

DEUS
WULT



EX CATHEDRA

DEUS VULT

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Credits

Author

Gareth Hanrahan

Editor

Charlotte Law

Cover Illustration

Jon Hodgson

Layout

Mischa Thomas

Interior Illustrations

Johan Fredriksson

Maps

Gillian Pearce

Proofreading

Nick Robinson

Special Thanks

Will Chapman

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Introduction

Even in laughter the heart may ache, and joy may end in grief.
– Proverbs 14:13

Ex Cathedra is comprised of three linked adventures for *Deus Vult*. While it is possible to run each adventure separately, the best experience comes from playing through the first two in order and then running *The Tomb of Solomon* later in the campaign.

The first adventure, *The Heresiarch of Troyes*, sends the characters to the trade city of Troyes in France to deal with an outbreak of vile heresy. The cause of this heresy, they discover, is a spirit that the Knights Templar brought back from the Holy Land and accidentally set loose. The first adventure chronicles the Hieromonks' efforts to undo the evil of the spirit.

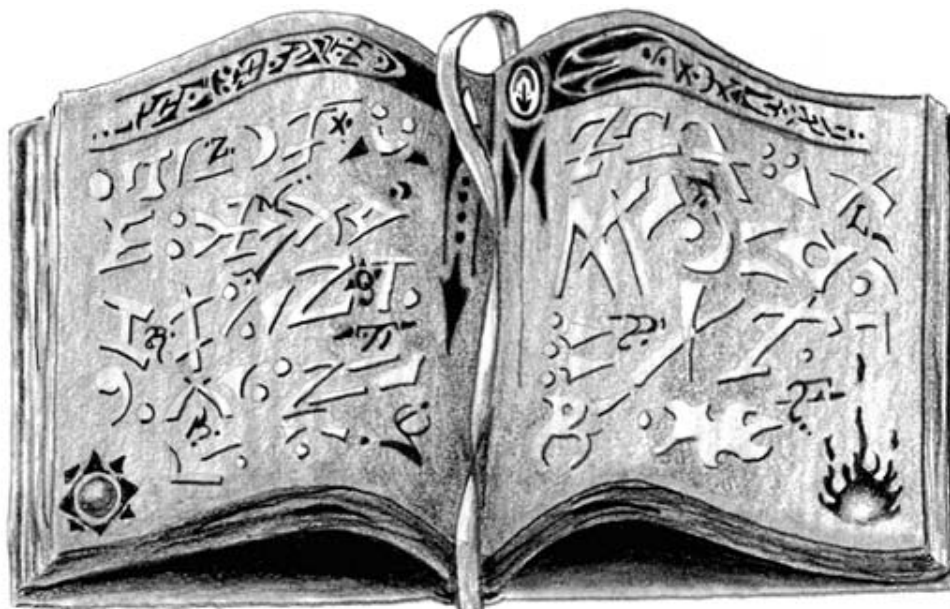
The second adventure, *The Lord of Misrule*, continues straight on from where *The Heresiarch* ended. It covers the chase across

France, as the characters pursue the fugitive spirit from Troyes to Provins and Orleans and ultimately to the sea.

The third adventure is set in the East, at *The Tomb of Solomon* and should be run several months, or even years, of play after the first two. In Syria, the characters must put together clues from the first two adventures to find the vault built by King Solomon the wise.

These are not easy adventures. There are dilemmas, cryptic puzzles, moral choices and often overwhelming odds to overcome. Unwary players may go through several Hieromonks over the course of play; careless groups may not make it past the first adventure. The fate of all Christendom is at stake, so players should expect to be tested to their limits.

God will not test the characters with more than they can bear – but would He test them with one iota less of suffering?





The Heresiarch of Troyes

This adventure takes the Hieromonks into the city of Troyes, in search of a heretical preacher. The characters must follow the trail of the first group of monks to tackle this problem, which leads them to the famous ‘hot fair’ of Troyes and a Templar castle beset by supernatural foes. The adventure is suitable for first or second-rank Hieromonks.

The tale of the Heresiarch begins in the Holy Land. The Knights of the Temple uncovered a cache of occult scrolls and magical paraphernalia in the lands near Bethlehem, including a strange sealed jar. They took their finds back to Europe, to the Chateau du Paynes, in order to study them and unlock their secrets. The chief of these researchers was a scholarly knight named Jerome, who broke the cipher on the jar’s inscription and discovered it contained a bound spirit called The Joyous One. In experimenting with the jar, the Templars accidentally freed the spirit.

The Joyous One fled the castle and possessed a leper in the nearby leper colony. This leper was the first Heresiarch. He began to spread his gospel of madness and inhuman joy – the Joyous One can entwine the human soul in a spell of madness, where the victim believes he has achieved his heart’s

desire. The lepers put on masks and became proselytisers for the cult.

Meanwhile, a spy loyal to the Order named Alix reported the existence of the Heresiarch. The Preceptor of Paris sent four Hieromonks to investigate. These monks managed to find the Heresiarch but were unable to defeat it. The Joyous One drove them insane and now these four monks wander the woods around Troyes, believing themselves to be in Hell.

Over the course of the scenario, the Templars will temporarily capture the Heresiarch, only to be bewitched by its power. The Templar Jerome then becomes the Heresiarch while the Joyous One flees to spread madness elsewhere.

Racing Against Time

The characters are racing against time in this adventure. The more time they waste, the more time the Heresiarch has to prepare. Keep track of the number of days spent travelling and investigating. Some events in the adventure happen on a specific day, others are merely expected to happen. Expected events are in *italics* in the following table.

Day	Date	Events
	June 14 th	The Templars open the jar containing the Joyous One. It possesses the body of a leper.
	June 21 st	Alix writes to Rene, warning him of the Heresiarch.
	July 9 th	The first set of Hieromonks are dispatched from Paris.
	July 12 th	The first set of Hieromonks arrive in Troyes.
	July 14 th	The first set of Hieromonks encounter the Heresiarch and go mad.
	July 22 nd	Rene sends word to Mont St. Michel.
1	July 24 th	The characters get their mission.
2	July 25 th	
3	July 26 th	The mad monks slaughter the merchants.
4	July 27 th	<i>The characters arrive in Paris.</i>
5	July 28 th	
6	July 29 th	<i>The characters discover the dead merchants.</i> The mad monks are attacked by the Fair Guard.
7	July 30 th	<i>The characters arrive in Troyes.</i> The Count holds a tourney.
8	July 31 st	The Count of Champagne visits the fair. The Templars recapture the Joyous One.
9	August 1 st	The Joyous One escapes. The Templar Jerome becomes the new Heresiarch.
10	August 2 nd	The Templars close for business.
11	August 3 rd	The bishop is attacked.
12	August 4 th	The Heresiarch preaches at the Champagne Fair.



The Joyous One

The Joyous One is a spirit of madness and disorder, also known as the Lord of Misrule. It seeks to bring down existing order through madness. In human terms, it is both evil and mischievous – it claims to be a creature of chaos that brings joy but its gifts are always tainted. Long ago, when it tormented souls in the Kingdom of Israel, it was held to be a dybbuk or a djinn.

The Joyous One was imprisoned by King Solomon many centuries ago and should have been placed with the other imprisoned spirits in Solomon’s Tomb. Instead, the urn containing the spirit was hidden in a cave and abandoned until the Knights Templar found it a year ago.

It can be thought of as an evil genie. The Joyous One grants ‘wishes’, or more accurately, it drives its victims mad and makes them believe they have attained their heart’s desire. A greedy man who is touched by the spirit might think that stones are gold and bury himself alive, or sell his wife and children into slavery to earn money because his madness allows him to ignore law and social convention. The Joyous One feeds on belief and happiness – the more people it touches, the stronger it gets.

The Joyous One can also inspire others, driving them to an unsustainable fervour. Those blessed by the Joyous One enjoy supernatural powers of strength, speed, agility and charisma – for a brief time. At best, they die of a heart attack or other systemic failure after a few months, as their body cannot keep up with the demands of the burning spirit within. At worst, they spontaneously combust from sheer joy.

Spirit: The Joyous One is a spirit and is vulnerable to spells and effects that target spirits. It is not a demon and does not

need an anchor to remain in this world but cannot use its Blessings or Inspiration powers while disincorporated.

Possession: The Joyous One can possess a human host. While possessing a host, the victim’s Strength, Constitution and Dexterity are all doubled.

Worshippers: The Joyous One can draw strength from its worshippers, taking Magic Points from them on a two-for-one basis.

Blessing of the Joyous One: As a Combat Action, the Joyous One can bless a target, affecting that individual and anyone in close proximity. This costs the Joyous One three Magic Points per target. The targets may each make a Persistence test opposed by the Joyous One’s Spiritual Combat skill.

If a target fails, he is afflicted by the Blessing of the Joyous One. He goes insane and begins to hallucinate wildly, usually believing that he has somehow achieved his heart’s desire. In combat, the character must make an Insight test each round to work out who his foes are.

