, and even near Sir Hanson's manor the strength is 2. These higher-than-average values reflect the faith of the people of Gern.

Gern also boasts a large mill which the Carew twins operate for their lord. The only other establishment in Gern is the winepress across the mill pond, which doubles as a tavern and social center for the village. The Brass Key has a small sleeping quarters upstairs, but there is enough room for six average size men (besides



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the tavern keeper) with little discomfort, and of course the floor in the common room is available as well (if you like sleeping on old straw and chicken bones). The door of the tavern is bolted every night about midnight as the owner feels safe from the dragon only after this is done.

Peter Coffin, the owner of the Brass Key, is a scholarly man who was destined for the priesthood before he fell in love. He knows his letters and has even written a short philosophical treatise on the life of Thomas Aquinas, which has interested a few scholars — on a roll of Intelligence+ Philosophy of 13+, the character has even heard of it. He has little patience with the peddlers who occasionally take advantage of his beds, but he will energetically welcome a friendly magus, though he does not wish to hear anything about magic for fear of jeopardizing his immortal soul. Peter also has a small wine cellar with various kinds of wine, which he offers for a price to customers, or free to those who can speak at or above his own intellectual level.

The Villagers

The loyalty of the villagers once bordered on fanatical, but since the dragon attacked, the serfs are afraid to leave the village and work the fields. Only a small group of men venture into the fields on a regular basis to try and prevent starvation because of untended fields. They ask for men-at-arms to protect them when they do, but Sir Hanson is no longer capable of leading his warriors who are too demoralized to go on their own.

The people will be gravely disposed toward magi and may see the arrival of the characters as another indication that the village is being punished for some past unrighteousness. However, they will not try to banish the magi from their home, but accept them as just punishment for whatever sins they have committed. If the magi are in the area for more than a few days, some of the villagers may even approach them and ask that they quickly punish those who must have sinned so grievously. Currently, they are engaged in a search for the sinners who have brought this misery to their peaceful village and are quick to accuse those whom they suspect. A sinister and malignant mood is growing and soon there may be some burnings as they attempt to punish those who have brought them so much trouble. The magi are expected to punish them, but if they do not, the villagers will do it themselves.

The Manor of Sir Hanson

About a mile past the village (a half mile from the church) is Sir Hanson's manor house. This small fortification has decayed somewhat; the only residents are few in number, old in age, and disheartened in spirit. Sir Hanson, a man servant named Grendleby, a middle-aged

female cook, a young stablehand, and an older woman who does the cleaning, are the sum total of the regular household compliment. In addition, a half-dozen aging mercenaries are currently employed to protect the manor.

As the characters travel to the manor house, they will notice the vacant fields which surround it. With Per rolls of 8+, they will note one or two large areas in the middle of the fields which are scorched black.

The manor itself is wooden and surrounded by a ten foot high stone wall. A large storage barn and a smallish stable are within its boundaries. When the characters arrive, Pip, the stableboy, will rush out of the open front gate to greet them. He's a friendly and energetic young man, especially curious about visiting knights, who could become the immediate friend of one of the grogs.

Pip will help the grogs care for the horses while the magi and companions prepare to greet Sir Hanson. Shortly after the characters enter the manor grounds, Grendleby will exit the manor house to greet the characters. Very reserved and fastidious, he will simply introduce himself and ask for the characters' name so he may announce them to Sir Hanson. He will be surprised if they do not announce themselves as knights, but will say nothing. Grendleby will be the first unfriendly person the characters will meet in Gern and you may wish to specifically emphasize his cool demeanor towards the party.

Inside the manor house, Grendleby will show the characters to a large, cluttered drawing room where Sir Hanson is resting from an active morning (he walked the fields to investigate the damage wrought thus far). The room is hot, as Sir Hanson has stoked a fire despite the warmth of the weather outside. His old bones are cold and he will let the characters know he does not possess the vigor of youth anymore.

The characters can immediately recognize (on a Folk Kenroll of 8+) that Sir Hanson is a compassionate person and is truly concerned about the dangers of the beast plaguing his lands. Sir Hanson will direct all of his speech to those whom he feels are best equipped to handle the dragon, — the companions with the best armor and most "knightly" weapons. If the characters insist that one of the magi is the leader of the group, Sir Hanson will laugh it off, "I'm certain your liege's scholars will be of some help in determining the weaknesses of the dragon, but to think that such a soft belly could be in charge . . ."

Even if the magi explain their magical status and abilities, Sir Hanson will speak as an equal only to the chosen companion, though he may direct some questions to the "scholars" for their opinion. He carefully ignores and subsequently forgets any mention that they are wizards and not knights, as he is looking desperately for any way to protect his people.

In a roundabout way, the characters can learn from Sir Hanson that a dragon has raided his fields several times during the last month. With no apparent pattern or even reason for these attacks, this winged serpent simply scorches a section of the crops and immediately takes to flight. The aged knight rambles on and on, telling many anecdotes about his land and his people, but most of what he says, although heart-warming, divulges little more information regarding the problem at hand.

Only one serf has been killed, but Sir Hanson fears that soon more will be consumed by the dragon's fire. Even if the wyrm refrains from killing them, they will all die of starvation unless the harvest is brought in before the killing frosts of winter arrive. The few mercenaries in Sir Hanson's employ have agreed to remain and will protect the manor itself and their lord's own personage. Since one of their number was dispatched during the dragon's first attack when he was evidently taken unaware, however, they are not interested in confronting it directly. They are his war band from the old days and many of them are as old as he.

After about ten minutes of discussion (go by actual time if you wish), Sir Hanson will fall asleep in his chair. Grendleby will sourly provide whatever information he can that Sir Hanson did not have time to relate. The manservant will admit to seeing the dragon himself, but because of the smoke from the burning field, he could not see any details.

Before the characters leave, Grendleby will rouse his master. The knight then offers his best hound, his finest steed, and even his title (on the advent of his death) to the "knight" whom he perceives as the leader of the party, should they succeed in this quest. This he offers with great pride and more than a little sadness. The last reward, his title, requires that he adopt the "knight" in question.

After this initial meeting has ended, Grendleby will welcome all whom he believes to be knights to stay in guest rooms in the manor house. There is no room for magi or grogs, so Grendleby will suggest the Brass Key in Gern, though they are welcome to the hay beds in the stable where Pip sleeps. If the magi make a case for their leadership to Grendleby, the steward will apologize and admit, with narrow eyes, that Sir Hanson's invitation to stay in the manor house is only extended to knights. In fact, Grendleby insists that any "knights" stay as Sir Hanson's guests. To do otherwise would shame the Banneret's hospitality. The "knight" who is perceived to be in charge is given their own room and offered a warm bath, unlike the rest of the "knights."

Sir Hanson, Knight Banneret, Lord of Gern

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

Confidence: 2

Age: 59

Personality Traits: _____

Stubborn +2

Open-Minded +1

Compassionate +3

Important Skills: _____

Ride (in battle) 3

Sword (mounted) 5

Folk Ken (peasants) 5

Scribe Latin 4

Church Lore (Bible) 4

Area Lore (southwestern France) 3

Speak Provençal French (vocabulary) 6

Speak Norman French (noblesse) 4

Reputations: _____

Religious/Gern (3)

Compassionate/Gern (2)

Incompetent/Grendleby (1)

Sir Hanson as an NPC _____

Sir Hanson is an elderly landed knight who won the rewards of life but never received the pleasure it could offer a man of his position. His wife died in childbirth and the unfortunate child did not survive either. In spite of, or perhaps because of misery like this, Sir Hanson has turned to the shelter of the Church in his later years. His serfs are very proud to have a liege like Sir Hanson, who was noted for his courage in his younger days. Long ago, he fought to protect Christianity in the Holy Land and now he lives the life of one truly devoted to God. He is more than a little doddering however, and may prove to be difficult to work around at times.

Grendleby, Steward of Gern

Int +2	Str +1	Prs 0	Dex +1
Per +2	Stm 0	Com +1	Qik 0

Confidence: 3 Age: 36

Personality Traits: _____

Melancholy +2
Friendly -2

Important Skills: _____

Read Lips (whispers) 3
Folk Ken (nobles) 4
Play Harp (solos) 4
Leadership (peasants) 5
Evaluate (harvests) 4

Reputations:

Knowledgeable/Gern (3)
Secretive/Gern (1)

Grendleby as an NPC _____

Grendleby was sent by the Duke to help manage Sir Hanson's land following a case of apoplexy which ravaged Sir Hanson about ten years ago. Grendleby has done a fine job, but is simply a manager. Sir Hanson makes most of the decisions, but Grendleby must implement them. Sir Hanson's declining health plus the sudden appearance of the dragon have combined to frustrate Grendleby completely. He has lost the enthusiasm of doing a good job which normally motivates him. His moody disposition has started rumors in Gern that he knows more about the dragon than he is telling. Such rumors are complete fabrications. The pressure of late has just been too much for Grendleby, though the characters do not need to know this right away.

Pip, Stableboy

Int +2	Str 0	Prs 0	Dex +1
Per +1	Stm -1	Com 0	Qik +2

Confidence: 1 Age: 13

Personality Traits: _____

Curious +3 Brave -1

Important Skills: _____

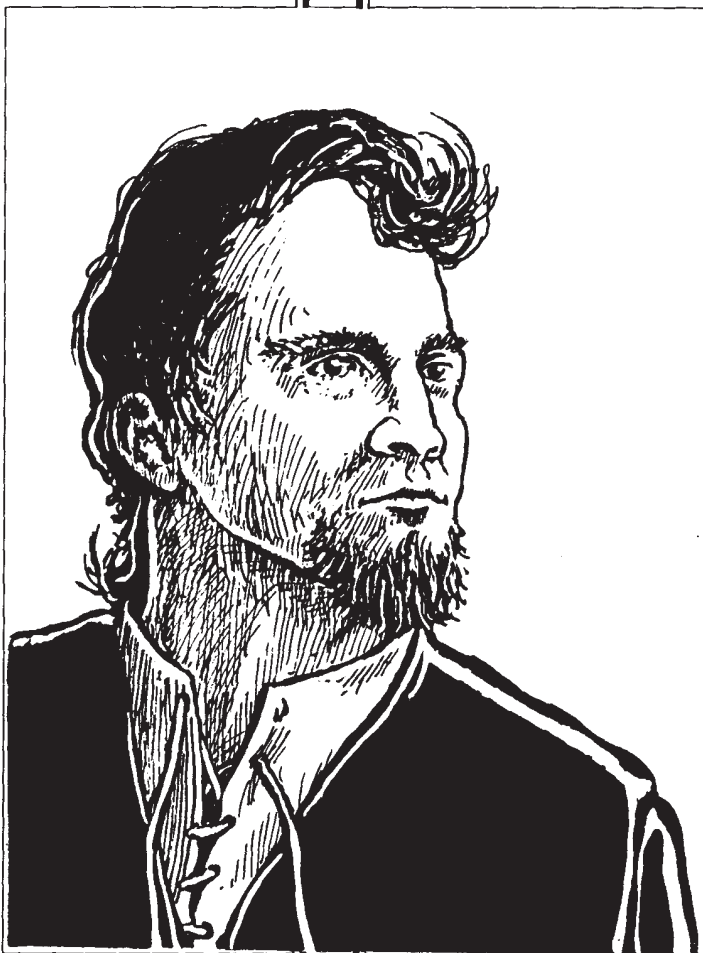
Alertness (sounds) 2
Search (in the dark) 4
Guile (quick explanations) 3
Stealth (hide) 2
Scribe Latin (Bible passages) 1

Reputations:

Troublemaker/Gern (1)
Troublemaker/Grendleby (2)
Religious/
Sir Hanson (1)

Pip as an NPC _____

Pip is a lucky youth, for he has freedoms which are almost unknown to all but the nobility. Orphaned by the death of his parents in Gern, Pip was taken in by Sir Hanson. The knight discovered that Pip is a bright lad and has recently begun to educate the youth, treating him almost like a son. Grendleby supported this to help keep Pip out of trouble, as he just cannot seem to mind his own business. He has never gotten into serious trouble, but that is partially due to his status with Sir Hanson and a quick tongue which provides brilliant explanations to "obvious" misunderstandings.



The First Night

There are likely to be several separate role-playing events during the first night and morning in Gern, since it is likely that the characters may end up sleeping in up to three different locations: the companions in the manor house, the magi at the Brass Key, and at least one grog may adventure with Pip.

The Grog

Pip will try to talk the grog he befriends into staying with him in the barn. He is not aware that the grog is sworn to protect the magi so does not immediately account for that duty. If his new friend declines, Pip will do his best to convince the grog otherwise. Pip is desperate to have fun (i.e. cause trouble) with someone his own age. He will even tell some small lies in order to get his friend to stay.

"I think I know where the dragon's lair is at, but I'm afraid to check it out alone. No! We can't tell your masters about it because I'm not sure I'm right and I can't embarrass my liege, Sir Hanson. Let's check it out tonight."

That night, Pip will lead the way into the woods but will complain of not being sure which way to go. He suggests that they go get something to drink. "I know a secret a crawlspace into the wine cellar beneath the Brass Key." If the grog seems unwilling, Pip will point out that the magi are staying there so he may as well come and at least check it out with him.

Indeed, Pip does know a secret way of getting into the wine cellar. A loose board on the back of the tavern allows him to get underneath the floor where a board he has loosened can be removed, allowing him to swing onto the earthen stairs which lead down to the wine cellar.

About two score wine bottles are in the cellar and Pip knows which are the best ones (in his opinion, anyway). He can also tap the bottom of a bottle of the expensive

varieties so he and his friend(s) can get a taste. He has a small tool, similar to an ice pick, which he uses to tap through the bottle and a piece of wax which he will hand to a grog to warm up so it may be used to plug the bottom when they are done.

All of the characters (Pip included) in the cellar must make a stealth roll of 7+ every ten minutes they are down there. After any two failures, Peter Coffin will wake up and investigate.

If caught in the cellar, Pip will weave a quick lie unless one of the grogs beats him to it. "Ah . . . these men wanted to sleep here with their masters and since the front door was locked I showed them a way to sneak in

through the cellar and we just were on our way up." If worse comes to worse and he is not believed, Pip will blame everything on the grog. Later on, however, he will make it up, bringing them a present of a bottle of fine port (stolen from his masters wine cellar).

The Companions

Since Sir Hanson retires for a period after falling asleep during his greeting, his knightly guests will be left on their own. They may accompany the magi back to Gern or anything else they desire, but Grendleby makes it clear he expects them back by nightfall and says that dinner will be served at his lord's table.

A large meal will be served for the companions by Mrs. Hoby, the cook.

Grendleby will not join them as he does not dine at his lord's table, so knights will have the manor to themselves. The meal is not lavish, but the food is better than anything the companions receive at the covenant. Sir Hanson and his men-at-arms will regale them with tales of their younger days, and with a little prompting will imbibe large quantities of wine and become quite jolly.

The following morning, Sir Hanson will ask them to join him for breakfast. Over a meal of wine and fruit cakes (and, if the characters wish, any re-heated leftovers from the meal the night before), Sir Hanson will question



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them concerning their plans. He is most interested in how far they have traveled, who their liege is, and what coat-of-arms they bear. He will still laugh at the idea of the "scholars" being in charge, but he will accept the idea that the companions will not proceed with the matter until they discuss it with the "scholars." In fact, Sir Hanson will comment that such advice would be very prudent and wise. He is full of suggestions on how they should proceed, some of them good and some of them quite bad: "You should wear a necklace of daisies, as long as you wear it, you can't be injured by the flames of the dragon."

The Magi

The magi are in for a peaceful and intellectually stimulating evening if they decide to stay at the Brass Key. Peter Coffin will definitely break out some wine and enjoy the discussion as well. He gets very excited if a debate breaks out and enters directly into the fray, as long as it is abstract. Even a discussion on whether wizards go to heaven or not will be joined with gusto. If the magi stay up late enough, Pip and company may try to slip in too soon, especially if Peter needs to retrieve some more wine. If the discussion is noisy, Pip and the grogs only need to make Stealth rolls of 5+.

Adding Fuel to the Fire

Depending on how much roleplaying you and your troupe prefer, you could tinker with events in order to implicate Grendleby (apparently) in a scheme involving Sir Hanson and/or the dragon. The characters could get wind of Grendleby's new reputation in Gern and may note his sometimes thinly veiled frustration with Sir Hanson's mental condition. Combined with the fact that Grendleby is the only person who claims to have actually seen the dragon (the serfs have only seen fire, smoke, and vague outlines of a serpentine form), the characters may incorrectly conclude that Grendleby is behind these mysterious events.

Any number of mistaken conclusions on the part of the characters could accentuate this misconception. When retiring to their rooms at night, the companions could pass a room with a door slightly ajar. Inside they catch a glimpse of Grendleby counting coins into piles and pocketing a number of them. Anything but a thief, Grendleby may be taking the money for any number of reasons: to set it aside to pay a merchant he expects to visit in the morning; to pay the wages of the men-at-arms; or even to give it to the characters for their expenses as he was ordered by Sir Hanson. When all is revealed, make sure the characters are thoroughly embarrassed.

If you want to be very sinister, you may have the characters see Grendleby giving Sir Hanson some medi-

cine immediately before the knight retires. The medicine was recommended by a doctor who was a guest a month ago, but the characters may blame Sir Hanson's condition on repeated poisonings performed by Grendleby.

The Story Behind the Attacks

There is a dragon attacking the fields, but he is only doing so to draw unwanted attention to the magus Marlowe with whom he shares a cave. Marlowe recruited the young dragon many years ago with a promise to reward it with magical treasures if it would make its home with him. The dragon agreed and Marlowe felt confident that he had a guardian of unsurpassed prowess. Unfortunately, the dragon swallowed the Faerie Stone, the first gift which Marlowe gave the beast, and the stone has stunted the dragon's growth. While the stone granted certain magical powers to the dragon, it kept the creature from acquiring its expected degree of size and power.

Bitter about its stunted growth, the dragon has attempted to compensate in other ways. Initially, it demanded more magic from Marlowe. The old magus provided as long as he could, but eventually he ran out of things to offer. The dragon believes that Marlowe is lying and feels the wizard planned for him to swallow the stone, so it has promised to draw attention to Marlowe's hiding place by raiding Sir Hanson's land. He is unable to attack Marlowe himself because of the enchantments placed upon him.

The dragon ultimately hopes to lead some of Sir Hanson's men directly to the cave to punish Marlowe completely. Once the knights arrive, the dragon intends to quickly flee the area and leave the trackers to discover Marlowe. However, the wily old magician has a surprise for the dragon. Prior to its raids, the dragon moved its treasure to another site to safeguard it, but Marlowe has magically transported it back to the cavern. Therefore, the dragon will be forced to guard against the very attackers it led to the cave if it wishes to keep its treasure (which it very much does).

The Attack

Sometime within a few days of the characters' arrival in Gern, the dragon will again ravage the fields. The day that the dragon attacks could be determined randomly or you may simply judge when you have received enough enjoyment from the roleplaying encounters between the characters and the personalities of Gern.

The characters will probably have watches posted around the fields and one of these will spot the dragon. If there are no watches, then the fire and smoke from the

dragon's first few gusts will be noticed by some serfs. They will then run for cover at the manor house and bring news of the attack.

The dragon will continue to burn fields until it sees challengers approaching. Then it will stop and prepare to briefly engage them before fleeing into the woods. It simply breaths one burst of flame at its adversaries and then flies away. When it does flee, it will be careful to go at a rate which only slightly outraces the characters. It will remain on the ground so the characters may track it once it is out of sight. The characters will reach the cave after a half hour's journey by foot.

Faerie Stone Dragon

Magic Might 33

Size +3 **Int** -2

Bite: 1st +3* **Atk** +4 **Dam** +28

Claw: 1st +4* **Atk** +6 **Dam** +24

Breath: 1st +10* **Atk** +12** **Dam** +15
Fat 0 **Def** 0 **Soak** +36***

Body Levels: 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5, Incapacitated

* May either attack with breath, two claws, or one claw and a bite.

** May only be dodged, not parried.

*** 20 of this is from the Faerie Stone.

Powers: _____

Fiery Breath, CrIg 20, 3 Magic Points
 - see combat stats.

Description: _____

Though twice as large as a bear, this dragon is small for its age because of the the growth inhibiting effects of the Faerie Stone it swallowed. It is very stocky and has the texture and color of stone. The dragon may only be healed by CrTe spells because of the Faerie Stone's transformation effects.

At the Cavern _____

If the characters successfully track the dragon, they will be led directly to the cave where the beast makes its home. Since the dragon purposefully leaves a trail which is easy to follow, only a botched track roll initially will result in failure. However, with a Per + Track roll of 13+, the tracker will realize the trail has been deliberately made.

Shortly after the characters begin following the trail, a light rain will fall and somewhat obscure the obvious trail. Two more tracking skill rolls must be made before

the characters reach the cave. This time, the tracker must roll 4+ and then 7+, simulating the tracks being washed away. If the characters take cover from the rain instead of continuing to follow the path, the tracker will have to roll 9+ once for each roll not met before the characters stopped.

Note that this rain is the result of Marlowe's magic and is protected by **Spell Aegis**. See "Protecting the Cave" below for information about the rain and check the end of this supplement for details on the "Spell Aegis."

The trail eventually leads to a flat area of ground between two rocky hills. The cave is at the rear of the flat ground. A Per roll of 8+ allows a character to see the dragon poking his head out of the cave for an instant.

Since the dragon arrived at the cave about five minutes before the characters, Marlowe had time to cast a CrTe spell from a text and heal the wounds the dragon might have suffered during the brief skirmish in Sir Hanson's fields. The dragon will battle from the mouth of the cave to limit the number of opponents it must face at one time.

Marlowe at this point has told the dragon what has been done with its treasure, shocking and dismaying this "noble" creature. For the entire battle it will be muttering about "treacherous wizards," "damn fools," "got me again," "but its mine, mine," and "this really gets me angry." If the characters listen closely enough to these mutterings, they may be able to learn something, and if you time them well enough, they can add a subtle layer of humor to the encounter.

Protecting the Cave _____

Marlowe has placed a great number of magical protections around his cave to defend it from interlopers. While he is really only interested in being left alone, Marlowe has been mindful of most contingencies and is prepared to use powerful destructive magic to fend off intruders. Most of the protections are spells held by the rituals **Waiting Spell** or **Watching Ward**. The latter holds protective spells for the dragon. These protections and the contingencies which spark them are listed below:

1. The rain which has fallen since the characters tracked the dragon to the cave was created by a CrAu spell which was set off when the dragon left the cave. Marlowe added this to his defense to cover the dragon's tracks when it returns to the cave. Remember that the light rainfall is protected by **Spell Aegis**. However, there are three more stages to this spell; none of these later stages are protected by a **Spell Aegis** and may be dealt with normally.

First, as soon as intruders trod the flat ground between the hills, a 30th level version of the MuAu spell **Clouds of Thunderous Might** is activated. This height-

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ened storm will last for one hour. Afterwards, the normal rainfall will return and fall until sunset.

Second, if intruders attempt to gain entrance to the cave, the MuAu spell **Rain of Stones** will kick in for one pelting of the intruders. Each person in the party will take +15 damage.

Third, if the intruders are still not convinced to stay away, the MuAu spell **Rain of Oil** will be activated if the intruders are not off the flat area in front of the cave mouth within three minutes of the **Rain of Stones**. Alternately, this spell will fire if the same group of intruders leaves and then returns before the **Clouds of Thunderous Might** spell ends.

After the rain turns to oil, the Faerie Stone Dragon will remind the intruders that it can breathe fire and could set the oily rain ablaze by breathing a tiny practice flame. If the intruders do not begin to retreat almost immediately after this announcement, the dragon will let loose a powerful burst of fire. Any intruder without magical protection against fire will burn to a crisp (though you may decide that tougher characters can make it out of the fire storm before suffering much more than disfiguring burns, especially if they wear protective armor).

2. If it is not raining and intruders attempt to enter the cave (which could happen if the characters are fended off the first time and decide to return to try again), then the following sequence of **Waiting Spells** is fired instead of those listed above.

First, the PeJg spell **Wizard's Eclipse** is activated and the area around the twin hills only is cast into darkness like night. At the same time, the InAu spell **Eyes of the Bat** is cast on the Faerie Stone Dragon so it is not at a loss in the darkness.

Also, any sources of light, magical or otherwise, which are used near the cave when it is dark will be countered by the PeJg spell **Well Without Light**, which will be centered on the source of the light. There are four

of these spells ready to activate on torches, magical lights, etc. The dragon's **Eyes of the Bat**, of course, work even in the complete darkness created by a **Well Without Light**.

3. A number of PeCo and ReCo spells also wait to activate as detailed below:

- a) **Twist of the Tongue** on the intruder who casts the first magical spell.
- b) **Incantation of the Milky Eyes** on the first warrior who attacks the Faerie Stone Dragon.
- c) **Spasms of the Uncontrolled Hands and Despair of**

the Quivering Manacles both on the first warrior who injures the dragon.
d) **The Wound that Weeps** will affect the first cuts caused by each of the dragon's claws.

4. Marlowe also prepared some **Watching Ward** spells to protect the Faerie Stone Dragon. Because of the dragon's recent actions, Marlowe has altered the original **Watching Ward** so that the various spells will only take effect if the dragon is within 500 yards of the cave. The following **Watching Wards** are in effect:

First, the CrAn spell **Soothe Pains of the Beast** will be activated the first time the dragon suffers each of the following types of wounds: light, medium, and heavy. However, only the first two will do any good. Because of the Faerie

Stone which the dragon swallowed, heavy wounds penetrate and damage the stone arteries of the beast, something the level 15 CrAn spell is not empowered to heal.

Second, there are two level 25 Animál versions of the CrCo spell **Free the Accursed Body** which help protect the dragon. They activate the first and second time some malignant magic has twisted the dragon in some way (damaged its sight, etc.). Remember to add a die to the level of the protection (25), so there is a chance the spell will fend off higher level afflictions.



Finally, after the first time the dragon attacks, the new MuAn spell **Claws of the Razor's Edge** alter the dragon as described in the text of this new spell at the end of this supplement.

5. Finally, one last spell is triggered if the dragon should perish. Halfway down the entrance tunnel of the cave, a **Waiting Spell** will activate the CrTe spell **Wall of Protecting Stone** to block the tunnel.

The Dragon's Lair

The characters will probably persevere and find a way to defeat the dragon and bypass all of the magical safeguards. If this does happen, Marlowe will decide that it would be foolish to battle them and will depend on his ability to make a deal too sweet for the magi to ignore.

Marlowe will meet the characters in the room of the dragon's lair. He is seated on the ground near the center of the room. As soon as an intruder enters this cavern, the PeAu spell **Room of Stale Air** is activated by a **Waiting Spell**. Marlowe will not be affected (his powerful immortality spell easily protects him from effects like this).

The ancient magus will try to speak sensibly with the characters and explain that he does not wish to be disturbed. Would they please leave? He will gladly allow the characters to gather the dragon's treasure before leaving if they so desire. Marlowe already reclaimed most of the magical treasures which he had paid to the dragon as "protection money" prior to the characters' entrance.

Marlowe will do his best to convince the characters not to wander down the other tunnel from the dragon's lair. If any of them look like they might do so, the magus will warn them that they will meet a horrible death if they attempt to traverse the tunnel.

If one of the characters persists and looks ready to attempt the act, Marlowe will ask for a moment alone with the leader of the characters. Once off to the side, Marlowe requests that the magus use a spontaneous spell to make certain they will not be overheard. If the character accommodates this request, Marlowe will offer to become the private tutor of that magus, if the group agrees not to force its way down the other tunnel.

If any character magus challenges Marlowe to certámen for the right to go down the tunnel unassailed, the ancient magus will become perplexed but finally answer, "I do not wield weapons." He is unfamiliar with the Order of Hermes' means of settling disputes through a magical duel and thinks that the character is asking for a hand-to-hand confrontation. (Being a member of House Flambeau, and a Mercurian one at that, Marlowe did not waste time learning abilities which would only be useful

in politics and had no "real" magical purpose. Before the Schism War, certámen was looked upon as useless magical dawdling by many outside of House Tremere and Hermetic politics.) In any event, Marlowe will refuse any sort of arrangement which allows a character to walk down the tunnel safely.

The Mercurian wizard will warn the characters repeatedly if they attempt to attack him — if they do another **Waiting Spell** will be activated. "Attack" in the context of this **Waiting Spell** is to draw Marlowe's blood. After the first attack, the MuTe spell **Hands of the Grasping Earth** will activate and lock around the character(s) who injured Marlowe. The Mercurian magus will then step out of harm's way and warn them one more time.

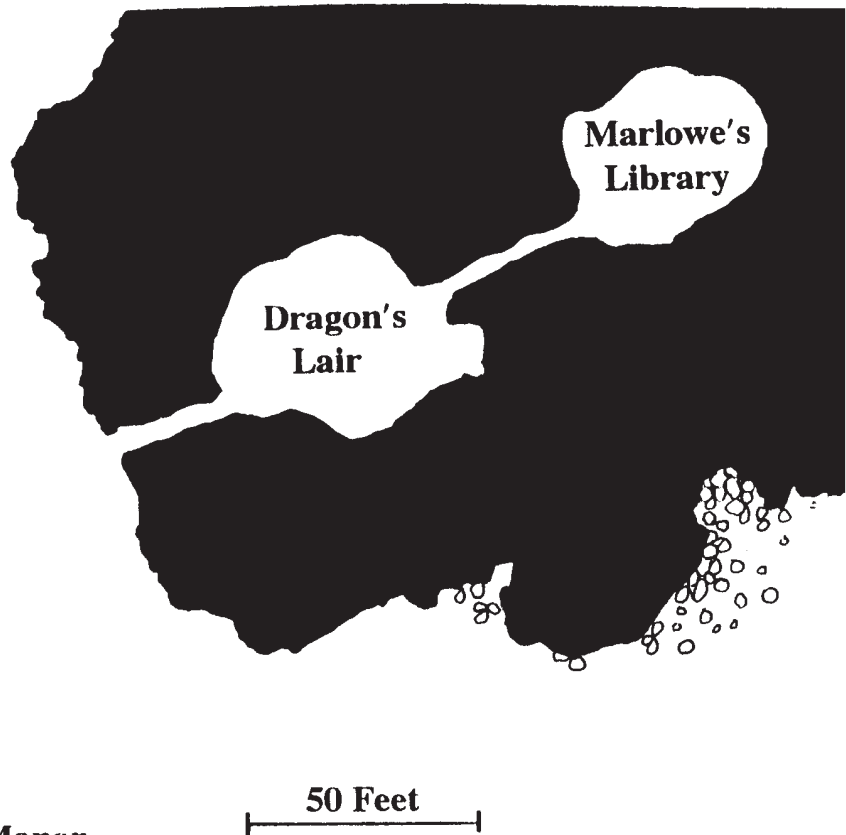
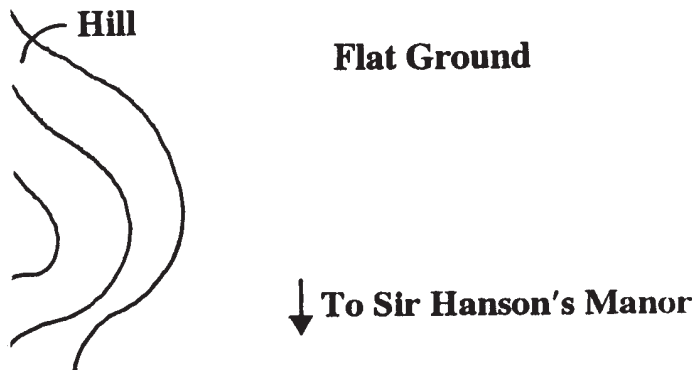
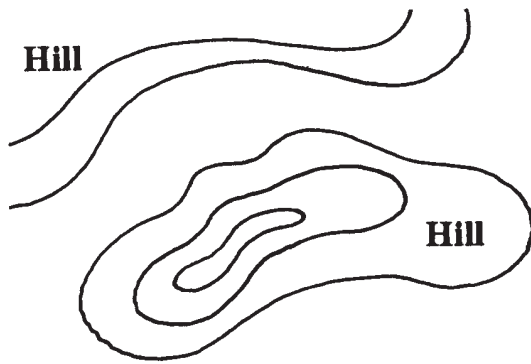
If Marlowe is attacked again, everyone in the cave is very likely going to be killed (it's what you get for messing with a powerful magus like Marlowe). The tunnel to the outside will again be blocked, but this time with a **Circle of the Faeries' Stone** while a huge hole opens in the floor of the dragon's lair, the result of **Opening the Earth's Pore**. The entire cave will fill with lava and noxious gases, easily killing everyone inside (and destroy everything at the end of the tunnel which Marlowe is guarding).

However, if a magus agrees to be tutored, Marlowe also requests that the magus order all the characters to undergo a ritual that will cause them to forget ever meeting him. Marlowe suggests that the magus undergo the ritual as well so it will not appear to obviously be a set-up, but he promises that the ritual will not have the same effect on the magus. Marlowe will leave the magus to explain the reason for the ritual.

If all of this can be arranged, Marlowe will perform the ritual. Anticipating the need for such an arrangement, Marlowe has the necessary supplies with him already. In the very early stages of the ritual, he will spread some additional powders before the "protected" character magus and anoint the character's forehead with some myrrh oil.

The magus will indeed be protected from immediate memory loss, but if he ever attempts to tell another sentient being about Marlowe's existence, the character will begin to suffer the same memory loss. If they persevere, they will forget what they were about to say. This could be a real problem if the magus is prone to bragging and will certainly become a problem for him once other magi see his knowledge outracing their own.