After every 25-POW days, the victim may make a Persistence test to regain his sanity. A character who is aware of the spirit’s ability to bewitch others may make a Persistence test every 20-POW days and will slip in and out of madness instead of being constantly deluded during this period. Effectively, a bewitched character can still be played, as long as his fellow PCs remind him every so often of what is real and what is not.

A *Heal Mind* spell can remove the Blessing. The Blessing counts as a spell of Magnitude 5 and can be dispelled normally.

Lesser Inspiration of the Joyous One: The Lesser Inspiration of the Joyous One gives the recipient a feeling of constant ecstatic

The Joyous One

STR	–
CON	–
SIZ	–
INT	15
POW	25
DEX	–
CHA	20

Combat Actions	4	Armour: None
Spirit Damage:	1D10	
Magic Points	25	Traits: Spirit, Worshippers, Blessing of the Joyous One, Inspiration of the Joyous One
Movement	12m	
Strike Rank	+18	Skills: Insight 90%, Lore (History) 90%, Persistence 70%, Possession 80%, Spectral Combat 90%

joy and fills him with devotion to the spirit. The recipient's Strength, Dexterity and Charisma are all increased by +1D6 and he gains a +25% bonus to Athletics, Evade, Influence, Persistence, Resilience and Combat skills. Maintaining the inspiration costs the Joyous One one Magic Point per day and permanently reduces the recipient's Constitution by one point each day.

The Inspiration counts as a spell of Magnitude 3 and can be dispelled normally.

Greater Inspiration of the Joyous One: The Greater Inspiration works like the Lesser Inspiration but the increases to skills and characteristics are doubled. Furthermore, the recipient of the Greater Inspiration can use the Blessing of the Joyous One and the Lesser Inspiration powers. The Greater Inspiration costs the spirit 3 Magic Points per day and permanently reduces the recipient's POW by one point each day.

The Greater Inspiration counts as a spell of Magnitude 10 and can be dispelled normally.

Exhausting: The Joyous One must make a Resilience test after using an Inspiration or Blessing or gain one level of Fatigue.

For the statistics of Jacques Taillebois when possessed by the Joyous One, see page 94.

The Joyful People



This is what the heretics of Troyes call themselves. They follow a bizarre inversion of rationality and faith, believing that when the Joyous One comes (or, to be more accurate, when the trickster-spirit that possesses their leader has accumulated enough power), then the social order will be turned upside down. The poor and the oppressed will have their revenge, while the great and the powerful will be punished and made to suffer.

Some of the cult's statistics change over time. For example, Subversion starts at 10% and rises by 3% per day. Thus, if the characters are delayed on the road and arrive in Troyes on Day 10 of the scenario, the cult's Subversion score will be $10 + (3 \times 10) = 40\%$. The cult starts with the following statistics:

Subversion: 10%, +3% per day: The cult grows rapidly in influence as the game continues, thanks to the supernatural gifts of the Joyous One. Most of those subverted by the cult are among the poor of Troyes but the cult is expanding to embrace merchants and richer citizens.

The characters can reduce the cult's Subversion by stopping the preachers in the city or by convincing people not to listen to their lies. Revealing that the preachers are hideous lepers by publicly unmasking one is an excellent way to turn people against the cult.

Fanaticism: 40%. The cult's message of upheaval and anarchy is appealing to those who have nothing.



The Madness of the Player Characters

At some point over the course of *The Heresiarch of Troyes* or *The Lord of Misrule*, it is almost certain that one or more of the Hieromonks will be struck by the Blessing of the Joyous One, driving them temporarily insane. The form of this insanity depends on the unconscious desires of the afflicted characters. It should be debilitating enough to greatly inconvenience them but not so much that it makes the characters unplayable. For example:

1. **Demons Everywhere:** This is the same delusion as the first group of Hieromonks; the character believes himself to be in Hell and that everyone around him is a demonic monster. Unless he restrains himself, the character will attack everyone, even the innocent.


2. **Signs of Evil:** The character realises that only he is pure and that everyone else is succumbing to taint. He notices his companions' sins or can scent the corruption in their hearts. He may even spot signs of demonic possession or lycanthropy in his fellow monks. The GM should try to sow mistrust among party members by passing notes and casting innocent actions in a sinister light.

3. **The Power of God:** The Lord speaks to the character in his mind, filling him with divine power. The character believes himself to be a miracle-worker. The Lord works through him, allowing him to heal the sick and drive out demons. These miraculous powers are just delusions but the GM should twist events just enough to feed the player's belief that his character has developed magical abilities.

4. **The All-Conquering Hero:** Enemies fall with a single slash of the character's sword; there is no task he cannot complete, no challenge he cannot overcome. Victory comes easy to him in all things. The truth of the delusion is that the character does not succeed half so well as he thinks – he inflicts a scratch on a foe but considers it to be a killing blow and so on, leaving everything half-done at best.

5. **What The Heart Desires:** The character finds whatever he truly desires – wealth, love, redemption – and the pursuit of this prize distracts the monk from his mission.

6. **The Evil of the Order:** The character becomes convinced that the Order is malicious – they are either manipulating him towards some dark purpose, or they are deliberately sabotaging his efforts to defeat evil. Only by turning on the Order – including any companions who do not join him in his revolt – can he hope to survive.





Reducing Fanaticism is always difficult, especially when it is backed up by supernatural powers. The characters could possibly use Medicine or Alchemy to come up with a counter-agent to block the cult's use of mind-altering drugs.

Concealment: 80%, dropping by 5% per day. The cult starts off well hidden in the leper colony but as the Joyous One keeps sending out more preachers, it becomes easier to find the cult's stronghold.

Concealment can be reduced by gathering information about the cult and learning about the leper colony.

Force: 30% initially, rising to 80% once the cult takes over the Templar castle. Most of the cult warriors are madmen, whose only weapon is their insane belief that they are invisible. As soon as the Joyous One bewitches the Templars, though, the cult gains a number of trained and well-equipped fighting men.

Force can be reduced by killing the Templars or rescuing knights from their madness.

Supernatural: 20%. The Joyous One is the only supernatural threat involved in this adventure.

A Dream of Demons

In this short prequel to the main adventure, the players take on the role of the four Hieromonks sent to investigate the Heresiarch. They have been driven mad by the Heresiarch's preachings and now see demons everywhere. They cut a bloody swathe through a pack of 'demons', which are actually innocent merchants on the road outside Troyes.

On the Road to Troyes

The characters are sent from Mont St-Michel to the Paris preceptry, where Preceptor Jean outlines what is known of the situation in Troyes. From there, they travel in a caravan along with hundreds of merchants and traders to the fair at Troyes.

Troyes

A guide to the city of Troyes and the great fair.

Pursued By Demons

Once again, the players temporarily take on the role of the insane Hieromonks, this time battling the fair guard and a knight.

Trail of the Heresiarch

On arriving in Troyes, the Hieromonks may explore the city and search for clues that might lead them to the Heresiarch. They rapidly discover that the heresy has but newly come to the city but is strangely well entrenched despite its newness. Supernatural compulsions must be to blame!

The Leper Colony

The characters investigate the leper colony, which is the stronghold of the cult and here they learn the true nature of the Heresiarch.



Running the Adventure

Much of this adventure takes place in an overcrowded city. With the fair in town, the population of Troyes is swollen by many thousands; there are travellers here from all manner of exotic places, from England and Denmark, from the Holy Roman Empire, from the south of France, from Lombardy, Venice, Rome and even from further afield. The town is a babel of strange tongues and unusual costumes. Worse, the fair takes place at the height of summer and it is an unusually warm summer. The heat beats down on the crowded town like the blow of Vulcan's hammer, driving men to violence and madness even without supernatural impetus.

The characters must be careful and act discretely, or their unwise actions will cause widespread panic. Emphasise the heat and the closeness of the town, the crowded streets and the strange voices echoing down the alleyways, the carnival atmosphere of the fair and the growing threat of the Heresiarch. Turn Troyes into a pressure cooker.

As Part of Ex Cathedra

If you are running this adventure as part of the *Ex Cathedra* series, then once the characters have slain the Heresiarch, they must pursue the malicious spirit that inspired him. This pursuit is taken up in the second scenario, *The Lord of Mismule*, beginning on page 52.

As a Stand- Alone Mission

If you are running this adventure as a stand-alone game, then the climax is the defeat of the Heresiarch. In this case, the spirit did not merely inspire his madness; it possessed him, lending him supernatural powers of charisma. Slaying the Heresiarch banishes the spirit.



The Chateau du Paynes

The characters investigate the Templar castle outside Troyes and battle the crazed knights.

Demon Slayers

The characters encounter the first set of Hieromonks and catch a glimpse of their own future.

Murder in the Cathedral

The Heresiarch attacks the bishop of Troyes as part of the revelations that are to come.

At The Champagne Fair

The characters must race to the fair and eliminate the Heresiarch before his madness spreads across all of Christendom.



A Dream of Demons



This prequel section sets the scene for the chaos that is to come.

Four Hieromonks – Claude, Renaud, Victor and Andrew – were dispatched from the Paris preceptry to investigate allegations of heresy and supernatural activity in Troyes. They were bewitched by the supernatural powers of the Heresiarch and now believe that they have fallen into Hell. They are convinced that they are surrounded by demons.

Give the players the pregenerated character sheets of Claude, Renaud, Victor and Andrew. If you have extra players, they can either be an audience for this short drama, or else let them play the guards or merchants from the unfortunate caravan. Tell the extra players what is really going on, that the

Hieromonks are insane and are hallucinating, but make sure they do not give the game away to the Hieromonk players. Describe everything as if the four characters really were in Hell and the caravan really is a demonic horror.

Out of the Abyss

It has been three days since you were plunged into this otherworld, three days of terror and nightmare, running from the packs of hunting hellhounds and the aerial fiends that circle constantly above this realm of tortured souls. Against the odds, you have survived but surely you cannot last much longer. The skies of this alien place burn hot indeed and you have seen no water in your travels, only streams of boiling, tainted blood.

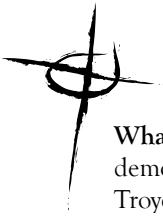
The four Hieromonks are in a small wooded area on the road outside of Troyes. They have been roaming the countryside for three days, without food or water, raving about the hellfire and the demons, of running from dogs, crows and their own shadows.

You have taken refuge in an outcrop of twisted obsidian spires. The larger demons – the hulking, brutish creatures bigger than houses, the ones that lumber around dragging the weight of their tremendous tusks – cannot get in here. Up ahead, cutting through this maze of black stone, is a road paved with flayed human flesh. It winds towards the horizon, where you can see a blood-red citadel crowned with lurid golden flames.

Let the characters roleplay for a few minutes, then...

Travelling along this ghastly road of flesh is a grotesque parade of horrors. A humanoid figure with the head of a fly leads this procession of the damned; there are armoured demons clad in tatters of human skin, scorpion-women with shamelessly uncovered bosoms and stinging tails, along with a trail of shambling monsters that appear to be made from pairs of headless human corpses sewn together at the neckstump to serve as undead beasts of burden. At the core of this nightmare tableau is an elephantine thing, a mountain of writhing yellow-green maggots that squirms along the road. Embedded in this rolling pile of maggots, you can make out human shapes – damned prisoners, on their way to torture in the hellish fortress.

Perhaps if you could rescue these unfortunates, you might learn of a refuge in Hell or even a way out!



What is Really Going On: The ‘obsidian spires’ are trees. The demonic procession is a merchant’s caravan on the road to Troyes. The ‘fly-headed demon’ is a rich merchant, Gerard of Paris, riding at the head of the caravan, accompanied by his retinue of servants (the scorpion women) and guards (the armoured demons). The beasts of burden are mules, laden down with bolts of cloth; the mountain of maggots is a cart with various other supplies and trade goods – including some beautiful puppets, which the insane monks have mistaken for damned souls.

The Hieromonks have only a brief window of opportunity in which to rescue these ‘souls’. Once the caravan exits the forest, there is no good place to ambush it. The monks must act now.

The Caravan: The caravan consists of four armed guards, eight servants and the merchant himself. The Hieromonks can just charge in and attack directly or they can take a more cunning approach like felling trees to block the road, using ranged attacks, spooking the mules or sneaking into the caravan in disguise.

Running the Ambush

Remember to translate the actions of the caravan guards and the merchants from the real world (‘the guard attacks a Hieromonk with his sword’) into something horrific that fits the hallucination (‘the demon lashes at you with a whip

of braided serpents’). The guards initially assume that the Hieromonks are desperate bandits and move to drive them away from the caravan. The servants go to steady the mules. It is only when the Hieromonks start using their wonder-weapons and alchemical compounds that the guards realise that they are utterly doomed.

Ideally, the Hieromonks carve through the guards without too much resistance but it is possible that a lucky blow eliminates one or more of the monks. Keep track of the casualties – the aftermath of this battle will be investigated by the actual Player Characters in a later scene.

After The Battle

This assumes that the Hieromonks easily win and rescue the ‘souls’ from the caravan.

Demonic ichor drips from your blades and the stench of the butchery fills the air... you are victorious over the forces of Hell. Plunging your hands into the writhing mass of maggots, you pull out one of the damned souls. It is small and light, like an emaciated child. Its voice is like the rustling of paper.

‘This is Hell’ it says, ‘and you wanted to come here.’

Take the pregenerated characters back off the players and put them somewhere safe; you will need to refer to them again later on.

Guards

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	5/6
INT	9	10-12	Chest	5/7
POW	9	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	8	19-20	Head	2/5

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D2
Magic Points	9
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+10 (+6 in armour)

Armour: Leather and Chain
Equipment: Crossbow, Sword

Notable Skills: Athletics 33%, Brawn 36%, Drive 29%, Evade 30%, Perception 28%, Resilience 34%, Ride 29%, Unarmed 32%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword	M	L	52%	1D8	6/12
Crossbow			38%	1D10	4/8



Servants/Merchant

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	11	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	9	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	8	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 12

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +9

Armour: None

Equipment: Club or Dagger

Notable Skills: Commerce 31%, Evade 26%, Evaluate 51%, Influence 54%, Lore (Regional) 48%, Perception 41%, Persistence 34%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	29%	1D4+1	6/8
or Club	M	S	29%	1D6	4/4



On The Road to Troyes

It is June, a blazing June that makes the crops wilt and the impious feel the hot breath of Hell on the back of their necks. Mont St-Michel is surrounded by a glittering jewelled sea as the sun reflects back off the wind-tossed surf. God is in His Heaven and all is right with the world.

Ask the players where their Adventurers are and what they are doing. Pick one of them and read the following.

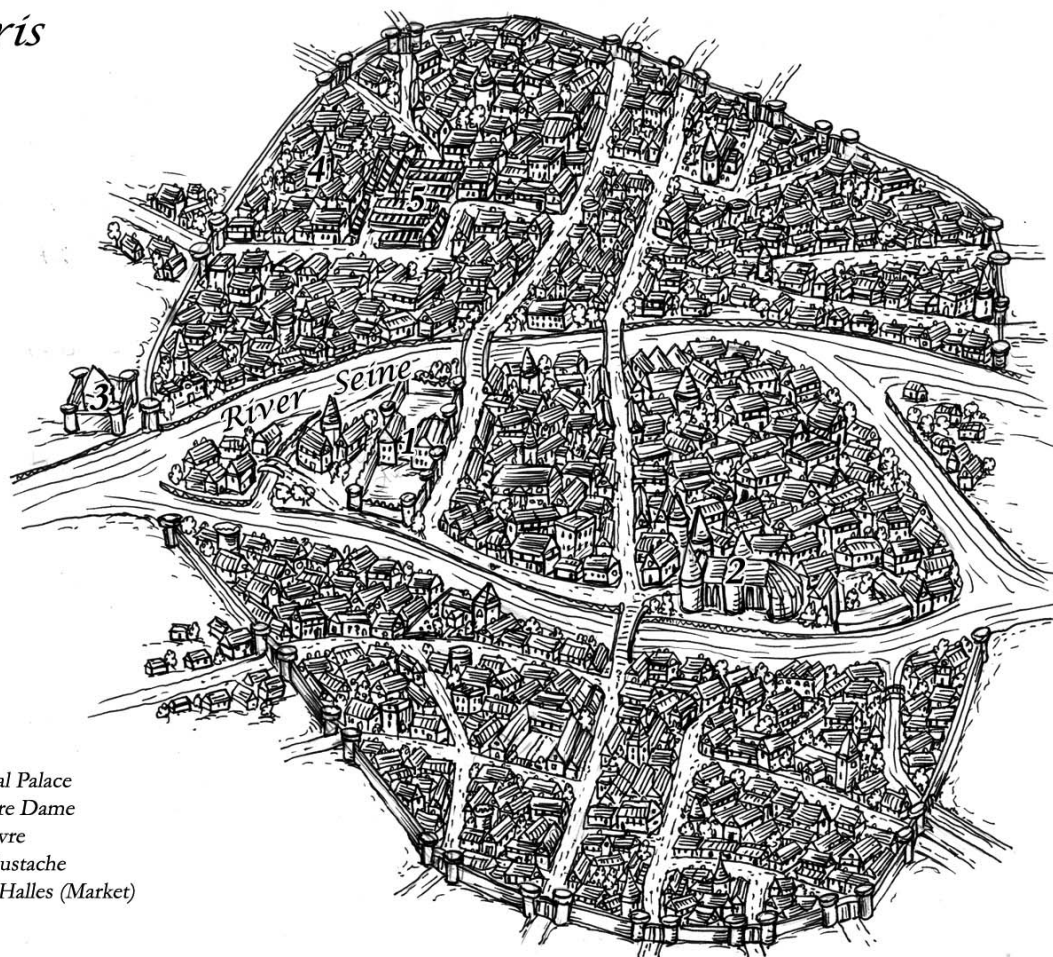
[PLAYER NAME], you see a familiar figure approaching you. Sweat rolls off his balding pate as he strides up the steep slope towards you. Despite the intense heat of the day, he is dressed in chain mail over his thick black robes. It is Basilio de Rossi, the abbot and Superior General of the Order. He salutes you and says 'brother, there is little

time to lose. Gather your fellows and take what supplies you need from the Prior Artifex. Be swift – you must be in Paris in three days time. The Preceptor of Paris will explain. Godspeed!