After the ritual is performed, all of the characters except the "protected" magus will be in a daze. This state will last for about five minutes and meanwhile, they will accept the orders of any person they recognize as having authority over them. Therefore, the magus can hustle them out of the cave before they "awaken" and see Marlowe again. The characters will remember nothing about Marlowe but can clearly recall everything else, including



collecting the dragon's treasure. Perceptive characters (those with a positive perception) may see a man who looks like Marlowe performing dark magics on them in nightmares which occur again and again. Warn your players that you will not tolerate them using information to which their characters do not have access, but tell them that their dreams will continue and someday, this may lead them to recall those "forgotten" events.

The Inner Sanctum

The other tunnel from the dragon's lair leads to Marlowe's personal study area. In the largish cavern at the end of the tunnel, he stores all of his scores of tomes and several potent magical items. For the tomes, simply assume that Marlowe has all of the Aquam, Auram, Ignem, Terram, and Vim spells listed in the *Ars Magica* rulebook, the new spells provided in this supplement, and any number of other spells from the rulebook that you desire.

The tunnel which leads to this inner sanctum is efficiently protected. No less than 10 PeCo **Clenching Grasp of the Crushed Heart** spells are activated one by one as long as an intruder continues down the tunnel toward the sanctum. Moving back toward the dragon's lair is completely safe.

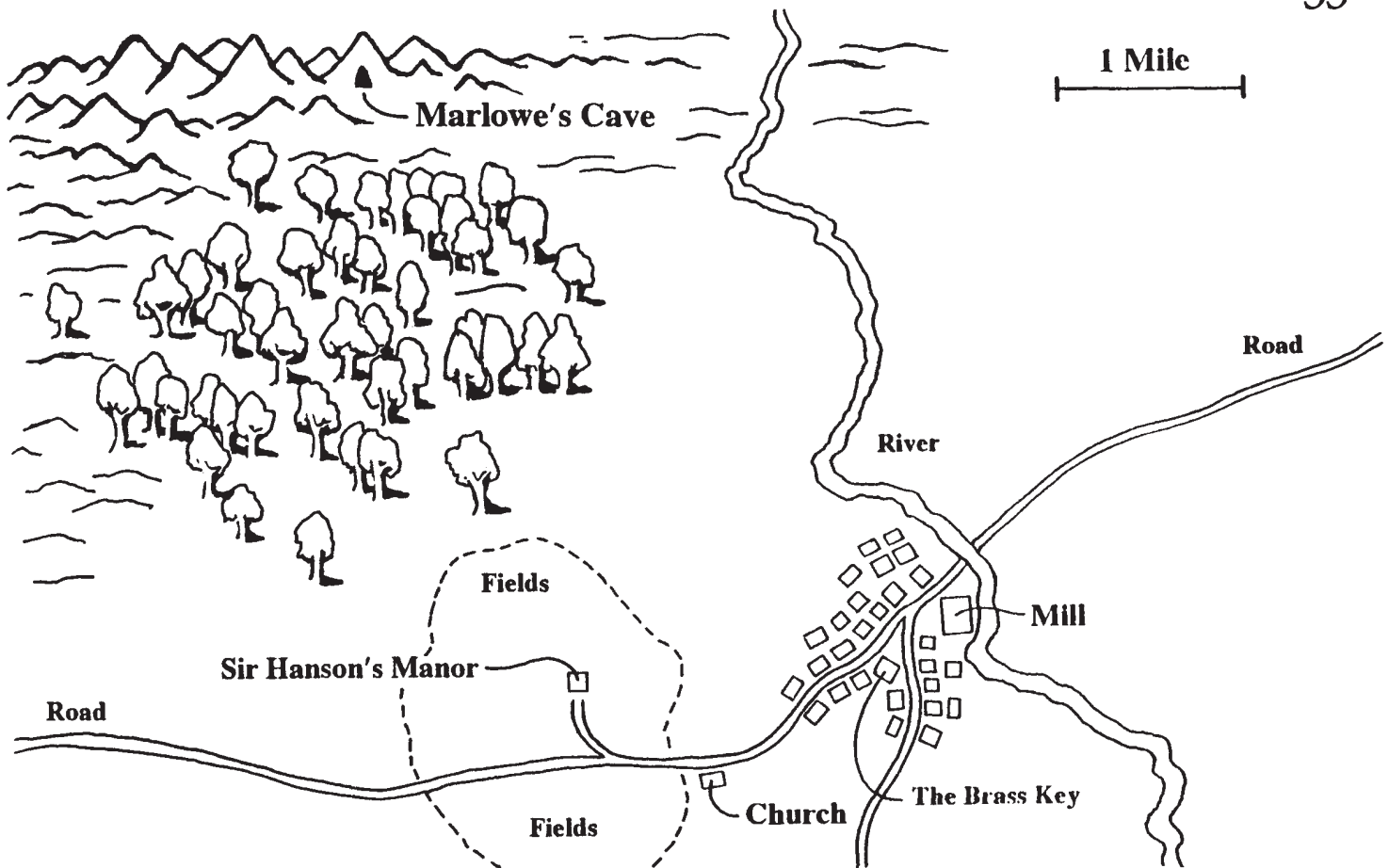
If someone other than Marlowe manages to reach the inner sanctum, he will only be delighted by the treasures before him for an instant before the PeTe spell **Cascade of Earth** will be activated on the sanctum and the tunnel, immediately crushing the characters to death and burying the magical goods under tons of rock.

Obviously, Marlowe is very serious about these treasures never leaving his possession, you should be as well. It is not wise to steal from magi....

Learning From Marlowe

Marlowe will accept one of the character magi as an apprentice if he absolutely must in order to protect his privacy and the security of his magical treasures. In reality, he would not mind the company, as long as he does not constantly fear for his life (which he values over all else). He will be very curious about the current status of the Order and will likely have many questions to ask.

If the character accepts this arrangement, he may come to Marlowe's cave as often as every other season to receive lessons. The magus will have the option of learning spells from Marlowe's huge library or receiving one-on-one instruction from the Mercurian magus himself.



All research or instruction will take place in the dragon's lair (Marlowe will clean it out between the time of the dragon's death at the hands of the characters and the magus's return for lessons). Marlowe absolutely forbids the character from going down the tunnel which leads to his private study and magical treasures. Refer to the preceding information about the defenses of the inner sanctum if the character ignores this restriction and attempts to walk the tunnel anyway.

If the character chooses to learn from the library, Marlowe grants access to any tome he possesses and the character learns accordingly. (See page 102 of *Ars Magica*.) However, because the character is learning from texts developed for use with the Mercurian tradition of magic, he may not add his Magic Theory skill to his Lab total. Marlowe will need to first teach the character Mercurian Magic Theory to at least level one before any magus can learn from him or his books, and this skill could then be added to the Lab total.

Alternatively, Marlowe can teach the character the workings of the various Forms and Techniques of magic. Because of Marlowe's advanced understanding of magic, he can help the character develop his skills at an accelerated pace in the Forms and Techniques favored by Mercurian wizards (Aquam, Auram, Córpoem, Ignem, Terram, Vim and Perdo) or a normal rate in any other Form or Technique.

The "accelerated pace" is one point more than the character could have learned from a text with the same level in a Form or Technique that Marlowe possesses. For example, if Marlowe's score is twice the character's, then the character gains three levels.

Obviously, Marlowe's own level of ability is the limit of advancement. Also, because the Mercurian tradition of magic intricately interrelates the four elements (Aquam, Auram, Ignem, Terram), Marlowe cannot instruct his student in any one element if it is more than five levels above any other element.

There is a side-effect to this fantastic learning opportunity. Because the Mercurian tradition stresses slow and careful working of magic, the character will inevitably work such restrictions into his own magic. Therefore, any Techniques or Forms which the magus increases with the help of Marlowe are restricted when used in spontaneous magic spells. When using an area taught by Marlowe, the magus must expend a fatigue level to cast a spontaneous spell and must also divide by five, not two. For this reason, a character should be careful how many different arts Marlowe tutors him in, because it can severely restrict their actions in the future if they are not wise.

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The Hedge Wizard

Alexander Tiberius slowly walked upstairs to the higher levels of the covenant. His muscular frame, normally limber, was growing stiff. The weapons training with the grogs always left him tired. He still found it amusing when he bested one of grogs with the practice weapons. Skilled weapon displays simply did not fit their picture of a magus.

As he passed the library door, he noted that it was ajar. Interested in who was working so hard, and also curious about what they were working on, Alexander strolled into the room. The empty shelves in here always depressed him, but with work the library would soon be full.

When the industrious worker came into view, Alexander decided that the library would fill out sooner than expected. The man seated at the table hardly looked like a magus, but he had proven a high degree of skill. The man was dressed in new robes, they had just been knitted for him, but he still gave little attention to his wild, long hair.

Alexander chuckled, remembering that this man had come to the covenant only a few months ago, begging to be accepted to learn how to control his magic — a hedge wizard convinced that the Order had something to offer him.

If nothing else, this ex-hedge wizard had something to offer the covenant. In return for accepting him into the fold, the hedge wizard, named Herrick, volunteered to spend every other season working in the library so the written texts could help others as they will help him.

Herrick was deep in thought, so Alexander left him to his work.

After the magus left, Herrick looked up from his work. With a twisted grin and a flick of the quill, he maliciously inserted another error into the text of the spell he was copying.

Summary

A few years after his disappearance into the forest after surfacing in Hapton, Herrick comes to the covenant to learn what he needs to exact his vengeance. Because of the promises Herrick makes, the characters are likely to accept him. While he is at the covenant, Herrick will appear to work hard and keep his promises. When his hidden agenda of learning the requirements to perform ritual magic is fulfilled, he slips away into the night, taking the covenant's entire store of raw *vis* with him, if possible.

The Petition

This segment of the story begins with Herrick's arrival at the covenant and his request to be accepted as a member of the Order of Hermes. At least three years have passed since he was awakened in Hapton (the exact length of time may be whatever works best for your Saga). He has learned a great deal since he woke and will pass himself off as a hedge wizard, a spell caster who at best is a member of House Ex Miscellanea, but is likely not a member of the Order at all. He looks the part — weed-filled hair, tattered clothing, vacant eyes with crossed pupils, etc. There is absolutely no resemblance between Herrick now and the discolored



monster which rose from the water in Hapton — laugh openly at any player who makes any such suggestion.

He arrives late in the evening at the front gates and requests to speak to the wizards' council. Once he is able to address the gathered council, or just one magus, he will ask if he can stay at the covenant and learn from them the ways of the Order. If requested, Herrick will display some magic, but will keep it simple. He does not wish to tip the magi of the covenant off to exactly how much he does know.

If questioned about his past, he will say that he has lived in the forest since the death of his master, who told him she was a member of the Order and that he should contact it someday. He says he has learned all that the forest can teach him and now he wishes to learn the magic of civilization, which is why he wants to join the Order and live in the covenant. Herrick has prepared himself well to play this undercover role. He has actually lived the last year as a hedge wizard, eating berries and squirrels. If they ask to use a truth detecting spell upon him, he will agree, but will attempt to answer the questions in a way so that he does not lie. If they press him, he will tell them the truth of his plans for them while weaving a powerful enchantment around himself. Then he will attempt to escape from the covenant, a task aided by his impressive abilities with magic, perhaps injuring or dispatching whoever gets in his way. Even if the magi are able to capture him (which is unlikely), they will not be able to hold him for long — Herrick is simply too powerful.

Whether or not the characters immediately grant his request or balk at it, Herrick will offer to spend every other season in their library transcribing spells for future magi of the covenant in return for some guidance in his "off" seasons (he learned to scribe Latin when he joined House Díedne, so long ago). If they do not seem to be interested in this, he will offer to teach them secret methods of the arts of Animál and Herbam, passed down through his line for centuries.

He explains that he is mostly interested in learning more about the complexities of ritual magic, as they are most unlike the magic which he already knows. He is willing to learn anything they wish to teach him. If the characters do not accept Herrick, he will go to other covenants until he is admitted. In such a case, a redcap may deliver news of the following events in a year and a half.

Present this whole scene to your characters as if it is a gift from you, that you feel sorry for how you have been treating them the last few game sessions and that this is your little way of helping them out. Herrick is a gift. You want to lull their sensibilities in a manner akin to what Herrick is doing with his magic, subtly using his powers to ease any suspicions the magi have. Because his magic is so strong yet so natural and without hard

edges, his persuasion will be very effective, just make sure your's is at least as good. This is a suggestion to go the full length and completely outfox your players by tricking them — enjoy it.

If you want to completely fool them, introduce Herrick as your magus character (if you don't already have one) and pretend that you are simply joining the covenant just like their characters did. They will not be even remotely suspicious and when the big theft occurs, they will be even more flabbergasted. This is a very cruel tactic to use, but it is by far the most effective — it is recommended.

Herrick's Plan

Herrick is being completely candid with the magi, almost. He does indeed wish to learn ritual magic, but not simply because he is curious. Instead, since the Druidic tradition of magic offers nothing in the way of complex, ritual magic, Herrick must learn it. He knows only a powerful ritual spell will generate the power he needs to perform his **Reanimation Ritual** (see "The Bleeding Ground," p. 37).

He will learn what he needs under the direction of one of the magi and, in part of the time he spends in the library, he will carry out a little research of his own (if the covenant's library is large enough to permit such a luxury). Time spent pursuing his own ends in the library, of course, will subtract from how much transcribing he accomplishes, but he will explain that away as a desire to go slowly to make sure he makes no errors. He states that he expects to increase his speed to normal levels after he becomes more familiar with the process. Those that confront him will discover a shy, yet intelligent wizard, who is abundantly apologetic and willing to work day and night to set things right. Herrick proves himself to be loyal to the covenant in whatever way he can, reporting a spy perhaps, or maybe destroying a menace to the covenant.

While transcribing spells, Herrick will plant a seed which may later contribute to the downfall of the covenant. He will purposefully make some errors in the transcriptions of some spells, so that future magi of the covenant will learn a version of a spell which is not as effective as it should be. The effects of these alterations could vary; anything on the following list could result: the spell is automatically resisted, an extra three botch rolls must be made, it always fatigues the caster, its effects occur to the caster, etc. Keep a note of which magi learn these spells from the library. After they cast that spell, describe what nasty side effects occur but do not explain why — let them figure it out through trial and error. These side effects cannot be fixed and will always occur when the spell is cast.

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Herrick intends to spend six seasons at the covenant. If he encounters difficulties, he will gladly spend any extra time needed. He makes sure he has the knowledge he needs before he leaves. Alternately, if his treachery is somehow discovered, he will quickly flee and disappear into the wilderness.

Besides learning about magic, Herrick is very open concerning his curiosity about the Order. He will ask questions of the magi about the Order and its history, sometimes asking very probing questions that raise uncomfortable points (about the Schism War or the lack of justice, for example). It is likely that he will befriend one of the magi and take this opportunity to ask even more probing questions, perhaps even debating the value of the Order. You should use this as a chance to get your players to start thinking about why their magi belong to the Order, why they remain in it, and how they feel about it. Get them to question the Order and come to new conclusions on what type of organization it is. Force them to question themselves — later on, this look at the Order will be essential.

You can do this simply by having Herrick question anything that has to do with the Order; not negatively, just very probing questions. At a council meeting, if he is invited to attend, have him ask why they must attend the Tribunal, why they cannot deal with Father Fulke with the greatest expediency, and why the Quaesitoris have such power over their lives. He is simply curious, but these simple questions will hopefully breed doubt among the magi about the Order.

Overall, Herrick will strike the characters as being polite, considerate, well spoken, and temperate. Though his wildness and roughness is quite apparent, they should begin to appreciate his finer qualities underneath. His constant questioning may anger some, but hopefully it will open the eyes of others. If Herrick is well treated he may come to question his own motives, but ultimately he cannot be dissuaded from his self-appointed task.

Caught in the Act

You may wish to introduce a short roleplaying encounter to the flow of the Saga by allowing a grog or companion to notice Herrick doing something questionable in the covenant: sneaking into the laboratory of another magus, counting the covenant's raw *vis* supplies, transcribing a spell into a personal journal, etc. Reveal this information only to the player with that character and then take them aside to work out the rest of the episode.

If such an incident occurs, Herrick will first use *Men-tem* spells to make the character become his loyal follower. The character receives a resistance roll, but if failed, they need an intelligence roll of 15+ to break his control. Henceforth, that character becomes Herrick's best friend and spends much time with him. Warn the player not to tell or even hint to anyone else what happened upon pain of your wrath. When Herrick later escapes, the character will refuse to believe that he betrayed the covenant and will need to have a *Perdo Vim* spell of level 25 cast upon him to have the charm removed. The spell will require *vis* to make the cure permanent.

The Escape

After six seasons of working at the covenant, Herrick will leave in the middle of the night. He will take as many of the covenant's treasures as he can carry — raw *vis*, magic items, one-of-a-kind items, books, etc. Mostlly, he needs any kind of magical substance or item to gain the *vis* he needs to power the ritual spell he intends to cast.