A direct command from the abbot is like the word of God to a Hieromonk. The characters must gather their equipment (standard asset point allocations for their Degree; remind the players that they must buy horses too) and ride for Paris immediately.

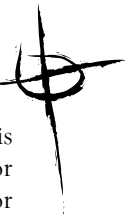
If the characters question the abbot, he is visibly irritated but explains: 'We sent four Hieromonks to investigate heresy in the city of Troyes and they have not reported back. We fear they are lost. You must complete their work and discover their fate. The

Paris



Key

1. Royal Palace
2. Notre Dame
3. Louvre
4. St Eustache
5. Les Halles (Market)



Preceptor of Paris, Rene the Black, knows more of the situation in Troyes than I do – follow his commands as if they were mine. Now, be swift, for I fear the heretics have chosen their time well.'

Riding to Paris

It is 150 miles from the monastery gates to the city of Paris; getting there in three days is extremely demanding. There are several choices that the players must make en route:

- **Cross the sands now or wait for the tide?** The tide is coming in when the characters are about to leave. They can try racing across the causeway to make it to the mainland before the island is cut off or wait for a safer time to cross. If they wait, it costs them half a day. If they race across, call for Riding Skill Tests. A character who fumbles the test loses his horse and half a day.
- **Go across country or cling to the roads?** Taking a short cut requires a successful Lore (Regional) test. If successful, the characters gain half a day. If failed, the characters lose half a day. A critical success gains a full day; a fumble loses a full day.
- **Drive the horses to the edge or let them rest?** Pushing the horses requires a Riding test. If successful, the characters gain half a day. If failed, the characters lose a whole day. A critical success gains a full day; a fumble loses a day and kills the horse.

The ride to Paris is otherwise relatively uneventful; treat it as a red line crossing the map.

Paris

The Paris of 1189 is a city undergoing rapid change. The charismatic and ambitious king Philip Augustus has embarked on a series of building works and the whole city echoes to the sounds of saw and hammer. As the characters ride through the narrow streets, they notice an unusual number of closed shops – many of the city's merchants have travelled to Troyes for the great fair.

The Ghouls of Paris

The construction work in Paris uncovered an ancient ghoulish relic. Rene the Black stole it from the construction site to study it and last night ghouls crawled out of the catacombs and attacked the preceptory. They captured Rene and the relic and carried them off into the underworld. If the characters want to find out what Rene knows, they will have to rescue the preceptor – and doing so will take time they can ill afford.

The Preceptory

The Paris Preceptory is located in a house near the Church of St. Sulpice. The house looks like a large two-storey house from the outside but there are certain hidden signs and symbols on the walls that the characters can recognise,

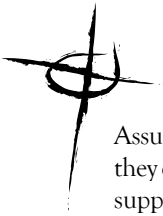
which mark it as an outpost of the Order. The front door is locked; once the characters gain entry via the back door or a window, they discover signs of a struggle. The back door was smashed open and it looks like there was a brawl in the downstairs room.

Searching the house turns up several clues. The skill used to discover the clue is in brackets:

- **(Perception):** Whatever smashed the door was strong. There are several sets of clawed footprints. There are also signs of combat; those scars in the wall look like they were made with a Crusader sword.
- **(Insight):** Reconstructing the situation suggests that the attackers broke in through the back door and ambushed whoever was in the house. They also stole something from the study upstairs. Bizarrely, though, nothing else was taken, even though there were weapons and money lying around.
- **(First Aid):** There is not enough blood shed here for any of the wounds to be immediately lethal. Some of the blood certainly is not human.
- **(Mechanisms):** There is a secret trapdoor in the floor. It looks like the intruders never noticed it.
- **(Track):** There is a trail leading out of the door. It should be easy enough to follow.
- **(Streetwise or Difficult (-20%) Influence):** Asking around picks up a few rumours. 'That place? It's where Rene the merchant lives. Odd fellow. Strange people call there at all hours of the day or night. The last time I saw Rene, he was heading up to Les Halles.' Les Halles is the great covered market recently built by the king.
- **(Hard (-40%) Lore: Occult):** This place stinks of ghoulish.

In the upper study, the characters find a sheaf of letters from a clothier's wife called Alix, one of the Order's informants. These letters comprise Handout #1 (Page 16) and are enough to warn the players of what awaits them in Troyes. The names referred to in the letter are described further in the next chapter.

If the characters try to open the trapdoor, call for a Hard (-40%) Mechanisms roll. If this test is failed, a trap is triggered – call for a Difficult (-20%) Perception roll. If this second roll is successful, the character hears a faint click as he unlocks the trapdoor. If both rolls are failed, then the unlucky first player down the ladder activates the trap – the whole basement is sprayed with Greek fire for three rounds after weight is put on the ladder. Anyone in the basement takes 1D4 damage to all locations each round and has to climb out of the basement to roll on the floor as the basement is completely saturated with the chemical spray.



Assuming the characters do not get incinerated by the fire trap, they discover that the basement contains a cache of weapons and supplies – mostly conventional swords and armour but also two Crusader swords and a chest full of alchemical compounds.

Les Halles

Investigating Les Halles in the centre of the city is largely a dead end but the characters can pick up an odd tale from some workmen. Two days ago, they were digging the foundations of a new building just off the market and they accidentally broke open a strange leaden coffin. The foulest stench imaginable issued forth, sickening all those present. Inside the coffin was a withered corpse *'like a man but also like a dead goat'* and clutched in the corpse's bony hands was a weird idol.

The local priest was called to drive away any evil spirits that might be lurking in the grave. They covered it with a canvas overnight and when they returned the next morning, both corpse and idol had vanished. They did find a curious burnt patch of ground nearby – any Hieromonk who examines the patch can tell that someone used Greek fire to incinerate something, most likely the 'goat'-like corpse.

Following the Trail

If the characters wish to rescue Rene, they can follow the trail out into the streets of Paris, a trail that will lead them to the Catacombs. The ghoul pack that abducted Rene travelled at night and stayed away from humans, so the trail winds its ways through the hedgerows, the woods and the back alleys.

Along the way, call for a Perception test. The character who succeeds by the most finds a small scallop-shell token on the ground. The scallop-shell is a symbol of pilgrims but is also

used by the Order on occasion. Rene obviously dropped this shell to let any other monks know they were on the right track.

The trail ends in a field surrounded by a few tumble-down old stone walls. These are Roman ruins that have been quarried for stone over the years. In one spot there are a few old flagstones set into the ground and the earth around one of them shows signs of being recently disturbed. Searching around the field also turns up a few gnawed bones and a Medicine roll confirms them as being those of a human child.

Lifting the flagstone requires a Difficult (-20%) Brawn test. Lifting it *quietly* raises the difficulty to Hard (-40%). A stench that seems to flow from Beelzebub's own backside issues forth from the depths below. There is no ladder or steps down, just a very steep slope. Moving on the slope at speed without falling requires an Athletics test.

Into the Catacombs

The slope leads into a warren of tunnels. These are part of the old Roman burial chambers. The corridors are lined with coffins, most of which are shattered and alarmingly empty of bones.

Emphasise the cramped conditions (-20% to attacks with Large weapons, -10% with Medium weapons), the darkness, the stench and the fact that there could be any number of ghouls lurking down here. All the tunnels look the same, too, so the characters are in danger of becoming lost.

There is no light down here, the floors are treacherous and the characters must move silently to avoid alerting the ghouls. It is Hard (-40% to Tracking) to follow the trail down here – ghouls have been tramping up and down these corridors for

Paris Warren Encounter Table

Roll	Encounter
0 or less	A Pack of Ghouls: 1d6 ghouls plus one per Player Character. This is a hungry pack of hunters, out searching for the intruders.
1	A Lone Ghoul: A lone ghoul, perched on a coffin and gnawing on a leg bone. The ghoul's attention is focussed on its meal and it does not notice the approach of the characters. However, if not slain immediately, it will run off into the darkness and alert its kin. Any future encounters of this type are lone ghoul scouts, looking for the intruders.
2	Unexpected Pit: The lead Hieromonk runs into an unexpected pit. The character must make a Perception or Evade test (whichever is higher); if failed, the character falls into the pit and takes 1D6+1 damage to a random leg.
3	Treacherous Tunnel: The tunnel floor here is especially uneven, the roof is low and the characters have to clamber over debris and fallen stones. An Athletics roll is necessary to get past these obstacles. Failure means the characters cannot pass this way and lose any accumulated bonuses to their Encounter Table rolls.
4	Empty Corridors: Nothing of note, just empty coffins and the smell of ghouls.
5	Treasure Trove: A coffin contains (roll 1d6) 1-3: a handful of coins, 4-5: a lucky amulet, 6: a rusted short sword.
6 or more	The Ritual Chamber: The characters have found the heart of the ghoul nest.



centuries. If the character succeeds in the tracking attempt, it is worth a +2 bonus to rolls on the Warren Encounter Table.