Depending on how his tenure at the covenant went (e.g. grudges with other magi), he may become careless and try to exact a little immediate revenge by slaying a familiar, disrupting a season's worth of laboratory work, etc. If he has made any enemies, he will certainly attempt this; if he has made any friends, he may leave them a letter trying to explain what he is going to do, giving clues as to his intentions.

In any event, you can make a short adventure of Herrick's escape and let the players control some of the covenant's grogs. Herrick may have a difficult time sneaking past them while carrying a large bundle of booty. However, by this time he will be more interested in escape than battle and will make for the wilderness. Any grogs or other characters who chase him will find that he practically disappears after entering the forest. This particular trait may prompt a magus to recall a similar incident some years ago, but let the players remember this on their own. If he is hotly pursued, he will drop the things he has stolen one by one (one for every successful chase roll the characters make), but after they have failed 3 chase rolls in a row, he has escaped them. A chase roll is considered to be either a running roll (a straight case), a tracking roll (they are trying to pick up his trail), or a scan roll (they are trying to spot him).

The Bleeding Ground

The storyline of this campaign is connected to a very important long term event which bridges the introduction of Herrick and Marlowe early in the campaign with its finale. After learning more about the methods of powerful formulaic magic (i.e. ritual spells) at either the characters' covenant or elsewhere, Herrick will embark upon his path of vengeance. The formulaic magic enables him to reanimate the powerful magical beasts which were slain during the ferocious battle centuries ago at the site of the characters' covenant. The Tempest is begun anew.

The basic idea is this: as the power of Herrick's ritual grows, the course of the death of the magical beasts slain during The Tempest slowly reverses itself so the beasts begin to come back to life. The process hastens as it reaches its conclusion, so that ultimately living creatures of great power will seem to spring from the earth. When, and if, that occurs, Herrick will be nearby to lead the beasts against the covenant.

As this process continues, the magical aura of the covenant slowly diminishes, because it was created by the decomposition of the magical beasts slain during The Tempest. As their magical energies and earthly remains regain form, the magical aura slowly loses power. It should take very little detective work on the part of the magi to realize a connection between the two events.

(Note that the times given for each step of the process may be altered as you see fit so you can integrate them into your campaign.)

Also, the bones, blood, feathers, etc. that appear are only physical manifestations of the magical process, so if, for example, the bones are discovered and dug up, the reanimation of the beasts will not be stopped. They will appear some years later with skeletons intact.

Stages of Reanimation

1. Before he uses his powerful ritual to reform the magical beasts, Herrick wishes to test himself and the concepts he so recently learned with a practice ritual. To this end, he will cast the MuCo spell *Mists of Change* (Lv 30) (a spell which was based on a druidic ceremony and first invented by the maga Díedne) on a town or village in the region of the covenant. A short adventure could result from this, especially if the characters are in the town when the ritual takes effect. Herrick may even lure them to the town prior to performing the ritual just to cause them extra grief, especially if he has reason to hate them after his stay at their covenant.

2. Herrick will consider the results of this experiment and make slight adjustments to his **Reanimation Ritual**. Two seasons later, he will perform his **Reanimation Ritual** and set the ball rolling. The gogs on watch may notice something strange is going on that night (Perception roll of 11+) but are not likely to find the druid through the deep mist that has arisen.

3. As noted above, the process of recreating the beasts starts slowly but hastens asymptotically. After a period of five seasons, the bones of the dead beasts will reform. However, the bones are deep within the ground and will not be noticed by the residents of the covenant. No magical aura decrease will occur at this point.



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4. Four seasons later, a small spot of blood appears somewhere, either on the perimeter of the covenant or in a partially hidden area within the outer wall (if there is one). A Per roll can be made once for each grog who stands on guard duty during the day. A result of 20+ means he notices the blood. However, the magi will know that something is happening to the covenant because the magical aura surrounding the place suddenly decreases by one point.

Over the course of the next three seasons, this spot of blood will spread to the size of a puddle and only a Per roll of 10+ is needed to notice it now (you may allow characters to roll only when they leave and return to the covenant during a story). After two more seasons, tiny blood spots appear on the ground all around the covenant. If the blood has not been noticed yet, then sometime in the course of these last two seasons a grog should definitely find one (roleplay it out). The magical aura becomes two points lower than normal at this time.

At the end of two more seasons, all of the tiny spots of blood will have expanded into puddles like the first. Finally, eleven seasons after the first blood spot appeared, the entire landscape around the covenant should be sopped with blood. People cannot walk to or from the covenant without getting blood all over their shoes and pants — it is truly disgusting. You may wish to have a short grog roleplaying session where you can act through their reaction to these disgusting events — this is likely to hurt their morale (by at least 2 levels, see the *Covenants* supplement for more details). At this point, the magical aura is three lower than normal or 1, whichever is greater.

5. Over the period of the next year and a half (six seasons), larger manifestations of the *Reanimation Ritual* will begin to appear. First hair mixes with the blood and then scales and feathers poke up from the ground. Clumps of hair, larger feathers, and connected “pelts” of scales appear next. After approximately four seasons of

this, the covenant’s magical aura completely disappears as almost all of the power which created the aura in the first place has been used to recreate the bones, blood, and feathers of the ancient beasts slain during *The Tempest*. If the characters try to pry up these pelts or scales, they will find them firmly attached to the ground (almost magically so) and there are so many it would take even a magus with powerful spells months of work to get them all. It can be attempted, however, but will not do any good, as the ritual’s progress cannot be stopped in this way. The animals will still reform at the end of the ritual.



6. Finally, during the season after the formation of the scales, etc., concludes, the beasts will have fully formed and they rise out of the ground as one and assault the covenant under Herrick’s direction. This can only be prevented if the characters were successful in a trip to the sunken isle of *Cimbrinsula*. The time the beasts actually materialize should be at sunrise of an important day during the season, — the Summer Solstice or Autumn Equinox.

Not All Blood, Sweat and Tears

While it certainly does not compensate for the loss of the covenant’s magical aura, the blood and other remains which appear will be of some use to magi for they all contain *Animal vis*.

The total raw *vis* value for all the blood which seeps from the ground is 40 points, and the scales, feathers, and hair are worth a total of another 15 points. The bones, if discovered, are worth a total of 25 points.

Only certain amounts of this should be available at any one time. For example, if a resident of the covenant happens to notice the first spot of blood which appears, a magus could analyze it and extract perhaps one point of raw *vis*. When the puddles come in earnest, it is the time to send the grogs into the fields with bowls and beakers to collect the foul, dark red liquid. However, those who

spend more than one day collecting the fluid become very ill, and cannot work or fight for one week. By the same token, the majority of the raw *vis* available from the feathers will only be available after several seasons.

You may rule that more raw *vis* is available if the magi wish to extract it from blood which has soaked back into the dirt. No more than ten additional pawns are available, and only one point may be extracted for each eight points of the magus's total of *Creo* + *Vim* + *Magic Theory* + magical aura (if any).

Adventure Ideas

The blood which appears around the covenant can be the springing point for several interesting roleplaying adventures. Some of these were developed in the playtest campaign, but it is likely that all of them could be fleshed out to provide an evening of intrigue.

- If the covenant is located near a town or village, the residents of these population centers are likely to be made very uneasy by a blood-drenched landscape. They will complain to the king's sheriff or similar authority, and an investigation will ensue. The covenant's relationship with the local nobility will have a profound effect on how the investigation proceeds and the relationship could easily be damaged if the magi "refuse" to explain why blood is oozing up from the ground.

- The Church is also likely to be very interested in this situation. The clergy may become involved at the request of nobles who are not satisfied with the explanations they are receiving from the magi. Again, the covenant's relationship with the Church is of major importance here. If you wish to be incredibly cruel, Father Fulke could arrive to lead the investigation (see "The Druid Rises"). Father Fulke may try to skillfully worm his way back into

the graces of the Church by condemning the magi as heretics and demon worshippers if the characters initially exposed his embezzlement of Church funds. This is a matter that can only be successfully resolved through skillful diplomacy.

- Magi from other covenants request to visit and take samples of the blood. This is an opportunity to introduce major figures of the Order of Hermes who might stand in the way of the characters' covenant later in your campaign (especially if the characters' covenant survives this storyline and enters Autumn). The Quaesitoris are likely to send an investigator as well, and they are not likely to have forgotten what once took place on this site. They may try to force the characters to abandon their covenant or may try to convince them to stay — just so the Quaesitoris can see what happens to the covenant.

- This final adventure idea includes a fun means of working the discovery of the first blood spot into the story of the campaign. A boy from a nearby farm, who is very curious about the covenant and the magi within it, sneaks in for a closer look. He brings his pet dog with him. While the boy is watching the covenant, the dog slips away and begins to drink the blood from the puddle. A grog on guard duty sees all of this happen.

Upon closer investigation, the grog sees a bubble of blood spurt up from the soil. Once the magi discover that the blood is actually raw *vis*, they may wish to check on the boy's dog which has become very ill. However, the whole affair becomes much more complicated when it is discovered that the boy is the son of a local nobleman.

The dog is likely to be infused with magic and could make a fine familiar if a magus can arrange to possess it, once it regains its health. You could also simplify matters for the magus by making the boy a precocious lad with a genuine interest in the Order of Hermes. An apprentice and a familiar in one fell swoop — if not for the father....

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The Longship



If everything went well, then the ship would be visible from the top of the cliff. But Alexander Tiberius was more careful, so just in case the position of the ship had altered due to hundreds of years of currents, several grogs were posted at various spots around the cliffs of northern Jutland.

William Gill helped organize the arrangement of the grogs. He had been made lieutenant prior to embarking for Jutland and the responsibility still felt new. William hoped that he had not neglected any of the almost hidden fjords in the area. If the Viking longship was not spotted due to his incompetence, Tiberius would certainly demote him back the status he had held for many years — common grog.

William assigned himself to one of the positions as well, but he reserved a spot with a view of the area where the ship supposedly sank.

He looked at the top of the cliff where Tiberius was going to perform the ceremony which promised to raise the ship from its watery grave. William couldn't see Tiberius, but some of the magus' companions were standing with their backs to the water. The ritual was obviously not complete.

He watched a while longer and soon Alcott Stuart and others turned and gazed down at the water. William did the same.

William waited patiently for more than a minute, but when nothing happened he looked back up at the cliff. He now saw the figure of Tiberius. The magus looked exhausted. A couple of the others, Alcott among them, looked to be conferring with the magus. William noticed Tiberius shrug his shoulders. Obviously, even the magus wasn't sure what had gone wrong.

Torlen, who was also at the top of the cliff, conferred with Tiberius a moment before looking down and making a motion at William. The new lieutenant knew what was expected. He needed to begin a sweep of the area. He also knew that the current could have swept the ship entirely out of the reach of the ritual, or so Tiberius had warned. Therefore, the sweep, while necessary, could always be a waste of time.

William began to pick his way across the treacherous terrain toward old Thark's location. He was about to turn a corner when he heard a spray of water and turned quickly about.

More than five minutes after Tiberius completed the ceremony, the Viking longship rose slowly to the surface. It was beaten but not rotted, and William thought it looked marvelous. The prow was worn, but William could make out what once must have been the proud head of a wooden dragon. He shivered with the thought of seeing a hundred or more such monstrosities bearing down on a fishing village or a monastery.

The water slowly smoothed out around the bobbing vessel and William saw that Tiberius and entourage were making their way to the water. From his angle, William saw something which he knew the others couldn't. A green tentacle as big as his own torso was slipping up the back side of the longship.

Something as ancient as the Viking ship had been awakened as well.

Learning the Story

At some point, while the ground around their covenant is bleeding, the characters must discover some details concerning The Tempest and how it relates to their covenant, Marlowe, and Herrick. Without this knowledge, they will be at the complete mercy of Herrick when the druid's **Reanimation Ritual** completes its cycle — and unfortunately Herrick has very little capacity for mercy any more.

There are a number of ways the characters could gain this knowledge, but the best is to give them a great deal of different information (after they make the effort to gain it), but allow them to piece it together on their own. It should be assumed that the players will want to investigate the strange events occurring at the covenant, if they do not, you should give up on them and find a new troupe. Whether their investigation starts with questioning Marlowe or by performing in-depth research on their own or at another covenant, the characters should soon learn that The Tempest was fought on their ground. From that incomplete realization, they should be able to branch out into many other paths of research. Encourage them to investigate this mystery and make this a story of quiet research and incredible discoveries.

Marlowe's Reaction

If Marlowe's understudy begins to ask questions about the bleeding ground around the covenant, and especially if the magus has researched elsewhere and inquires about The Tempest, Marlowe will become very concerned. After asking more questions, he slowly comes to the conclusion that a druid or another magus who has somehow tapped the powers of the Caverns of Cimbrinsula is reviving the beasts the Mercurian magi slew in the battle centuries ago.

As the magus continues to question Marlowe on the matter, the character will learn the significance of the blood and, if they have appeared, the scales and feathers. Unless the characters are very powerful, Marlowe admits that the beasts which may soon appear will overrun them and crush the covenant, unless they are being called for another purpose. At this time, he worries that he may be the target of revenge.

If the magus shared all the details of the past several years with Marlowe, the ancient magus helps the characters decipher that the druid who stayed at their covenant is the one responsible for the blood curse. Marlowe concludes that Herrick is interested in continuing the battle on the same battleground. Unfortunately, the characters' covenant is in the way.

Marlowe will further admit to his understudy that he was involved in that battle as well and that he knew

Herrick personally. A more barbaric and vile man he has never known. If an explanation has not been given before, Marlowe's "apprentice" will learn that he cannot leave his cave or his longevity ritual will collapse and time will catch up with him within hours. He will add, however, that the magi need his knowledge and power if they hope to defeat Herrick. Because of this, he waves the prohibition on his "apprentice" against speaking of Marlowe. Since the entire covenant is in jeopardy, and because Marlowe has no fondness for Herrick, the Mercurian magus grants his assistance. However, he can only instruct one student per season (see "The Mentor" for details), and will only perform this chore every other season. If any of his students displease him, he will refuse to teach them anymore, and will offer extra "classes" to his favorites.

The Source of Power

Marlowe advises that short of killing the druid, there is only one way of stopping Herrick's magic from completely reanimating the creatures killed during The Tempest — destroy the source of Herrick's power. He explains that he and his Mercurian companions discovered too late how the druids were able to control magical beasts without complicated ritual magic — they imprisoned a portion of the beast's essence in a physical object.

This, Marlowe continues, is the basic form of druidic magic and was long performed without the knowledge of what was being accomplished. The druids' ancestors were from Kymryc Britain and were able to capture the essence of the animals and beasts they painted. This natural talent was developed into the basis of a beast control magic, but with the sinking of Cimbrinsula, the druids lost this innate ability to trap the essence of a creature. However, they are still able to use the beasts whose spirits have already been captured, for somehow the images survived the sinking of the mystical isle. Before The Tempest, House Tremere used powerful *Intéllego* spells to investigate Cimbrinsula (using the carcass of a beast sent out to reconnoiter their camp) and all they saw were hazy underwater shadows of large metal bowls or urns with the images of animals carved into them. If these urns can be destroyed, the blood curse can be halted and Herrick will be unable to bring back the slain beasts.

If the source of the druid's hold over the beasts he is reanimating is broken, he will be unable to control them when and if the process is completed. However, the urns are lost in the caves of sunken Cimbrinsula and no one alive but Herrick knows where this lost island is. The only way he can be halted is if the characters can find Cimbrinsula and destroy the urns — some library investigation is called for.

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Background Details

Marlowe is essentially correct in his estimation of the source of Herrick's control over the beasts the druid is reviving with his **Reanimation Ritual**. However, while the druids did lose the ability to capture more beasts by painting, Herrick is still able to alter existing paintings so he can gain control of new beasts.

Therefore, when Herrick attacks the covenant (see "Herrick's Assault"), he will come with a small group of beasts to join, or so he hopes, the reanimated beasts from *The Tempest*. The reanimated beasts are pictured on bronze urns located in the caverns of sunken Cimbrinsula, but since he knows the correct rituals, he knows how to summon the spirits that are trapped by those images. In the last year however, he discovered some cave drawings along the rocky north-west coast of Iberia. These primitive paintings were created by his ancient ancestors and captured some of the spirit of the creatures which they portray. This has allowed Herrick to summon and control a small number of new beasts. His efforts have paid off and he believes he soon will be ready to attack the Order — this time to win.

Research

Unless the magi have some incredibly powerful (Lv 100+) InIm spells available, they will have to depend upon non-magical methods of locating Cimbrinsula. There are perhaps many different ways this knowledge can be gained, but a suggested series of ideas and events is provided upon which you are encouraged to expand. Several interesting adventures in far-flung locales can result from the exhaustive search the magi are required to make.

The best way to handle this search is to get the characters to travel far and wide to libraries full of ancient texts in order to obtain clues as to both the location of Cimbrinsula and the history of *The Tempest* itself. Whatever information the characters can gain is likely to

be of great value, besides it is about the only thing they are able to do. The destinations of these research trips depend on the year of your Saga. The best library for such a purpose would be the enormous repository of knowledge located at the famous covenant of Doissetep (for more in depth information, see the *Covenants* supplement). However, you can have them journey to any city, monastery, or treasure trove that you want — simply pick a place, detail an adventure, and then roleplay out the expedition to reach the information.



The magi must make a long and perhaps hazardous journey to the distant library (across treacherous mountains), strike bargains with its owners for its use (payment of silver or raw *vis*), and then spend at least a season doing the actual research. Have each character doing research make Perception + Scribe rolls, with results of 10+ indicating moderate success and 15+ indicating they have discovered more detailed information. Force the players, however, to tell you precisely what kind of information they are looking for and tailor the results of their rolls to the type of information for which they were searching.

A Roman reference to Cimbrinsula resting "beyond Albion" tells them it was past Britain and probably in the Atlantic Ocean. They

may even learn that it was between Britain and Ireland, but little more is possible and certainly the specific site will elude them. If they set sail with only this much information, it will be almost impossible for them to discover the lost continent, though an InIm spell of 40+ could lead them to it. An InIm spell of only 30+ would be necessary if they had access to some object which came from Cimbrinsula, but such objects are exceeding rare and few are recognized as having come from the Kymryc civilization.

However, this research will also likely lead them to a "Seeker" (a magus obsessed with the search for the origins of magic, see *The Order of Hermes* supplement) who has been looking for Cimbrinsula for years and allegedly has

discovered something of interest in the far north. He can easily be found, for he is studying at Doissetep as well (or wherever the characters are doing their research). This Germanic magus, named Johannes Reynolds, is compiling the legends and stories of Norse Vikings which he gathered on a recent expedition through Scandinavia. Among these legends is one concerning the owner of a longship who set sail to plunder Cimbrinsula despite warnings from village elders and forboding omens. The Viking should have indeed heeded the warnings, as the story fragments seem to indicate that the warrior's dragonship sank before it reached Cimbrinsula. Reynolds adds that he was in the village little more than a season ago and that he is certain the ship sank where the fjord meets the sea.

The Truth of the Legend ==

Reynolds, however, has a problem regarding the legend of the ship. He is sure he can gather enough information to locate it with one more trip to the village. If he could magically talk to the owner of the longship, this Viking would be able to tell him the location of Cimbrinsula, but Reynolds has no way to reach the dead crew which lies hundreds of feet under the water. He says that he has plans to pursue this further in the coming year and if the characters show any interest, he grows very excited and asks if he may meet with them later, "somewhere a little more private."

The character who studied under Marlowe realizes that his mentor spoke many times of powerful Mercurian rituals used to salvage magical artifacts sunk during ancient naval battles. If the characters meet with Reynolds in his private chambers (maybe even his sanctum, if it is at Doissetep) and tell him of this ritual, he will suggest that he lead them to the site of the shipwreck in order to raise the ship.

He wants the characters to travel to this village in Norway with him, to discover all that they can of this ship, and then to use the spell to raise it from the sea. He only wants to find the location of Cimbrinsula and then retrieve some object from it so he will later be able to search it out with Intéllego magic or perhaps even return. He has his own ship and crew and is willing to leave immediately with them to return to the village and attempt to raise the Vikings.

If the characters tell Reynolds of the spell, he is very eager to meet the magus who could aid him with such a powerful enchantment. The characters must approach Marlowe if they hope to have use of his spell and he will surely grill them on any progress they have made regarding the location of Cimbrinsula. When the characters discuss Reynolds and his ideas with Marlowe, the old Mercurian is anxious to meet a Seeker who is actually interested in the Kymry. Nothing would set Marlowe's

soul to rest more than discovering the true roots of his druidic adversaries. Over the years, he has come to believe they were not the savage barbarians the Cult of Mercury made them out to be, but descendants of a race as civilized as the Ancient Greeks, if not more so.

As Reynolds and Marlowe are anxious to meet each other, the characters will probably arrange it. Marlowe will wish to speak in private with Reynolds, and anyone trying to eavesdrop upon their conversation, magically or otherwise, will meet with a harsh magical rebuke from Marlowe's repertoire of **Waiting Spells**. Reynolds emerges from the meeting with a scroll case and a renewed enthusiasm to discover the location of Cimbrinsula.

The village is located on a river about twenty miles inland at the end of a fjord on the southwestern edge of Norway. The characters will have to make a sea journey to get to this village, but Reynolds will gladly provide them with his ship. The journey should be fairly uneventful, and for a sea voyage it is exceptionally fair weather and will take a little less than a month (assuming the characters leave from southern France, where Reynold's ship is docked).

Village in Turmoil ==

As they get further and further north, the water grows colder and colder, and as they approach the coast of Scandinavia, the morning mists make it nearly impossible to navigate. However, with the expert seamanship of Reynold's crew, they are able to locate the fjord of Nerstrand village,

The situation at Nerstrand will depend on the exact timing of the characters' arrival. Unless they specifically plan otherwise, assume that they arrive a few hours after night falls.

If they do arrive at night, they will find the village surrounded by literally scores of torches. While they are weighing anchor, it is obvious that something strange is going on. A large bonfire burns in the center of the low, long log-houses, but no one is gathered around it. Ask for Per rolls of 12+. A success allows the characters to see a couple well-concealed men lying on the roofs of some of the homes. All the other villagers are huddled inside their homes because the village is being besieged nightly by a barrow wight.

Reynolds, at this point, decides suddenly that he does not wish to enter the village, but will encourage the characters to do so if they so wish. He will say nothing if questioned about this, except to say that things were not like this when he was here last time.

As the characters use the long boat to come to shore, one of the men climbs down from a house to help them, catching the rope thrown to him. With very few ques-

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tions and no explanation, he hurries them to the building he was on, knocks on the door which soon opens, exchanges a few words with his wife, pushes them inside, and leaves to retake his watch.

Inside the home, his wife and two older women (grandmothers) quickly wake and heat some stew for the characters. This is a long, snug home, with a fire pit in the middle of the room and sleeping stalls all along the walls — two sheep and three pigs share it with the humans. The family's five children will rouse soon too, asking for food, which is curtly refused. Once the language barrier is somehow broken (magic will shock, but not scare them — one of Reynold's crewmen knows the local tongue), they are very friendly and ask at least as many questions as the characters. One of the kids will make a game of it and insist that everyone take turns asking questions.

By questioning the woman and children, the characters can piece together the following story: a few months ago, a visitor to the village dug into the barrow of the warrior Thorgrim and stole his treasures. Thorgrim has risen to regain his prizes and punish the interlopers in the process, but because the treasures were stolen, the villagers are unable to return them and stop the nocturnal maraudings. No one goes out at night, because that is when Thorgrim attacks. This has been going on for over a month. After several attempts to slay Thorgrim failed

and resulted in the deaths of many young men, the villagers decided that their current tactics were best. However, they downplay the dangers of their plight, and assure the characters that "it really isn't all that bad." In general, these villagers will never ask for help or admit how bad things have gotten, and they underplay the crisis all along.

As soon as longer hours of daylight arrive in another month, the villagers will have more time to do chores, but until then they live as best they can. The lack of food in the larder should be obvious to the characters, which indicates that things are not all that good. The short hours of daylight now give them little time to do all the work they need to do, especially when so many men must guard the village at night.

During the day, the atmosphere will be a bit less tense, but not much. Because they are exhausted from long nights of guarding, the men of the village sleep during the day. However, every day a different man forgoes guard duty to help direct the boys in the fields. An easy Int roll of 6+ allows a character to immediately note that only one man is within sight. Young boys are performing all of the heavy tasks under his direction.

Once daylight does come, the characters receive a warm welcome from the whole village and they ask many direct questions of their visitors, for they recognize the ship they see in the fjord. It seems that Reynolds took

more than stories from this village when he left. They will want to know if they have come back to return the treasures, and if not, why not. However, they waste little time on questions when so many man-hours are wasted each night guarding the village instead of plowing the hard soil. They are a stoic and hardworking folk, friendly to visitors and quick to realize that the characters are not the same folk who came before and desecrated Thorgrim's tomb.

When the characters question Reynolds, he takes a very high handed manner and freely admits that he opened the tomb and retrieved its contents — but it was simply “part of the great search for knowledge.” Curious to see if the ancient Vikings really did bury a man's possessions with his body in the mounds, he dug into Thorgrim's barrow the evening before he left. He was amazed at the treasures he found and loaded everything on his boat for later examination. He does not have any of the treasures with him now (and wants to keep them anyhow) and is not interested overly much in the villagers' plight either. He thinks he can find the location of the Viking ship even without help from the village, and wants to find it and raise it as soon as possible.

Hopefully, this will point out to the characters something of the theme of this entire supplement, that the Order of Hermes is involved in some very questionable and immoral activities. Wizards have a great deal of

power, often misusing it, and innocents often get hurt in the magi's efforts to gain new knowledge and power.

The characters can opt to get involved in this threat to the village, or they can simply go about their own business and request the details of the story of the Viking longship. If the characters decide to let the villagers take care of their problem even after they realize that it is a situation very similar to their own troubles (a “dead” man has risen to exact revenge), they should be treated in a similar way — make sure that outside of Marlowe, no one comes to help them defend their covenant from Herrick's final attack. You may even wish to have some powerful visitors to the covenant leave rather than take part in the battle with Herrick. If the characters complain about this, make sure you remind them about what they refused to do for the village.

An old man named Olaf is the village skald and he knows the Legend of Alfgair the best. He will be glad to tell them the tale as best he knows it, and the whole village will gather in the largest cabin (except for the guards) and listen to his tale, though he doubtless has told it many times before. Even if the characters do not help the villagers, they continue to act courteously, though an old man may yell at them a bit and tell them to get their “Loki friend” to return that which he stole.



Thorgrim, Barrow Wight

Infernal Might 25* Size +2

Int 0 Str +4 Stm +3

Persistent +2

Claws: 1st +5 Atk +8 Dam +15

Fat n/a Def 0 Soak +20**

Body Levels: OK, 0/0/0, -1, -3, -5, destroyed

* immune to Mentem spells

** immune to puncturing weapons

Abilities: _____

Stealth 5 Track 4

Vis: _____

Thorgrim's body contains 5 pawns of Perdo *vis*

Powers: _____

Fog of Winter, CrAu 20, 1 Infernal Point — Thorgrim leaves a trail of white fog which is thirty degrees cooler than the surrounding environment. If he stays in approximately the same area, it collects around him. Warm-blooded creatures in the fog must make Fatigue rolls of 10+ for 5 minus Stm rounds.

Fumes of Noxious Vapors, PeAu 35, 5 Infernal Points — These purple "fumes" suffocate those who breathe them. Anyone within melee distance who does not spend the turn dodging the vapor (Dodge 8+) must make Stm rolls of 10+ or lose a body level and choke until a Stm roll of 8+ is made. Another body level is lost for every failure.

Description: _____

Thorgrim is a very large, man-like creature. He is over six and a half feet tall and his stomach is grossly bloated. His flesh is mottled and stinks of decay. Though large, he has great stealth. On cold Norwegian nights, a mist which seems to perpetually cover him hides him from even attentive eyes.

content to remain dead in his barrow until his treasures were stolen. He then woke and is determined to scour the village and slaughter its inhabitants until his treasures are returned.

The villagers were easy pickings until they discovered what was happening and who was responsible. After Thorgrim easily survived a handful of assaults by groups of men, the villagers took to erecting large fires and keeping watch. Because he hates light, Thorgrim has not yet invaded the village, but his patience is wearing thin. He may well attack sometime while the characters are present.

The Legend of Alfgeir

Once the threat of Thorgrim has been averted, or as soon as the characters have a chance to speak with him, Olaf will relate the Legend of Alfgeir, who, in Olaf's words, was a glory-seeking Viking who has a place in the hearts of all the people in the village. If Thorgrim still haunts the village, Olaf wishes Alfgeir were here now. Alfgeir failed in his quest to plunder Cimbrinsula and was an embarrassment to the villagers' ancestors, but the heroic attempt earned Alfgeir's name such recognition that he is the only hero from the village whose name lives on to this day (Thorgrim was from Sweden and only used this fjord as a raiding base).

Evidently, several hundred years ago, a warrior named Alfgeir who owned a longship called for others in the village to sail for Cimbrinsula and loot its sea-side settlements. At first, most villagers laughed at him and recounted stories they had heard when raiding Irish and British shores that Cimbrinsula had sunk years ago. But Alfgeir met this argument with logic which persuaded a shipload of warriors, close to thirty in all, to accept his invitation. Alfgeir claimed that it was impossible for an island to simply sink and assured the villagers that it was a story started by Cimbrinsulans to keep intruders away from its defenseless shores.

The godi, or shaman, of the village (his name is now forgotten) reported dire omens and warned Alfgeir from his quest, but confident and leading a contingent of thirty warriors, Alfgeir could not be dissuaded.

The ship set sail after everyone enjoyed a feast financed by Alfgeir, but months later, news of a great, and predicted, tragedy came to the village by way of one of the Vikings who accompanied Alfgeir. He claimed to be the sole survivor of the wreck of the ship, and reported that the ship did not even reach the Skagerrak before disaster struck. After the wreck, he accepted a position on board another Viking ship and returned with some loot from raids on the English coast.

If the characters ask for a more specific location of the wreck, Olaf confidently reports that it occurred in the waters on the east side of the northern tip of Jutland, just shy of the Skagerrak.

The Barrow Wight

A famous warrior chief in the time of the Vikings, Thorgrim was buried under a large mound called a barrow. Norse legends are filled with stories of such warriors, who continued to live in their mounds after death, waiting there until the time of Ragnarok, when their sword would again be needed. Thorgrim was

Before the Ritual

Once Reynolds is told where to find the Viking ship, he shows the characters the ancient spell which Marlowe gave him. He opens a metal trunk and returns with a thick text, opens the vellum scroll, and displays it proudly to the characters. In an ancient version of Latin a spell is written, *Incantation of Summoning the Vessel to Sail Again*. Any magus with a *Rego + Mentem + Mercurian Magic Theory* roll of 12+ will understand the ritual, as Reynolds explains that it was originally used by the *Cult of Mercury* to recall Roman ships which had sunk to return to serve with the navy. Because the men aboard the ship were ghosts, they could do little to actually affect the enemy, except in rare cases when the ghosts had gained supernatural powers. When enemy vessels pulled within sight of these ghostly vessels, they terrified the opponents of the Empire and also bolstered the apparent size of the Empire's fleets when enemies spied from afar. Reynolds hopes that the owner of the longship might be tricked into continuing his quest, once he is raised from the dead. If not, he speculates, some sort of spirit coercion could probably be used.

Performing the Ritual

The characters will have little trouble finding the spot which Olaf described as the location of the sunken longship. By using the text of the scroll, a group of three magi will be able to automatically cast the ritual, though they may well be knocked unconscious as a result (Stm rolls of 7+ to avoid passing out).

The logical place to perform the ritual is on a fifty foot high cliff which overlooks the area of water where the ship supposedly sank. The characters may wish to verify that the ship is actually down there before the ritual is cast. A spontaneous InHe of Lv 15 will locate the wooden hull over one hundred feet down. Alternately, the use of the MuAq spell *Lungs of the Fish* may be cast on a grog or companion who will swim down to check it out first-hand. Precautions against the freezing cold water should

be taken as well. In this latter case, it is best not to let the character observe the kraken (see below) or else a powerful opponent will be killed too easily. The eggs (also see below) may be seen with a Per roll of 9+.

Nothing will happen immediately after the magi complete the complex ritual, though the lead magus will have to remain in intense concentration. The frozen water will remain relatively smooth. Within a few moments, ask for Per rolls. With a 6+ (modified by personality traits such as patience), the characters will see a large shadow rising to the surface. A minute later, a Viking longship bursts to the surface.

Suspension in the cold water kept the vessel largely intact — there are no apparent holes in the hull and the keel looks strong. What must have certainly been a proud dragon's head at the top of the prow has suffered the most. A few long fangs can yet be discerned, but otherwise the prow ends as an oblong chunk of wood. The longship is over sixty feet long and a mast of about thirty feet still stands near the center; however, the mast is broken and will collapse within a few seconds of losing the buoyant support of the water. Little remains of the sail; small shredded pieces hang from a pole supported by the mast.

A number of large-boned skeletons, the Viking crew of centuries ago, dressed in tattered

furs and discolored armor, lie in pools of water which have gathered on the floor of the longship. Many of them grasp rusted swords and axes.

After the longship bobs in the water and the mast collapses, the characters may also (Per 14+) see a number of large, greenish eggs towards the front of the vessel. The eggs are easily over two feet wide and three feet long. These eggs could someday hatch the descendants of the gigantic kraken which quickly ended the voyage of this longship centuries ago. One of the descendants, the mother of the eggs, was resting near her charges in the depths of the frozen water and she will not rest until she regains the eggs.