As the characters make their way through the warrens, roll 1D6 on the Paris Warren Encounter Table. Call for a Stealth test from the least stealthy character (or all characters, if the Hieromonks split up); apply a -1 penalty to the Encounter Table roll if the Stealth test is failed and a +1 bonus for each previous Encounter Table roll.

In the central ritual chamber are a dozen ghouls, dancing and gibbering around a coffin. Lying in the coffin is a man dressed in the black robes of a Hieromonk. He is bound and his hands have been lashed around a small ugly leaden idol. There is a disturbing energy in the air, a sense of rising power as if a storm was about to break over this underground chamber.

The ghouls are distracted by their ritual, so the characters have a moment to prepare their attack. If they catch Rene's eye, the elder monk will not give their position away but will call a ghoul over once they are ready. He will then head-butt this ghoul with all his might - a clear signal for the characters to attack!

The characters are heavily outnumbered, so a quick strike to free Rene and retrieve the idol is the best tactic. The fight takes place in extremely close quarters - the ghouls are like a solid wall of claws and flesh and there are all manner of tunnels and passageways for the characters or the ghouls to retreat into.

- Bright light or open flames repel the ghouls. A ghoul will retreat if threatened with a burning torch but they will also try to ambush or overwhelm characters armed with fiery weapons, ideally by ganging up on them or attacking them from behind.
- Although there are a dozen ghouls here, the place is so cramped that only two or three ghouls can attack a single Player Character at most.
- The ceiling in this room is unstable - a charge of blasting powder or a very solid blow that inflicts 10 or more damage can collapse it.
- If the characters are losing the fight, let a player spend a fate point to find Rene's belongings strewn around the floor. Rene was carrying a Crusader sword, two vials of Flaredust and a vial of Blasting Powder.

Once freed, Rene grabs whatever weapon he can - a leg-bone if nothing else - and urges the characters to flee. Retrieving the idol is not a priority for him but if the characters can grab it, it will prove useful later on. If they have Flaredust, he shouts at them to use it, as the ghouls fear the light. The Preceptor also knows the way back out of the corridors, as he memorised the route when he was being dragged in.

As soon as they are out of the catacombs, Rene takes charge and leads the characters to a small shack on the outskirts of the city - the Preceptry is compromised now. This shack is not much but it is shelter for the night. 'There are some emergency supplies around here somewhere' he mutters as he digs around in a pile of skins and produces a stoppered jug of surprisingly excellent wine.

Rene the Black

The Preceptor of Paris is a Hieromonk of the Third Degree. He was severely wounded in a botched investigation in Denmark (there is a lake there where monsters dwell) and is no longer fit for field work. He has gone a little soft with easy living and good wine but he still has a core of steel. His nickname of 'the Black' comes from his hair, which was jet-black when he was younger. Ever since that lake, though, most of it has turned white.

The ghoul problem is unrelated to the Heresiarch of Troyes but the characters will obviously have questions about it. Rene tells them what he knows - the king's workmen dug up a strange coffin that contained a misshapen corpse that held the idol. Suspecting that the idol was supernatural, Rene stole it during the night and took it back to the preceptry to study it. The ghouls attacked the following night.

He suspects that the idol somehow drew the ghouls to it. Worse, the ghoul ritual that the characters interrupted seemed to be a magical rite to bind him to the idol as a replacement keeper for the one he destroyed. He is very grateful to the characters for rescuing him. Insightful characters may notice that Rene's confidence is born of bravado; his lack of caution when dealing with the supernatural has destroyed the Paris preceptry and nearly got him killed.

If the characters rescued the idol, then Rene asks if they want to take it with them. The further away it is from the ghouls, the better. If the characters do not wish to be burdened with a cursed idol, he accepts their refusal - he will bring it to Mont St-Michel as soon as he can but he must first erase the evidence of the Preceptry.

The Heresiarch

The characters are really here to learn about the Heresiarch, of course. The tale begins with one of Rene's spies, Alix. She is the wife of one of the more successful merchants in Troyes and for many years she has passed on useful information to the Order. Most of her reports are inconsequential things - rumours, tales of the cloth trade, gossip about the nobility and the church - but her latest reports were much more troubling. A strange heretical cult appeared in the city of Troyes and grew with alarming rapidity.

The report warranted investigation, so Rene dispatched four of his monks - Claude, Renaud, Victor and Andrew, all



experienced agents of the Order – to Troyes to deal with the matter. They left three weeks ago and have not reported back. At the very least, they should have sent word through Alix. He can only assume that they are dead or captured.

Give the players Handout #1 (page 16) if they have failed to find it so far.

Troyes and The Fair

Rene suspects that the location and time of these heretical preachings is no co-incidence. Troyes is a prosperous city at any time but this month it hosts the Hot Fair.

The Fairs of Champagne are perhaps the greatest market in Europe. Six times a year, a great fair is held in the county of Champagne. Merchants come from far and wide to sell their wares and trade. Cloth and wool from northern Europe is exchanged for Milanese weaponry and spices from the east. The Fairs are a time for settling debts and grand financial transactions – especially in the last few years, thanks to the

influence of the Knights Templar. The Templars, with their vast wealth and network of castles across Europe, have become the bankers of Christendom.

The fairs are of such importance that they have the protection of the Count and a special police force, the Keepers of the Fair, exists just to maintain order for those few crowded weeks. Visitors from every nation and agents of every king and merchant in Christendom will be in Troyes for the fair. From there, a heretical belief could spread like wildfire and the Order might not contain the contagion.

Finding this so-called Heresiarch is vitally important. The heresy must be cut out at the source.

Rene advises that the characters continue on to Troyes. If they wish to disguise themselves as merchants, he can supply them with suitable clothing and a few mules. He also suggests that the first step should be making contact with Alix; she will be able to shelter the characters and aid their investigations but they should be wary.



The Ghoulish Idol

The idol is a spirit fetish, the anchor for an otherworldly entity, a lord of the dead.

The presence of the spirit in the idol causes several disturbing supernatural effects:

- Ghouls can sense the idol and are drawn to it.
- Worms, crows and other carrion-eaters are also drawn to the idol. Put it down on the ground, even for a minute and the earth beneath it seethes with insects.
- Those who sleep near the idol must make a Resilience roll at night. If the test fails, the sleeper suffers from a form of paralysis at night; while sleeping, he is cold and stiff as a corpse and when he awakens, it takes him several minutes to rub feeling and warmth back into his limbs.

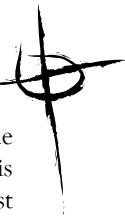
The ghouls bound the spirit to the idol and then bound the idol to a human to serve as a mouthpiece and interpreter for the spirit. A character who carries the idol may, over time, become bound to it. After carrying the idol for a number of days equal to the character's POW, secretly make a Persistence test for the character. If he fails, he becomes psychically linked with the idol. If he succeeds, he must make another Persistence test after another POW days, at a cumulative -20% penalty.

A bound character can communicate with and command the spirit. By spending three Magic Points, the spirit can drag back a soul to a recently dead corpse, allowing the dead to speak for a few minutes. By spending five Magic Points, the spirit can animate a corpse as a zombie for up to an hour.

The bound character is affected by his link to the idol. Over the course of several weeks, the character becomes increasingly ghoulish-like.

Week	#1	#2	#3	#4
Strength	+0	+1	+2	+3
Charisma	-1	-2	-3	-4
Natural Armour	0	0	0	1
Visible Effects	Greyish skin	Longer canines	Light sensitivity	Ghoul features





The first Commandery he sent to Troyes were also told to make contact with Alix. She may have been subverted by the heretics.

Riding On

It is another three days' travel from Paris to Troyes. If the characters do not accept Rene's offer of disguises and just ride for Troyes, they can make it there in two days.

The Killers on the Road

En route to Troyes, the characters run into another merchant and his entourage. The merchant is named Nabon; he is a Parisian mercer and a representative of the influential guild of mercers. He travels with a dozen crossbowmen and two score servants, aides, his wife Pernelle and his young apprentice Yon. The head of his guards is a churlish, sullen Lombard mercenary called Daufer.