Fighting the Kraken

The kraken is attacking simply because its nest has been disturbed and in its agitated mood, it will attack any moving thing it can see. Because of the kraken's phenomenal eye-sight, it can see potential targets wherever they may be hiding and grab them. Also, because of its immense size and reach, characters on top of the cliff are not safe from it.

There is one very simple way to end the threat of the kraken — drop its eggs over the side of the Viking longship. The kraken will immediately plunge after them and carry them to a safe spot. There are three eggs, but the kraken (not a particularly intelligent beast) will be content to regain two of them. What a magus can do with the third (or all three if the characters simply defeat the beast) is your decision. Even if they have no use for them themselves, they could sell them to another magi (if they are still in good shape) for 15 pawns of *vis*.

Going Viking

While the battle against the kraken is being waged, the Vikings on the longship will slowly "awaken." Most will stand confused, but a few will grab their weapons and attack the kraken. Their blows will accomplish little, but if the characters are being hard pressed, the kraken might use some of its tentacles to try to grab the Vikings (except the owner, who must be around to show the way to Cimbrinsula).

Once the kraken has been defeated, one large Viking will call thanks to the characters for assisting the battle against the "sea serpent." Unless one of the characters somehow has the ability to communicate in the Vikings' tongue, an InMe spell is appropriate here.

It should be obvious to the characters that the Vikings have confused "now" and "then," and apparently do not realize that they have rested at the bottom of the ocean for hundreds of years. The members of the crew certainly do not realize that they are dead, and will bellow with laughter at the suggestion that there is no flesh on their bodies. Though the captain has never been to Cimbrinsula, he has heard many stories about it and knows just how to get there, he is sure of it. The captain says he is prepared to continue his voyage and, if asked, will gladly accept the characters aboard if they will do their share of rowing (for some members of the crew were obviously taken down by the sea serpent, or how else can he explain their sudden disappearance?). However, he does not want another ship following his (it would slow him down and "interfere with the raiding"), and will try to lose any ship that attempts to do so.

The Kraken

Magic Might 15*

Size +10 **Int** -2 **Brave** +5

Tentacles: 1st 0 **Atk** +6** **Dam** +5

Beak: 1st 0 **Atk** auto **Dam** +20
 Fat n/a **Def** *** **Soak** ***

Body Levels: OK, blind, dead

* vs. Aquam and Auram magic only

** can only be dodged

*** see description below

Abilities: _____

Scan 10

Vis: _____

The kraken's body contains a total of 8 pawns of Aquam *vis*.

Description: _____

A kraken is a huge magical beast which combines aspects of a squid and octopus. They grow anywhere up to over 300 feet long, and this one is almost 200 feet in length. It uses its eight thick tentacles to grab man-sized targets, which it slowly draws underwater and toward its beak to consume. The beast is so immense that most attacks from normal weapons will not harm it. You may rule that enough powerful attacks (especially if inflicted by magic) will disable a tentacle. However, this should not be an option for defeating the beast.

The only way to kill the beast is to strike it at least twice in one of its eyes. The eye can only be targeted by a victim who is being drawn towards the kraken's beak, and even then, only a weapon which requires a space of at least 2' (see *Ars Magica*, p.58) can reach the eye (throwing a weapon underwater is basically impossible). The first successful attack roll of 10+ blinds the creature so it cannot grab more victims. This also sends the beast into a wild fury of pain and its tentacles convulse (Dam +10) before they loosen for a moment (any victim currently in its clutches who makes a Str roll of 9+ can escape). A second hit of the eye penetrates the soft head of the beast and kills it.

While this may seem relatively simple, there is the problem of drowning before the beast decides it wishes to devour you. After a victim is captured in a tentacle, they will be crushed for +5 damage every round. The round after a victim is caught, they are pulled underwater. One to ten rounds later, and not during the same round as another character, the kraken will draw each victim to its beak. Every round victims are underwater, they must make a Stm roll of 8+ or lose a fatigue level (and thereafter a body level). If the victim is unconscious or dead when the kraken draws it near, so much the better for the beast.

Beneath the Waves



After months of wandering across countless different lands, William was happy for the rest he gained on board the Viking longship. It was not easy at first since the captain of the ship expected everyone to help with the rowing. But when the Viking saw how inept they all were, except Alcott, who was even now pulling his weight with an oar, he allowed them to simply enjoy the trip.

Of course there were some troubles. The captain tried to stop on the northern coast of France to do some looting, and later a contingent of the Cinque Ports' warships had surrounded them, but now the longship finally broke away from the shore it had hugged during the entire trip and made for open sea, and the spot where Cimbrinsula once floated on the waves.

"We should see the island soon," roared the Viking captain. Dozens of oars rose and fell more quickly as the anticipation of pillage filled the minds of the Vikings.

William was tense. A few days ago he heard Tiberius, Alcott, and Torlen discussing what might happen when the Vikings didn't find Cimbrinsula when and where they expected to. Tiberius had seemed a little too concerned for William's taste.

"The rumors of the high hills of Cimbrinsula are proven false, my friends," shouted the captain while scanning the horizon.

The longship continued to cut across the water under the direction of the captain. The large Viking was becoming obviously anxious and even took a few men off the oars to scan the waters. Alcott dropped his oar and pretended to look around as well.

After a few minutes of searching, the owner called for a complete stop. He then checked the sun and some archaic directional devices which William didn't recognize, to make sure the ship was headed in the correct direction.

"We should be able to see it by now," said the Viking.

William saw Tiberius nod to Torlen and the grog captain rounded up all of the covenfolk. Hiding behind Alcott, Tiberius performed some magic and William felt a warmth rush over him.

The Viking captain was growing even more irritated now. "I'm sure that these are right, by Odin's beard we should be on top of the island right now."

Then Tiberius stepped from the rear of the group and said to the Vikings. "Thank you for your transporting us to Cimbrinsula. It is beneath us now."

William, looking into the clear water, saw what Tiberius was looking at. Beneath them, far in the depths, was an enormous underwater city in ruins, inhabited by a myriad of colorful fish. Moving up towards the ship he saw what looked to be some larger fish with enormous fins, until he saw their faces and blond hair...

With the Vikings

Due to the navigational skills of the captain, the boat hugs the shore as much as possible for the entire trip to Cimbrinsula. Therefore, the trip will take at least a month, if not more. Also, the ship will not be able to go very far unless the mast is repaired — which can be done by a spontaneous Herbam spell (level 15 or so, perhaps necessitating the use of raw *vis*).

The characters will face a few anxious moments during the trip to Cimbrinsula. First, the

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Vikings will be sorely tempted to pillage a small seaside village they spy while sailing on the northern coast of France. As an attack like this could delay the journey to Cimbrinsula by several days, the characters will probably try to convince the Vikings that Cimbrinsula will offer much more, so they must hasten to it. A combination of roleplaying and a Subterfuge roll of 10+ will convince the Vikings to forgo this raid. However, play up their desire to go on a raid as much as possible and make it exceedingly difficult for the characters to convince them otherwise.

If the Vikings do attack the village, the frightened French will certainly flee from the ghostly apparitions which descend upon them. The Vikings, of course, will attribute this reaction to their fearsome prowess. They then loot and burn the village, and carry as many valuables as they can back to the ship — news of this raid is certain to send a panic throughout the region, perhaps all of France, as fears of a renewed Dark Age emerge. The characters may well hear of it later on subsequent journeys.

The other touchy confrontation comes when the longship crosses the English Channel and rounds the Isle of Wight. After they spot the longship from a distance, a trio of warships from the Cinque Ports (five British ports which supplied ships to the King of England) descend upon the longship and attempt to pursue it. It is doubtful the Viking ship can escape, considering the shape it is in, and soon it will be surrounded by the British cogs.

As the warships close and the crews see more clearly the aspect of the Vikings, morale will begin to break. However, fierce leaders will keep the sailors under control and the warships will hold their ground. If the Vikings attacked the French village, then word of that attack which spread to the fleet commanders will force an attack on the longship. The Vikings will be in no danger from such an attack, but the characters could easily be injured. Plus, if the longship is sunk, then the sole means of finding Cimbrinsula is lost. If no attack was made on the village, the ships will simply want to question the

longship to ensure that they are not Iberian and are not smugglers. Once they see the corpses of the Vikings, however, it be very difficult to persuade them of any degree of innocence.

At any point during this encounter, a visually powerful spell from a magus will crack the sailors' morale and force the retreat of the warships. A visually powerful spell includes any spell with any obvious magical effect. Any MuCo spell would do the trick, as would spells such as *Talons of the Winds*, as long as its effects can be witnessed by all.



Over Cimbrinsula

Eventually, the Viking captain will direct the longship to the spot where Cimbrinsula once stood. As the longship nears the area, the captain commands that the sail be taken down so the ship cannot be easily spotted and night can arrive before the attack. Then he will have everyone make battle preparations (which can be very complicated and involve calling upon the gods for favor in battle, and certainly includes the sharpening of weapons). They then muffle the oars by putting leather or cloth around the oarlocks and set underway for the night beaching, yet the beach never comes. The captain will be very confused when he is unable to find the island and will direct the

longship in ever-widening sweeps to locate the island. When he cannot spot the sails of the ships which must certainly sail around Cimbrinsula, he will begin to doubt the stories of his forefathers, of the tales he had heard of those who had ventured to Cimbrinsula. The stories were quite clear and very specific, and he cannot understand why the island is not where it should be.

However, the Viking does correctly direct the ship to a spot above Cimbrinsula, about half-way between Angelsey and the Irish coast. The characters should act at this time, before the longship begins its sweep of surrounding waters. Otherwise, the characters may be taken too far away from the sunken island to be able to find it.

Fortunately, all they need to do is wait until dawn, look into the water, and they will see the city beneath them through the crystal clear water. However, do not describe anything of what is below until a player announces, "I am looking into the water."

It is deathly still beneath the waves, and underneath them, through the clear water, the characters can see the remains of a complex society spread out before them on the ocean floor. Large buildings in various stages of decay stand everywhere, as lasting reminders of the quality of the civilization which the Kymry sacrificed to avoid the persecution of some of the Gaelic warriors. There are enormous stone cairns and many crushed altars.

Though there are some fish that swim in these waters, they seem to only add to the sense of serenity and stillness. Almost the only motion is that of the tendrils of sea plants which litter the floor and the sides of the buildings. Cimbrinsula may not be the spectacular sight of swirling and glorious colors which the characters (and players) expected, but some of the fun of roleplaying comes from preying on such expectations.

Out of this peace and tranquility (which you should describe in as much detail as possible) the characters begin to see something else — a war. Far beneath them, those with good eyes will notice two groups of Merfolk (human torsos, with fins instead of legs) fighting it out with tridents, spears, and nets.

The Merfolk

The Merfolk are a barbaric race of sea faeries (or so they are considered by the Order) who have moved into the structures of Cimbrinsula which survived the sinking centuries ago. There are two tribes of Merfolk and they battle each other continually. War is the only constant in their underwater "paradise." One tribe lives in the cave on the "hills" to the north of the city, while the other lives in the city itself. Almost daily, they send warriors out to meet their enemies, usually in the water over the great altar. After meeting near the arch over the sacrificial pit, the two groups spend at least an hour maneuvering to gain advantage. The most basic strategy of their battles is to get above their enemies and then drop large, weighted nets on top of them. Thus, the battle usually begins near the surface of the water, with the Merfolk actually leaping out of the water to gain momentum for their "charges," allowing them to throw nets through the air a distance away so as to catch an enemy unaware (an action impossible in the water).

When the characters first see the Merfolk, they will gradually see the two groups maneuvering up towards them. Eventually, they will be directly below the ship and in plain sight of the crew. The warriors actually use the bulk of the ship to shield them from their opponents getting above them, so the battle gets underway as a

turmoil of action and blood directly beneath and around the ship. Describe this in vivid detail, giving clues as to the differences between the two sides, so that the characters have something they can think about to help them decide what to do.

The characters' first chance to contact one of these Merfolk is when one is wounded and floats to the surface of the water near the boat. If they fish him out of the water and onto the boat, and then tend his wounds, he will be able to talk to them. From him they can learn the situation beneath the waves, but cannot discover why there is a battle going on (it's been going on so long, that its origins have been forgotten, perhaps they are as old as the sinking of Cimbrinsula itself). He relates to them that he is only newly adult and that this combat is his rite of passage. If they demonstrate magic, he will beg them to help his people and will offer them nearly anything if they are able to win the day for them. He is from the hill people, and they are more "rough" and "uncivilized" than the city tribe (like Herrick in relation to the Order). They are noble and proud, though they are less organized. Helping them will be difficult but can reap great rewards.

From their ship, the characters may well be able to gain the support of one of the groups by aiding them in the battle, but which side should they help? Somehow, they need to figure out which group is more virtuous, and which is more likely to be able to aid them. It is not suggested that the characters actually get in the water, as they would be sitting ducks for the fierce Merfolk. The characters need to pick a side, help them in the fight, and communicate with these new Cimbrinsulans, convincing them to help find the magical urns.

The Urns

After a substantial amount of negotiation, the Merfolk eventually manage to find and enter the caves which contain the magical urns and remove them. If the characters have allied with the tribe who makes their home in the hills, this will be very easy, otherwise the city tribe will have to make a concerted attack on the caves. The etchings on these urns have trapped part of the essence of the creatures which the druids used during *The Tempest*, and therefore allow Herrick to control the creatures again when his *Reanimation Ritual* is complete. After great difficulty, they are able to bring one to the surface of the water, near the boat, for the inspection of the magi. If it is the correct urn, they will bring the others up as well (necessitating another battle, if the characters are allied with the city tribe).

All that the characters have to do is deface the drawings on the urns so they no longer resemble the creatures Herrick is reanimating. The glowing etchings on the nine bronze urns depict the following beasts: a pair of griffins,

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a manticore, a basilisk, a large bear, a wolf, a lion, a boar, and a large serpent. The characters may wish to take a moment to count their blessings.

How to Run It

There are several ways you can play the underwater search through Cimbrinsula for the magical urns. It can be either long or short, depending on how intrigued you are by Cimbrinsula. Like everything else in this wide ranging supplement, it is going to take work on your part to make it detailed enough to be worth running. Add whatever detail you prefer, and then go with it. It can take the players only an hour of roleplaying, or you can make it last a years worth of sessions.

Merfolk

Magic Might 12 Size 0 Brave +4

Int +1	Str +1	Dex +2
Per +4 (underwater)	Stm +3	Qik +3

Trident: 1st +10 Atk +5 Dam +14

Spear: 1st +11 Atk +7 Dam +8

Net: 1st +2 Atk +5* Dam n/a (victim becomes entangled in the net and a Dex roll of 9+ is needed to become disentangled)

Fat n/a Def +2 Soak +26

Body Levels: body=OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

* Add +3 to the Atk roll when the Merfolk cast it from above the water.

Description:

The Merfolk are a race of aquatic faeries. Being similar anatomically to humans in many ways, they differ from the waist down, where the presence of a fish-like tail becomes apparent. Merfolk breathe water like a fish, having gills located just behind the jawline.

The Merfolk society is barbaric, with warfare between the different tribes a part of everyday life. They have a patriarchal hierarchy and a young Merfolk does not become a man until he has made his first kill.

Merfolk fight with all sorts of thrusting weapons, with the spear and trident being the most prevalent. They also make use of nets, using them to capture enemies alive, so they can be sacrificed later.

Each Merfolk's body contains 3 points of Aquam vis.

The Whale

Floating motionless in the waters above Cimbrinsula, the characters will see a gigantic whale (over 300' long). The huge creature will seem not to notice the characters no matter how close they draw or even if they touch him. The Merfolk treat him with the utmost in respect and reverence and will not allow him to be disturbed.

This whale is a magical beast which has come to Cimbrinsula to die after being harpooned by Lapps in the Arctic. Immediately after being injured, he realized that the wounds he had suffered were fatal. He has the barest spark of life left within him and can communicate with a magus if an appropriate spell is cast. Because the whale is a powerfully magical beast, his mind is not that of an animal. InMe spells must be used to communicate with him. He can speak, albeit softly, because of his condition.

If the characters do manage to communicate with the whale, he will discuss the philosophy which led him here. The theme of the whale's philosophy is at the heart of the characters' struggle with Herrick, and while the whale does not provide any information which may help the characters, he is at least a point of discussion for the players.

The whale will explain that he had a choice after the attack of the Lapps ("men") — he could either swim to Cimbrinsula which he had decided years ago would be his grave, or he could have attacked and destroyed the men who had injured him. The latter option appealed to him greatly, but then he reasoned that if he expended the last energy he had to capsize the boats of the men, he would never make it to Cimbrinsula, and the last moments of his life would be spent performing acts which were contrary to the tenets of his entire life. "How can punishing one's self truly harm anyone else?" he will ask of the characters. He can give the characters help in deciding which tribe to aid, ultimately he says they should help the hill tribe, for they are still noble in spirit and have not forgotten themselves and their honor in the birth of organization and advancement.

At your discretion, this noble creature may have other secrets of value to the characters. If they are considerate of him, he will share secrets of his life in the depths, and if he feels they are worthy, some of the enigmatic wisdom of his race. Once he dies, the Merfolk conduct a complicated ceremony, in which both sides participate equally, and then they proceed into ritual combat with scores of warriors on each side. After a long battle, which the characters may participate in (though they had better not get in the water, they would get skewered fast) the winners gain the right to the corpse. If the "friendly side" wins, they offer the whale's heart to the magi, though the wizards will probably not want to eat it, as it's worth 10 pawns of Mentem vis. Many whales come to Cimbrinsula to die and they are a major source of food for the Merfolk.

Herrick's Assault



Grimgroth sat in his chambers, high in one of the towers of the covenant. The news of five days ago had eased the worries of the Arch-Mage substantially. Examinations of the blood-colored fields around the covenant seemed to confirm the report of Alexander Tiberius. The process seemed to have stopped. But he was still concerned — the magical aura still wasn't returning.

There was a slight knock at the door. The hesitant voice of one of the servants asked, "Master Grimgroth, there is a peasant outside who wishes to speak with you."

"Yes?" Grimgroth prompted softly.

"He says that something odd has happened to one of his roosters and he's curious if you could help."

Grimgroth wasn't in the mood for such matters, but decided that such a diversion might soothe his mind. "I'll be down shortly."

A few moments later, Grimgroth exited the covenant proper. He immediately saw the peasant in question. The crooked old man was arguing with Torlen, the sergeant of the guard.

The peasant cried, "No, I will only let a mystical man see my rooster."

Torlen was going to press the matter, but he backed away when Grimgroth arrived. As he drew near the peasant, he felt an odd sense of familiarity. Nevertheless, he simply asked, "How can I help you sir?"

"Oh, great magus, please just look at what I have here."

Then two things happened at once. A cry went up from the watch and Grimgroth caught a glimpse of scales on the back of the creature the peasant was revealing.

With a spontaneous motion, Grimgroth disappeared, invisible to the sight of all, especially the rooster.

The cockatrice which the peasant revealed looked quickly about for a victim.

In horror, Grimgroth realized his error. The cockatrice looked directly through him and slew Torlen on the spot.

Time of the Attack

Herrick will make his final assault on the covenant when one of two circumstances is met. Of course, he hopes that his **Reanimation Ritual** is successful and its completion is one of the events which will spring his attack. The druid will hide near the covenant until the moment the mantichore and the other beasts spring from the ground, and then he will direct his other slaves to attack as well.

The only thing which could force Herrick to attack before the ritual completes its cycle is if he senses that his control of the reanimating beasts is somehow lost (such as when the drawings of the beasts on the bronze urns are destroyed). He does not believe it possible that the characters could find Cimbrinsula and will be very confused, but once he loses control, he will

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hurry up, finish all his preparations, and attack within the week. Of course, if the characters who travel to Cimbrinsula wait to deface the urns, they will be able to take part in the battle, otherwise they will certainly miss it.

Battleground

The description of Herrick's final assault in this section assumes that the characters made it to Cimbrinsula and destroyed the urns. If this is not the case, then you will have to alter how this scene is run. Specifically, instead of using trickery, Herrick will outright assault the covenant, expecting that the magical beasts will be too much to handle. Prepare more beasts for the attack and use them to completely overwhelm the covenant. The best that the characters can probably do is hold off the attackers long enough to pack up the covenant's most valuable items and run for it.

The Attack

In order to gain entrance to the covenant, especially if it is surrounded by a wall, Herrick will disguise himself with tattered clothing and illusions to appear as a poor peasant. With a rooster in his hands, the "peasant" will ask to see one of the "mystics" of the covenant. There is something wrong with his rooster which he thinks will interest a magus. The rooster is actually a cockatrice which Herrick controls by virtue of the paintings he found in the limestone caves on the coast of Spain. When a magus comes to look at Herrick's rooster, and the "peasant" will let none but a magus inspect it, the druid will ask the magus to "look at this" and hold the creature out. The cockatrice gets to look at the magus point blank.

Immediately thereafter, a griffon which has been circling high in the sky (any covenant guards may attempt a Per roll of 14+ to see it) dives to support Herrick's surprise attack. The final part of the attack force, a twelve-headed hydra, rushes from any hiding place near the covenant to attack as well. Herrick will cast Perdo Herbam or Terram spells on the gates or walls of the covenant to allow the hydra to enter the fray, if such were closed by guards when the attack begins.

Running the Finale

This battle is the finale to a campaign which should have stretched through years of the characters' lives. As such, it should be treated very differently than a "normal" roleplaying encounter.

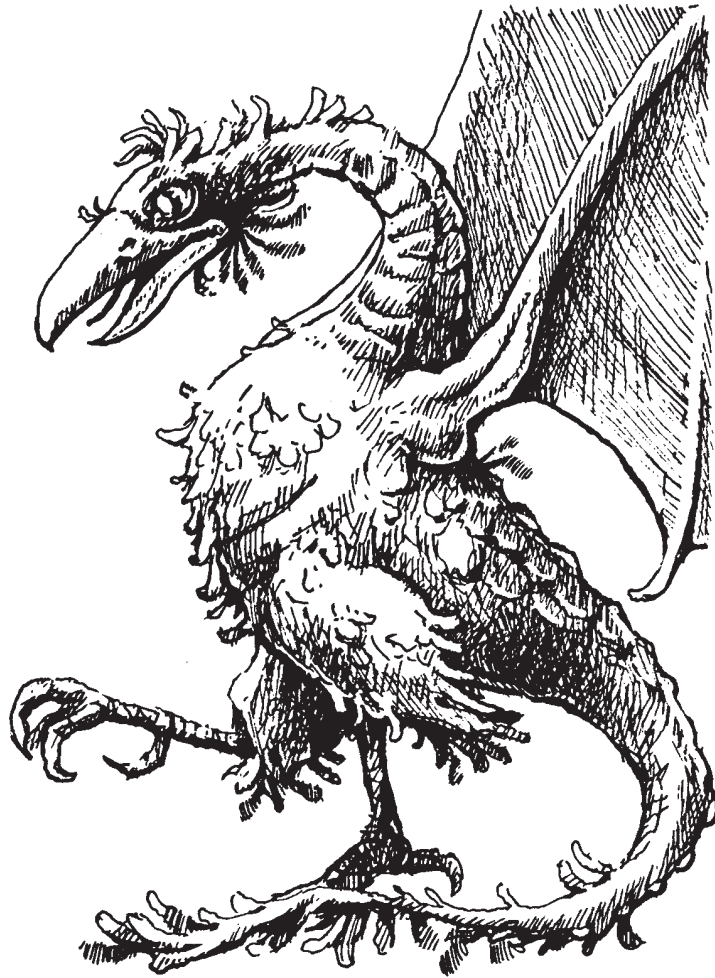
This is the break of tension the characters and players have been looking forward to ever since they discovered how the many events of this campaign fit together. Herrick is probably the most determined and relentless enemy they have ever faced. That this scene is the conclusion to perhaps a decade or more of action is explanation enough.

The characters should not waltz through this battle with ease. After all, when, and if, the characters defeat Herrick and the magical beasts who assist him, they will have transformed their growing Summer covenant into a powerful force within the Order of Hermes; they will have achieved Autumn. This battle is being fought within their walls and any damage being done is to things that belong to them and which may be irreplaceable. If they lose, everything will be destroyed, and the covenant will be no more. The stakes could not be higher.

Herrick is a powerful wizard who can cast extremely potent spontaneous magic spells, and these spells do not fatigue him as they do members of the Order of Hermes (See Herrick's character sheet, page 13). Let the encounter flow and revolve around the conflict with the cockatrice, griffin, and hydra but, always remember, and the characters would do well to keep this in mind as well, Herrick is the mastermind. Utilize his spontaneous spells as best fits the situation — in ways which disrupt what the characters are attempting and therefore cannot be predicted in this supplement. For example, if they get torches to scorch a neck of the hydra after a head has been chopped off, Herrick will cast Pelg or CrAq spells to ruin their chances.

Covenfolk (the weavers, blacksmiths, stableboys, etc.), who have been introduced during the course of your Saga, will be in jeopardy for the first time. Some of them will certainly be killed by the rampaging beasts. These deaths and other losses will temper the gains that the characters will make, and they serve as poignant reminders of the price which must sometimes be paid to achieve victory. Unleash your best storytelling skills here. This must definitely be more than just another brawl.

If the battle continues for more than ten rounds, then Marlowe will arrive on the scene, having considered his own life worthless if the druid is able to succeed in his "evil plot." He will use his last moments of life to destroy Herrick and thus remove him from the battle. You will want to describe their duel in as much detail as possible, it will last at least five rounds, and Marlowe may not succeed. Regardless of the results, the monsters will continue to attack until there is nothing standing on the spot of the covenant. If Herrick survives, he will gather the beasts around him, wait until the injured ones are healed, and move on to attack another covenant. Until he is stopped, Herrick will attack and destroy as many covenants as he possibly can.



Cockatrice

Magic Might 15*

Size -3 Cun -2

Merciful -4

Beak: 1st +5 Atk +3 Dam +1

Fat +2 Def +9 Soak -2

Body Levels: OK, 0, -1, -3, Incapacitated

* doubled for penetration rolls when determining the effectiveness of Death Glance

Powers:

Death Glance, PeCo 30/PeAn 30/PeHe 30, 1 magic point — the cockatrice's glance is deadly when it wishes and it can slay any living thing. If the target is a person or animal, it does not have to meet the look of the cockatrice. The only requirement is that the cockatrice see the victim. The target must make a Stm roll of 10+ or die.

Description:

The cockatrice looks like a large rooster, but it is more brightly colored and its slitted, snake-like eyes belie its malicious nature. Also, while most of its body is feathered, certain portions, especially the back and parts of the neck, are scaled like a lizard.

Its feathers are worth 10 Perdo *vis*.



12-headed Hydra

Magic Might 40

Size +7 (or more) Cun +1

Patient +3

Bite: 1st +5 Atk +8 Dam +16*

Fat +8 Def 0/+9** Soak +40/+5**

Body Levels: body= OK, 0/0/0, -1/-1/-1, -3/-3/-3, -5/-5, Incapacitated

head= OK, 0, dead or cut-off

* plus poison, Stm roll of 8+ or lose a body level, one fatigue level lost even if successful

** body/head

Powers:

Instant Regeneration, CrAn 40, no cost — whenever one of the hydra's heads is sliced off of its body, two more heads regrow in that spot at the end of the current round. These heads are just as powerful as the first. The hydra's body only has room for 30 heads; after this number has been reached, none will regenerate until more have been cut from the body. There are two ways to circumvent this awesome power. First, if flame is applied to the stub of the neck before the end of the current round, no heads will regrow. Also, if blunt weapons (clubs, maces, etc.) are used to kill the heads, then no heads will regrow, simply because these weapons are incapable of decapitating the beast. However, such "dead weight" is shed by the hydra about an hour after the head has been slain, and then two more heads are regrown.

Description:

The hydra is a huge, multi-headed serpent which knows how to take complete advantage of its powers. When fighting an opponent armed with a bladed weapon, the hydra can be very patient in its attack and let the opponent serve its own purposes by slashing off a few heads.

When fighting the hydra, a combatant may elect to attack either a head or the body of the beast. If the combatant is in front of the hydra, then he may only attack a head.

The hydra's body contains 30 Creo *vis*.

Griffin

Magic Might 30*

Size +4 Cun 0

Per +6 Stm +9

Brave +6

Claw: 1st +6 Atk +7 Dam +28

Fat n/a Def +2 Soak +26

Body Levels: body= OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5/-5, Incapacitated

* Double Magic Resistance against spells that counter strength, bravery, hunting prowess, etc.

Description: _____

The griffin has a lion's body in the back and an eagle's in the front. It attacks with its talons, reserving its beak for tearing the flesh off its prey and for emergency use. Although ferocious when threatened or hungry, it is not entirely malicious.

The griffin embodies the virtues of might, bravery, and hunting prowess. It gets double its normal Magic Might when resisting spells that would directly counter these strengths, such as spells to cripple or calm it.

Its heart is worth 18 *Animál vis*.

Just Rewards

If the characters manage to defend their covenant from the plans and final assault of the druid Herrick, they must be prepared for new challenges which will come in the near future. Several immediate rewards will be reaped, but because the covenant will have gained such immense power during these years, other, perhaps more established covenants will look upon the characters as upstarts and deal with them appropriately.

If the characters managed to reach Cimbrinsula and stop the **Reanimation Ritual** before it completed its cycle, then the powerful magical energies at work will seep back into the ground and not only return the magical aura to the covenant, but also heighten it (regardless of how much *Animál vis* the characters collected). The new aura will be twice what it was originally.

Also, the magus Marlowe will ask for assistance in escaping the cave which he has dwelt in for so long. He seeks to return to the life of a magus of the Order of Hermes. The longevity potion he must create may take some extremely rare components which could lead to other adventures for the characters, but when Marlowe moves to the covenant, he will take his library with him. A library like his would be the envy of any covenant — perhaps even Doissetep.

The Tempest

Appendix One: New Spells



Animál (Muto)

Claws of the Razor's Edge: Lv 10

Near, Sun.

This spell is very similar to the Lv 5 MuTe spell *Edge of the Razor*. However, *Claws of the Razor's Edge* affects the natural weaponry of any sort of beast. Claws, fangs, spiked tails, etc., all become much sharper and stronger. Damage caused is +2.

With a *Córporem* requisite, this spell could even be used on a human. Fingernails would become longer and sharper, or teeth would become pointed.

Vim (Creo)

Spell Aegis: Lv 50

Sight, Spec., Ritual

This powerful ritual was once used by a few groups of magi of the ancient world (notably some sects of Rome's Cult of Mercury), but it has been lost for several centuries. The ritual actually creates magical energy which can be used to bolster the innate energies of another spell, so that the spell becomes more difficult to resist or cancel (the magus chooses which at the time of casting) with spells such as *Wind of Mundane Silence*. Originally, the spell was designed only to strengthen a spell and protect it from cancellation (thus the spell's name), but soon after the formation of the Order of Hermes and the advent of *Parma Magica*, magi within the Cult of Mercury developed the means to aid spell penetration.

This ritual and the ritual of *Watching Ward* may be coordinated into one ceremony so that *Spell Aegis* will be activated when the magus casts a certain spell. For example, a magus wishes his Lv 30 MuMe *Mind of the Beast* to be very effective, so he uses raw *vis* to extend its duration and because he earlier performed *Watching Ward* and *Spell Aegis* to activate when he cast the MuMe spell, a *Spell Aegis* joins its power with *Mind of the Beast* to make it much more difficult to resist (if cast on another magus) or cancel (if cast on a companion, so a magus friend cannot easily dispel it). Note that the *Watching Ward* of one magus cannot put the *Spell Aegis* of another magus in suspension; one caster must perform *Watching Ward*, *Spell Aegis*, and cast the final spell (e.g. *Mind of the Beast*). Also, note that the *Watching Ward* must be of a higher level than the final spell.

The extra power of *Spell Aegis* is easy to compute: it's simply the CrVi score of the caster. Half of this total is added to the penetration score if a magus uses *Spell Aegis* to reduce another's chance of resisting the spell, but the full total is added to the effective level of the final spell if used for the designed purpose of shielding another spell from cancellation.

If a member of the Order of Hermes skilled in Vim could put his hands on this spell, he could doubtlessly create several CrVi variant spells which use the same concepts of energy creation, though channeled in a different manner.

Appendix Two:

New Magic

Faerie Stone

This egg-sized stone was enchanted long ago by a group of faeries for an unknown purpose. However, it is suspected that it was part of a practical joke on a band of thick-headed and morose dwarves who were mining a hillside. Little did the faeries know that their frivolous project had destructive powers as well.

When used as intended, the stone has the very interesting power of doubling the size of any vein of precious metal which it is brought into contact with. However, a frustrating side effect is that 10-100 (simple die) hours later, any of the metal which remains unmined simply vanishes, even the metal that was there before the stone worked its magic.

Because of the great Terram powers which the stone generates, it also has some very interesting effects if swallowed.

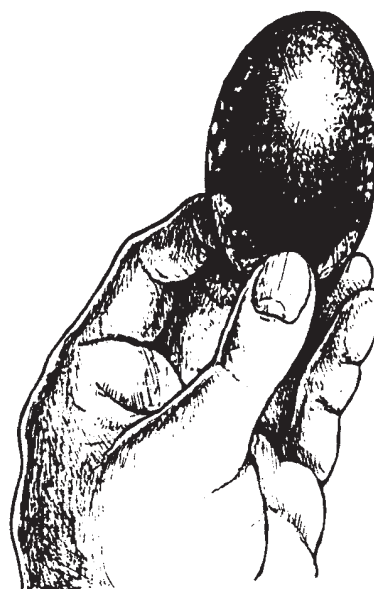
Shortly after being swallowed, the stone begins to work in a vile way. It slowly burrows its way to the heart of the creature which swallowed it and soon enters the heart itself. The stone then embarks upon the often long task of converting the heart and all the veins of the body into stone. This new circulatory system is only able to sustain the life of the victim with Terram magic from the stone itself.