Nabon is a talkative and curious fellow, interested in everything. Indeed, it seems as though it is impossible for him to sit quietly – if he is not working, he is talking to anyone or everyone. He will engage a bishop or a beggar in conversation with equal enthusiasm. His eye is always on the possibility of making a deal. For the characters, Nabon may be something of a curse – if they are trying to keep a low profile, then having to engage Nabon in conversation at night may test their patience and their cover identities to the limit.

If the characters ask about Nabon's business at the fair, he grumbles that his main role is to deliver a letter to representatives of the Bishopric of Troyes, settling a considerable debt owed to them. Personally, he feels that the letter is a mistake and that the guild should wait until next year and negotiate a better deal in the meantime. As it stands, he and every other mercer stands to pay a 'king's ransom' to the Bishop, money he can ill afford. Nonetheless, he will obey his masters in the guild and deliver the documents. Perhaps, if he is lucky, he can make back some of the money at the Fair.

Pernelle is a quiet woman but there is a curious intensity to her gaze. She is quite pretty and is obviously several years younger than her husband. She wears a strange religious symbol in place of a crucifix; a Lore (Christian theology) roll suggests that it is a Cathar symbol. The Cathars do not honour the cross Christ died on, believing it to be a symbol of torture and suffering, not sacrifice. She also speaks with an accent suggesting she comes from the Languedoc, the heartland of Catharism. In 1189, the Catholic Church frowns on Catharism and speaks out against it but the full brunt of the Inquisition and the Albigenian crusade lie years in the future. To be a Cathar in this age is unusual but not unacceptable in secular society. Pernelle spends much of her time speaking in low tones with Yon.

Yon is a nervous young man; this is his first visit to the Champagne Fair and he is obviously worried about failing his master. He sits in the wagon, keeping an eye on the heavy chest containing the money and documents belonging to Nabon and the mercer's guild. A successful Insight roll suggests that Yon's devotion to Pernelle may not be entirely honourable; tales of apprentices cuckolding their masters are almost as common as those of apprentices being treated as slaves by their master's wives.

Daufer takes an immediate dislike to the Hieromonks. The big Lombard despises monks (if they are in disguise, then he despises Normans instead). He considers them weak and greedy (or, in the case of Normans, uncivilised and greedy) and warns them several times to keep out of his way. He openly suggests that they could be scouts working for a band of thieves. Nabon dismisses this idea out of hand – the roads near Troyes are some of the safest in Europe right now. There is so much well-guarded traffic that no bandit would dare come near the fair. Nabon is travelling with a dozen guards and that is a comparatively small entourage! When his warnings are dismissed so casually, Daufer mutters and sulks.

Asking around, the other guards tell the characters that Daufer has a gambling problem. He loves to wager on dice but has abominable luck. He is paid more than any of the others but is still penniless. Even Yon won money off Daufer.

The Theft

If the characters camp with the merchant caravan overnight, then they are woken by a shout of alarm the next morning. As is his nervous habit, Yon checks the chest first thing in the morning and the document promising payment from the Mercer's Guild of Paris to the Bishopric of Troyes has vanished!

If the characters avoided interacting with Nabon and the other NPCs, then suspicion immediately falls on them. Pernelle whispers to her husband that those strange monks must have stolen the documents! Daufer orders the characters to hand over their bags so he can search them. If the characters want to avoid their secret wonder-weapons and other tools being pawed by an uncouth Lombard, they must act quickly and solve the crime themselves.

The other main suspect is Daufer. He has gambling debts to pay, is unpopular and has quarrelled openly with Nabon. The stolen documents could be sold for a considerable sum and he was on watch last night. If accused, Daufer offers to let his belongings be searched but then Yon pipes up, suggesting that Daufer could have hidden the stolen documents in the woods with the intention of recovering them later.

The players may suspect Nabon himself – he has easy access to the chest and he has reason to destroy or steal the documents,



especially if he thought he could blame the crime on the PCs or Daifer. With the documents gone, he can postpone his debt to the Bishop of Troyes for a year.

The true thief is Yon, the apprentice. Pernelle convinced him to burn the documents; she is a Cathar sympathiser and used this opportunity to aid her husband financially, doing what he dared not to and also attacking the Catholic church by denying them the money from Paris. If the characters examine Yon's campfire, they find a few scraps of vellum and a melted blob of wax that must once have been a seal.

If the characters solve the crime, then Nabon says he will deal with his disobedient wife and apprentice privately. He now owes the characters a favour.

Death on the Road

A day outside of Troyes, the characters (and Nabon's caravan if they are travelling together) come upon a scene of absolute horror – the aftermath of the crazed Hieromonks' attack on the other merchants that the players played through in *A Dream of Demons*. This time, describe the scene as it really is – instead of maggots and scorpion-women, there are butchered bodies and blood pooled an inch thick on the road. There is a wagon in the middle of the carnage that has been looted and burned; the characters can find several broken marionettes amid the debris.

The players may be able to work out, from the physical evidence or their own intuitions, that this is the aftermath of the scene they played through from the other side. This is especially obvious if the insane Hieromonks used wonder-weapons like blasting powder or Crusader Swords, or if any of them died in the battle.

Arriving in Troyes

After two or three days travel, the characters arrive at Troyes. The roads immediately around the city are choked with traffic – merchants and their entourage, hawkers, mountebanks, beggars and whores – but eventually, the characters pass through the west gate of the city called the Porte de Paris.

Somewhere in this crowded medieval city is the Heresiarch.

If the characters head straight to Alix's house, see the section on Alix on page 20. If they begin investigations immediately, at an appropriate juncture, run *Pursued by Demons* (page 21) as soon as possible after the characters reach Troyes.

Handout 1

Troyes, 2nd June

My brother in Christ,

I pray God that this letter finds you well and that the solemn duties of your most holy office are not beyond your strength to bear. In Saint Sebastian's name, I greet you.

The Keepers of the Hot Fair in Troyes this year are Aribert the Moneylender and Foulque the Spicer. Aribert I know little of, save that he is a Christian. Of Foulque, it is said that his trade caravans bring more than pepper and saffron from the East and I have heard tell that he traffics with devils and collects books of magic. Such venomous rumours are said of any man who accumulates a fortune, of course, and while I shall endeavour to discover more of him, I dare not do more than report what the fishwives whisper.

Count Henry grows eager to depart for the Holy Land and he ordered 50 bolts of cloth from my husband for the making of tabards for his knights. He begs our indulgence and wishes to have credit and it is widely known that the coffers of Champagne have been emptied to pay for his soldiers. I surmise he will try to borrow more money at the Fair and I shall learn who holds his debts and what the terms are, if I can.

Of late, I have heard a strange tale repeated over and over. It speaks of a band of holy men who are coming or, in some versions, have already come to Troyes. These holy men have been absolved of all sins and so they rejoice. Those who join them shall also become sinless. This is plainest heresy and I fear that this message may seduce many, especially with the shepherd Manassé no longer attending to all his duties. The tales all agree that a preacher will come to give the good news. This preacher is the root of the heresy and warrants, I think, the attention of the Order.

*I remain your most faithful servant and a devotee of the
Divine Path*

Alix



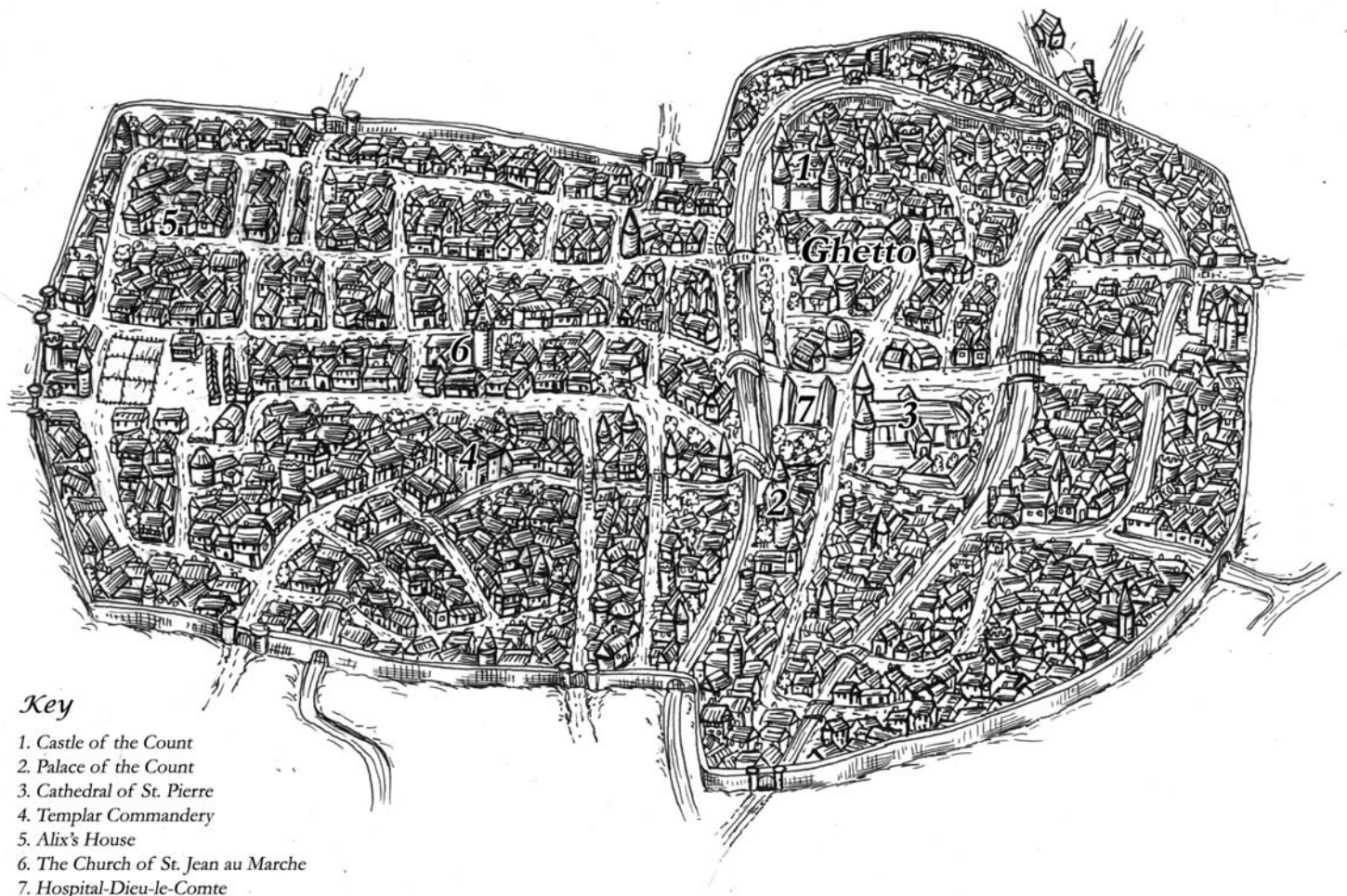
Troyes

Founded as a Roman town 1,000 years ago, today Troyes is the seat of a bishop and the second city of Champagne, one of the richest regions in the kingdom of France. Some 10,000 citizens call the city home.

The town is built on the river Seine, which is choked with run-off and debris from the tanner's district. At the height of summer, it stinks to high heaven. Roughly speaking, the town west of the river has the new commercial district in the north and the poorer quarter in the south, while east of the river is the old town, including the cathedral and the palaces and castles of the count of Champagne, as well as the pasturage and farmland enclosed by the walls.

Troyes is a typical medieval town. Buildings crowd in on each other and in many streets the upper stories sag so far over the street that it is possible to step from one rooftop to the other. The streets are unpaved; in winter, the rains turn them to muddy swamps but right now in summer they are dusty dirt tracks, streaked with animal dung and human waste that has been thrown from windows. A rich merchant might live in a house that is two or even three or four storeys tall, while a poor family lives in a single room and many buildings in town are shacks and hovels. There are barns and cowsheds even on main streets. The town echoes to the sound of many churchbells.

Troyes circa 1250



Key

1. Castle of the Count
2. Palace of the Count
3. Cathedral of St. Pierre
4. Templar Commandery
5. Alix's House
6. The Church of St. Jean au Marche
7. Hospital-Dieu-le-Comte



Locations

1. Castle of the Count: This fortification is not the seat of the Counts of Champagne – their seat is in Provins but Count Henry is resident in Troyes for the duration of the fair.

2. Palace of the Count: The castle is used only in times of war; this smaller palace is the usual home of the count and is vastly more comfortable than the draughty castle.

3. Cathedral of St. Pierre: There are more than a dozen churches, not to mention a handful of abbeys, priories and friaries in the city, however, this is the most important. The bishop of Troyes is a wealthy and influential figure in the church but the current cathedral does not reflect his power, being comparatively small and humble.

4. Templar Commandery: The Templars have long been associated with this region; the order was officially recognised here at the Council of Troyes in 1129 and in the 80 years since, they have built this great commandery on the Rue du Temple. The Templar order is heavily involved with the Fair; they enjoy a monopoly on wool weighing and also work as bankers and money-changers.

5. Alix's House: This is the home of Gerner, a merchant of Troyes and his wife Alix; she is a friend of the Order. See *Alix*, on page 20.

6. Ghetto: The 'Broce aux Juifs' is the Jewish district of the city. In this time of crusades and religious fervour, the Jews of Europe often suffer attacks from Christian youths. Those of Troyes, though, are so important to the smooth running of the all-important fair that they enjoy the protection of the Count.

7. The Church of St. Jean au Marché: The Feast of St. Jean takes place during the Hot Fair and so the church of St. Jean is the traditional centre of the fair.

8. Hospital-Dieu-le-Comte: This hospital was endowed by Count Henry I and is acclaimed as one of the greatest centres of healing in Europe.

The Champagne Fair

There are six Fairs of Champagne held each year; two in the nearby city of Provins, two in Troyes and one each in Lagny and Bar-sur-Arbe. Merchants come from all over Europe to trade at the Fair. The first 10 days of the Fair are given over to the trade of cloth and wool, then the Fair's focus switches to spices, cheeses and other goods that must be weighed. All through the Fair, there is trade in other goods, from livestock to precious metals or weapons. The money-changers and money-lenders also do great business during the Fair; the importance of the Fair as a clearing place for debts and a time to settle accounts between distant trading partners cannot be understated.

The fair is overseen by two Keepers of the Fair, drawn from the ranks of the town's merchants and burghers. These Keepers oversee a small army of clerks, notaries, accountants, assayers and servants, including more than 100 guards. Crimes committed at the Fair are tried at the Fair; those found guilty may be exiled from Troyes and, worse, unable to return to

their home city – if their former home lets them return, then the merchants of that city will be banned from future Fairs. The threat of economic isolation is a powerful one, so the Fair is surprisingly crime-free despite the vast wealth that flows through it.

The heart of the Fair is the Church of St. Jean on the Grande Rue but there are stalls and merchant halls spread throughout the city. Every inn in the town is full; travellers rent rooms in private houses or sleep in tents. The streets of Troyes ring with foreign voices and the cries of salesmen, hawking everything from fish to magical charms and relics from the Holy Land.

Outside the Walls

Troyes is partially surrounded by forest, although much of the woodland has been cleared for farming. There are several major castles within a short ride of the town. One plays a major role in this adventure – the Chateau du Paynes, a Templar castle some seven miles north-east from the town. This castle was the home of the knight who founded the Templars 80 years ago, Hugh de Paynes.

Another important location is the leper colony, the Leperserie des Deux Eaux, in the woods east of town.

Time Keeping In Troyes

The clock keeps ticking while the characters are in Troyes. Most avenues of investigation take half a day to follow and it similarly takes half a day to get from Troyes to one of the outlying locations and back again. The players will likely have to split up to follow every lead – if they do so, the GM should cut from one character to another at dramatically appropriate moments, so that none of the players feel left out of the game.

Important NPCs

Count Henry II

The dashing young Count has only just come into his own. His father, Henry I, died eight years ago and his mother Marie ruled in his stead until Henry II came of age. His mother is the sister of King Philip II of France, making Henry one of the most important nobles in the whole country. He is unmarried and will not take a bride until he returns from Crusade. The Hot Fair is one of the last duties he must oversee before departing. (In fact, Henry II will never return from the Holy Land – in three year's time, he marries Queen Isabella of Jerusalem and becomes King of Jerusalem.)

Henry II is brash and vigorous, he cannot wait to be off with his knights. Funding his expedition requires a huge amount of money and he is on the verge of begging the county to equip his army. Any disruption to the Champagne Fair incurs his wrath.



Bishop Manassé II

The elderly bishop of Troyes was once a keen political operator, a power-broker and manipulator but senility overcame him in the last few years. Today, Manassé is a kindly old fellow, easily confused and more than a little simple. His aides try to keep him away from the common folk, in case he hands over the keys to the treasury to some beggar or mistakes a stray dog for an angel again.

Aribert and Foulque

These two merchants – a moneylender and a spice-trader respectively – are the elected Keepers of the Fair. Both are wealthy residents of Troyes but neither has a reputation for complete honesty. The word on the street is that Aribert is a pawn of the Templars, who bought up many of his debts and now play him like a puppet. As for Foulque, while he has contacts and trading partners that stretch from Paris to Baghdad, business is just a means to an end to him; he is said to be a mystic and possibly a secret alchemist, and has spent a great deal on relics and magical items from the East.

Street Encounters

If the characters are exploring the streets of Troyes, throw in one of the encounters described here. Some of them give clues to the main investigation.

1. Whispers of Heresy: The characters overhear two citizens talking about the Joyous, a new band of preachers and holy people who will soon come to deliver Troyes from sin. They are joyous because they have been washed clean of all taint and so live in Heaven and on Earth at once. According to the rumour, the Joyous walk amongst the townsfolk in disguise but soon will reveal themselves in glory!