Once this change has been made, the stone slowly begins to convert the entire body of the victim into stone. Depending on the size and Magical Might of the victim, this process can take anywhere from a week (if a dog swallowed it) to a couple hundred years (a dragon).

While the victim will never actually die from this conversion, even when it is complete because the powers of the stone provide enough energy to live, other changes take place. Growth is slowed, intellect is diminished (-3 to Int), and the senses of touch, taste, and smell are destroyed.

However, a couple benefits are gained as well. Because the victim inherits the strength of stone, his Str and Soak scores increase. Strength is doubled and soak is increased by 20. These are the bonuses gained when the entire process is complete. Fractional bonuses are gained as the change progresses.

(Precious metal: 20, penalties if swallowed: 30, bonuses if swallowed: 35)



Appendix Three:

Hermetic Lore

These excerpts are taken from the Lion Rampant product, *The Order of Hermes*. Please see that product for additional information.

The Schism War

Just after the turn of the Millennium, open conflict broke out within the Order, a prolonged series of skirmishes, battles, and assassinations that have come to be known as the Schism War. It was a period of great destruction and growing rifts.

Some Houses and many powerful magi wanted to restrict the interaction among the Houses so that corruption in one House would not lead to the downfall of others. The corruption of House Tylalus was, no doubt, the main cause for this paranoia, but intrigue, competition, and skirmishing in general added to the atmosphere of distrust. Magi refused to attend Tribunals, or to agree on the decisions passed by Tribunals, saying that they were "influenced by Hell." Differences of opinion turned into frequent Wizard's Wars and raids, and some groups of unscrupulous magi took advantage of the confusion and began to simply raid covenants and ransack them for their treasures.

The confusion eventually led to a free-for-all and old feuds that had been quietly simmering for years were renewed. Sides shifted continually and the fighting took many lives. Some Houses retreated to avoid the violence, while others increased their violent activities to deter attackers or just to pursue personal grudges amid the chaos. Many covenants closed themselves off from the world and spent their energy increasing their defenses, and to this day a covenant in the Rhine Tribunal exists that refuses to believe the Schism War is over and have used the years to increase their defenses to ludicrous levels. The Quaesitoris lost effective power as the magi stopped obeying their orders, and it looked to most like the Order of Hermes was about to fall into total disorder. All that was required was one more wave of chaos and violence and it would follow the same path as did Rome 500 years before.

Then House Tremere declared open and total war on House Díedne. House Díedne, composed of descendants of the druids, had always been much removed from the other Houses, and it was generally distrusted. Tremere's Primus, Cercistum, called on House Flambeau to help rid the Order of these non-Latin troublemakers, and the Flambeau magi joined in the battle with relish. The Quaesitoris, seeing a chance to regain power by gaining the alliance of the two most powerful houses, backed House Tremere and declared House Díedne Renounced. Most of the other Houses retreated for safety, but many individual magi with grudges to settle joined the assault.

In the subsequent war, House Díedne was entirely eliminated, its covenants were destroyed and most of its members were put to the flames — but its leaders were never found. It was the most complete and widespread orgy of destruction the Order has ever known. Vast forests were burned, cities were completely razed, mountains were flattened and tremendous battles were waged across the country side. The magi of House Díedne used the magic in their own bodies in one enormous spell to strike back at their enemies before they died (a secret that perished with them). The leaders of the pogrom hoped that the far-reaching spells they had used had weakened all of House Díedne to the point where they would soon die, but many still suspect that the leaders of House Díedne had retreated into a faerie forest or escaped by ship into the sea. If that is the case, they might return at any time, bent on revenge.



With House Díedne destroyed, the Schism War was effectively over and order was slowly restored. The Quaesitoris with the new power they had gained with their powerful but satiated allies, insisted on settling all remaining conflicts peacefully. Most magi were eager to stop fighting once they had seen the incredible destruction that can result from war. Few magi missed House Díedne, but all were sobered by the fact that a House had been destroyed and no one had lifted a hand to prevent the injustice — it could happen again.

The fall of House Díedne was such a shock that within three years, the remaining magi settled their differences peaceably and soon the raids and the fighting were over. It may be that conflicts from those times remain unsettled in the minds of some, conflicts that could arise again should the Order fall once more into crisis, but the horror of the Schism War will never be forgotten.

House Díedne

House Díedne was destroyed during the Schism War, its last living members seen in the year A.D. 1012. They were descendents of the Celtic druids and had been a large, powerful, and highly secretive House based mainly in France and Spain, but with members and covenants everywhere. When the Schism War broke out and old hatreds were remembered, House Tremere turned against House Díedne. With the support of House Flambeau and the sanction of the Quaesitoris, House Tremere defeated House Díedne and slew all its members that they could find. The most powerful followers of Díedne, however, escaped and were never seen again. Legend says that they found their way to Faerieland, where they may be hiding still. Since one day in Faerieland is often a century in the mortal world, these enemies of the Order may come back any day, with battle and vengeance fresh in their minds. Another legend says that they managed to sail away upon a magical ship and sail the seas still — their ship manned with a crew of skeletons.

History

In looking for new ways to perform magic, Bonisagus talked with Díedne, a druid. From her he learned new ways for individual magi to cast small, fast spells. When the Order began, Díedne joined with all her sect, forming a large House, but they never participated fully in the Order.

They began as the only true House in the Order because the Latin magi were all individuals starting their own small Houses, but over the centuries the other Houses grew quickly. In the beginning of the eleventh century, problems plagued the Order. The execution of

the Tylalus Primus for diabolism caused fear among the Houses and old rivalries resurfaced. Always distant and secretive, House Díedne became the center of rumors and suspicion. When the Quaesitoris investigated all the Houses for diabolism, House Díedne objected and resisted, claiming a right to privacy.

Wizard's Wars and Wizards' Marches became common in this period, and not only against followers of Díedne. Chaos grew, violence increased, and finally outright war broke out. House Tremere, no longer willing to share the Order with those who flaunted it, organized an attack on House Díedne. The Quaesitoris, seeing the inevitable, backed the side they thought would win and declared all of House Díedne Renounced. In a long, bloody struggle, House Díedne was destroyed.

The leaders of the House, however, were never found. Perhaps they were killed in the confusion by the powerful, far-reaching spells of Houses Flambeau and Tremere, but perhaps they escaped to return another day. At first the remaining Hermetic magi were vigilant for the return of Llewellyn and other Díedne magi, but over the years the magi have turned their attention to more immediate concerns. Some magi of House Tremere are still vigilant and are prepared to begin the war anew when and if the remainder of House Díedne are ever found.

Magi of House Díedne

The specifics of the followers of Díedne are unknown. Having descended from druids, they specialized in nature-oriented magic. In addition, they excelled at spontaneous magic. Their ability to work formulaic spells, however, was highly limited. If they ever resurface, the magi of Díedne will probably attack the Order with elemental magic and hoards of magically-controlled animals. The fact that the Hermetic magi do not know exactly what these magi are actually capable of (especially after all these years) makes them even more frightening. The escaped members of House Díedne are the bogeymen in the nightmares of the Order's apprentices — and some of the magi as well.

House Flambeau

The followers of Flambeau revel in the violent use of fire and some of them also enjoy the more "subtle" use of destruction magic. Over the years, the Quaesitoris have taught this House to turn its destructiveness toward the Order's enemies, but they still get carried away from time to time and attack personal enemies in society and within the Order. The magi of other Houses frequently hold them in disdain, seeing them as immature and violent. For their part, Flambeau magi do little to better their reputation — they like being immature and violent.

The Tempest

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History

The wizard Flambeau was born to a family of proud nobles in Iberia. At that time, the Muslims were sweeping north from Africa conquering Christian lands. Flambeau's family lost battle after battle, eventually being driven from the home they had held since the early days of Rome. Flambeau's master took him from this violent area to a cave in the Pyrenees to the north and taught him magic. Both of them then fought with the Christian nobility against the Moors, but to no avail. Flambeau's master had been an expert in the art of destruction. For a time, Flambeau followed suit, but soon found other methods of fighting more to his taste. He began to study fire magic and soon mastered it. His fighting was flexible and brilliant: he could alternately provide an excellent distraction with a brilliant column of flame or remove his opponents and their steeds without a sound. He is known for being the most brilliant wizard of war the Order has ever known.

When Flambeau's master was slain by Moorish wizards, however, Flambeau gave up and fled north across the Pyrenees, which the Moors never permanently crossed. The battles continued and only in the past few centuries have the Christians begun to push the Moors back (often with the aid of Flambeau magi who still remember their past).

Once away from the battles with the Moors, Flambeau turned his magical prowess and taste for combat against other wizards. His deadly attacks on other magi were one factor that made forming an Order attractive to them; before the actually swearing of the Code it is said that he had killed over fifty magi and had done so simply for the challenge. When Trianoma first talked to him about helping to form the Order of Hermes, he was sceptical. He did not want to have his freedom limited by a restrictive Code. As it seemed more and more likely that the Order would indeed be formed, possibly without him, his attitude changed. In addition, he thought he could form the Order into a united military organization so that he would not have to face the defeat that his master suffered. He joined the Order and his demands saw to it that the Wizard's War would be accepted within the Order.

Meanwhile, Flambeau's first apprentice, Apromor, had matured to become a full Arch-Mage. He saw the good in his master's teaching, but much preferred the subtlety that the art of destruction offered. Since then, the magi of Flambeau have generally followed one of these two paths: fire or destruction, different means to a common end. Two distinct personalities have emerged as well, with the fire wizards tending to be volatile and courageous, while the destruction wizards tend to be more persevering and vengeful. Fire is still the preferred art of the majority of Flambeau's followers and it is this inclination for which the House is best known.

Current Practices

Imagine a bunch of assassins sitting around debating the relative benefits of the battle axe versus the poisoned dagger and you have House Flambeau. They are very informal, but their gatherings always include "shop talk." The competition in this House is incredible, mostly to see who can invent the mightiest spell, the one that does the most damage, has the greatest range of effect, or whatever. The magus who invented the spell *Treading the Ashen Path* won a prize from his Primus, but was driven mad when the faeries on whose forest he demonstrated it caught him a few months later. In addition to a competition for spells, they also have informal contests to see who can get the best familiar. The current champion is the late magus Pitsdim, who managed to get a fire drake, much to the envy of his colleagues.

They are not known for studying as much as other magi, but they seem to have as broad a mastery of their arts as anyone else, probably due to the amount of field practice they get. They are also known for augmenting their spells with generous amounts of raw *vis*, a favorite, albeit dangerous, pastime of some of the more unbalanced magi of this House. Followers of Flambeau are not known for their longevity.

The magi of House Flambeau are very ambitious and often contain an effervescent, youthful energy. Even the eldest magi are jovial and spritely, and enjoy a good brawl and then an orgy of drink as much as their younger kin. Lastly, it needs to be said that, despite appearances, these magi are not stupid. They are intelligent and clever magi; they just have vastly different values and goals from those of most wizards. All too frequently, they are underrated, but it should be noted that this is a very dangerous practice.

House Flambeau is politically powerful, perhaps due simply to their loud and dominant voices. Under a good leader, they can present a united front (being well acquainted with the tactics of warfare) and some have even proven capable orators (to the surprise of many). They are, however, looked down upon by most of the other magi of the Order because of their excitability and relative lack of sophistication.

They try to keep up passable relations with the other Houses, but they are not always successful. One of the tenets of the Order is that no one does anything that could cause the Order serious trouble. Followers of Flambeau, on the other hand, usually feel that, as magi, they can do whatever they "darn" well please, thank you very much. You might call it an ideological difference that separates them from the rest of the Order.

The followers of Flambeau are the enforcers of the Order, but not by official appointment. They simply enjoy the challenge that it brings them and the chance it provides to demonstrate their full powers. When a Wizards' March is called, they are usually the first to

volunteer, and, more often than not, the ones who actually slay the renegade magus. This House looks for fights, and when they cannot find one in the Order, they will look to the common world. They have often fought magi of another, more mysterious Order to the north, called the Order of Odin by Hermetic scholars. Some of them also take part in mundane battles that they happen across, participating more for sport than to back either side over the other. As mentioned before, they are travelers, and will actively seek out trouble — and they are very good at finding it. Some have ventured on the Crusades, and a small group is actively fighting the Moors in Iberia.

The Apprentice's Gauntlet usually includes being left alone, with no equipment or provisions, in a desolate area, and being given instructions to some other area where a Flambeau council is being held. Typically, the apprentice has no idea where they are or to where they must go, except for its name (as it is known to the magi). Once they arrive, they are inducted immediately, for they have passed the Gauntlet — if they do not arrive before the council is over, they have failed (and must find their own way back to their master; some never do). Most apprentices have to pass through the Dominion, though they sometimes have to maneuver through faerie forests or other supernatural obstacles as well. Flambeau apprentices generally have the strength to make it through the Gauntlet, but the area through which they travel is not always so lucky. It has become a tradition for these apprentices to use this as their first opportunity to use their full powers of destruction, performing deeds they will not be allowed to do once they are formal members of the Order. The more destruction they cause, the greater bragging rights they have once they reach the council and the greater their reputation in the House. This has begun to get a bit out of control, but House Quaesitor is reluctant to suggest upon a ruling at the Grand Tribunal for fear of losing a most valuable ally. However, it is said that the Archbishop of Canterbury was outraged when part of the city was razed, and has asked the Pope to declare a crusade against the Order. If this is true, the Quaesitoris will be finally forced to act, but this could create difficulties, for House Flambeau is very attached to its traditions.

A magus of another House can join House Flambeau only by defeating seven Flambeau champions. Certámen is accepted as a legitimate contest, at least against some of the champions. The last magus to gain entry was an air magus who beat his opponents with bolts of lightning.

Magi of House Flambeau

You have been given great power in the art of fire or destruction, or both. If you do not use this power for your own advantage, you are a fool or a weakling. There are many in the world who are afraid of power, yours or

their own. They will try to keep you from using the power that is your right.

Intra-House Relations

You can rely on others in your House. They're the only ones who really understand you and your use of power. You'll compete with them to invent the best spells, get the best familiar, and do the most damage to your enemies; but it's all friendly competition. You can still depend on them to help you out when you need battle-allies. You, in turn, are expected to help them out when they call on you. There isn't much of a hierarchy within the House, but you know better than to bother those who are more powerful than you. Sure, you can resist their *Pila of Fire*, but how about your laboratory and your books?

Councils of House Flambeau meet at irregular intervals. At each council, everyone decides when and where they'll meet again; as there is no standard it is largely a matter of whim. Likewise, the site changes accordingly. It normally occurs in a very desolate spot, where the magi can blast and destroy to their hearts' content (which takes quite a while) in a contest to see who has concocted the most destructive spells. (Vancasitum held the council at Val-Negra once. Once. The evidence of the meeting is still quite apparent.) The most honored wizards are those who are perceived to be the most dangerous and powerful, and are afforded respect accordingly. It is at these councils, rather than Tribunals, that apprentices are inducted.

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"It is they who began the war, not us. It is they who refused to obey the Code, they who preferred their own barbaric magics over ours, they who rejected civilization and law. They deserved to be destroyed and it was necessary for the preservation of the Order, but others will not understand that — therefore we must tell no one of what has transpired. This battle must be forgotten, just as their tradition will be forgotten. It is the only way."

Cercistum
Primus of House Tremere

The Schism War

Mysterious pools of blood have begun to appear around your covenant and the magical aura has slowly begun to disappear. What is the cause of this curse and can it be stopped before the covenant is destroyed? The fate of the entire Order of Hermes is in the characters' hands, as they must struggle against a mysterious foe whose powers and motives are not understood. Their success is not assured.

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The characters will discover the importance of The Order of Hermes within their own lives and the life of their covenant. While players may know much of its "official" history, the realities of its past struggles, present dangers, and future intrigues are forcefully brought to the characters' attention. The bloody legacy of the



Schism War and the destruction of House Diedne may finally be brought to light. However, not every wrong can be righted, and the characters will find themselves the target for the furious vengeance of a most potent adversary.

While the traditions of the Cult of Mercury were central to the founding of The Order of Hermes, the stone cairns of Britain helped provide the basis of its theories of magic. However, jealousy and mistrust resulted in a battle of great fury, which over the years has subsided but never ended. If the players are unable to halt the mighty forces that have again lurched into motion, a chain of events more critical to the future of magic since the creation of the Order could be set off. It is indeed a time of *The Tempest*.



Lion Rampant

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