2. Wild Horse: A horse, panicked by the jostling crowds, bolts down the road in a wild charge, dragging a young stableboy behind it. One character is right in the path of the stampeding beast. A simple (+20%) Evade test lets the character dodge the horse but the stable boy will have his skull smashed to pieces against the ground unless the characters intervene to save him.

3. The Madman: A deranged lunatic begins to preach to the crowd. He announces that he is John the Baptist returned and that soon all will know the joys of the kingdom of Heaven. Laugh, laugh and the burden will be lifted from your hearts! The Fair guards soon arrive and shove the madman into the filth of an alleyway to shut him up but that just makes him laugh in a disturbing, high-pitched and incessant cackle. Most of the crowd are amused by the madman's plight but the characters glimpse a pair of Templar monks who look stony-faced and worried at the madman's antics.

4. The Moneylender: The characters come upon a knot of young men, probably servants and apprentices, who are beating up an older man. The victim is obviously one of the

Jews of Troyes. If the characters intervene, the gang argues that the Jew is a moneylender and a practitioner of usury; worse, he refused to lend money to outfit one of the gang's friends, Gilbert, as a knight to go with Count Henry II on crusade. The old Jew begs for mercy; he did indeed refuse the request, because he believes Gilbert will certainly die on crusade and the youth could offer no surety except his word and the promise of booty from the Saracens.

5. Wonders of the East: One booth in the market is selling medicines and wonders from afar, not cloth. A Lore (Occult) test suggests that there are a few genuine scrolls amid the dross – nothing especially important or powerful and nothing that the Order does not already have in the vaults 10 times over but still something that should not fall into the hands of the impious. How do the characters ensure these scrolls do not fall into the wrong hands?

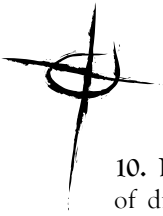
6. Pickpocket: A girl of eight years is a sneak-thief (Sleight 70%) who tries to steal the purse of one of the characters as they walk along a crowded street.

7. A Seller of Relics: If the characters are wearing monk's robes, then they are approached by another merchant. He introduces himself as Istario, a Venetian merchant. When in Byzantium, he obtained a most holy relic, one of Jesus' baby teeth, and now finding himself in need of money, he is prepared to sell the Holy Tooth for a reasonable price. Could the characters perhaps introduce him to a wealthy bishop or priest who would be interested in having such a relic displayed in their church?

The tooth is not actually a tooth at all but it is magical. It was created more than 1,000 years ago by Egyptian alchemists. It is a tiny insect egg, wrapped in a shell of magical nacre. The insect – a golden-green fly that shines in the darkness – that slumbers within possesses supernatural powers – anyone stung by it gains +50% to the Spirit Walking skill for 2d6 minutes but also suffers two levels of fatigue. The egg can be hatched by breaking it. Note that if the insect escapes, it will sting several people in the crowd, allowing them to see the spirit world and terrifying them.

8. The Beggar: A beggar approaches the characters, asking for alms. He says that he was recently cursed with leprosy but was turned away from the leper colony because they did not want another mouth to feed. He must therefore rely on the charity of others. A successful Medicine or Insight test confirms that he is actually telling the truth – he is a leper and should therefore have been accepted into the colony.

9. Street Thieves: A band of half-a-dozen thugs try to forcibly extract money from the monks. The characters can either flee to the safety of the Fair guards, or else show the thugs the virtues of Order combat training.



10. Drunken Louts: The characters are abused by a gang of drunken louts, who demand entertainment. The leader of the gang is Philip of Provins, a cousin of King Philip and an influential lord. Attacking or injuring him will bring the wrath of Count Henry down on the characters.

Finding Shelter

The obvious place to stay in town is with Rene's contact Alix. Alternatively, the characters can just camp on the pasturage in the south of town or outside the walls entirely. Unsubtle characters can also stride up to the bishop, wave their Blessed Rings and demand rooms in his palace.

Alix, Wife of Gerner

Two dozen years ago, Alix was taken by the Order and trained to be a Hieronun. She failed to complete the trials and never came to Mont St-Michel; instead, she left the nunnery and returned to the secular world. The Order ensured that, despite her low birth, she had the money and education to find a good husband – in her case, Gerner, a wealthy merchant of Troyes.

Alix has been an informant for the Order all her life. She reports to Rene in Paris once every six months on average by letter, passing on rumours and secrets. She owes the Order a great debt but her days in the nunnery are now far behind her and if she could extricate herself from her arrangement with Rene, she would. Given a choice, she would much prefer to be the wife of a rich noble instead of a spy. She wants to keep the two halves of her life as separate as possible.

Gerner

Gerner, her husband, has no idea that his beloved wife spent her childhood being trained to fight and kill for a secret order of holy assassins. He knows that she writes to a priest in Paris every so often but he believes that it is part of her religious devotions, which he indulges out of fondness. He is a busy, self-absorbed man who considers the Troyes cloth trade to be the centre of the world and the highest possible calling. If the characters want to talk about the price of English wool versus Flemish linen, he is eager to expound further on such topics.

Fortunately for the characters, Gerner is busy with the Fair most of the time and barely notices visitors coming and

going as long as they stay out of his way. However, if the characters interfere with his business or, say, getting into a running battle with the Fair guards or the heretics in his living room, he will protest quite vigorously.

The House

Gerner's house is a typical merchant dwelling. On the ground floor is the shop and workroom. The shop opens directly onto the street via a large window, while in the back room Gerner's apprentices cut and fold cloth. The middle two floors are the family's living quarters and dining room, while the servants live in the attic. There is a stable and storerooms at the back of the house.

Alix's Loyalty

The characters may take Rene's advice and spy on Alix for a day or two to ensure she is loyal to the Order. Her behaviour is almost entirely consistent with a burgher's wife; she oversees the household, hosts dinners for important guests from abroad and embroiders in the workroom. While the characters are watching her, she invites the occultist Foulque, one of the two Keepers of the Fair, to dinner; she is certainly associating with the rich and powerful.

Alix's Tale

Once the characters present themselves to Alix, she ushers them into the upstairs room as quickly as possible. She is torn between relief that there is someone here to deal with the Heresiarch and frustration that she once again has to give shelter to a band of heavily armed assassins without her husband asking too many questions.

'Tell Rene that this is the last time. This is it. I left the House of Sophia years ago, I cannot keep jumping every time your Masters whistle. You can stay here until the task is done if you must but I pray you, stay out of the way. I am Gerner's wife now, not a ward of the Order.'

She repeats the account she gave to Rene (see handout #1 – page 16), then tells the characters what has happened since the first band of Hieromonks arrived.

'They stayed in the stables here. I told my husband that they were friars from the Papal States, come to preach at the fair. They stayed here for two days, then they left in the middle of the night. One of them had a...what do you call it? One of those new little brass things? The Hoffman Device, is it? One of those. They left the city by St. Jacques' Gate, going east. I have not seen them since.'

'There has been little sign of this Heresiarch, either but people keep talking about him. The danger has not passed, I am sure.'



Pursued By Demons

This is the second interstitial scene where the players get to play the insane Hieromonks. Hand out the pregenerated characters again. You should also collect the players' own character sheets and put them to one side – this has no bearing on this encounter but plays a part in *Demon Slayers*, page 45.

Time has no meaning here in Hell. There is night and day – or, at least, the skies burn hotter at times and at others the shadows crowd around you like a swarm of hungry insects – but you have lost track of the whirling of the heavens. What does it matter when you are damned?

The souls you rescued from the demon prison told you that you were in Hell. Perhaps the Heresiarch killed you with a spell and you were condemned here, or perhaps you still live and his magic opened a gate to Hell. However it happened, you are stuck here and the demons are close on your heels.

A band of demonic hunters – things that look like men with the legs of storks and the heads of wolves – are chasing you through the obsidian maze. You are exhausted beyond measure and you must make your stand soon, or perish. But where will you fight them? The maze of black stone spikes stretches for miles all around but you passed a dark cave a short while ago and you could double back. The souls you rescue chatter that there is a bridge over a chasm just ahead – if you quicken your pace, you might be able to reach it before the demons catch you.

The characters have three obvious options – fight in the woods, take refuge in the cave or try to reach the bridge.

Fighting in the Woods

These woods are thick and heavily overgrown. Using ranged weapons is almost impossible (maximum range is only 30 metres). The characters can hide in the trees and attack from above, or fight with their backs to a tree to avoid being surrounded.

Fighting in the 'Cave'

The 'cave' is actually a peasant's shack where a forester and his family live. The bewitched monks perceive them

as lizard-like horrors. If the characters are going to hide in the cave, they need to either slaughter or drive out the lizard creatures. In reality, they are butchering an innocent family.

Fighting on the Bridge

To the hallucinating monks, the bridge is a narrow span of stone over a fiery gorge. In reality, it is a small wooden bridge over a fast-flowing stream. A Hieromonk who falls into the 'gorge' dies of shock.

The Pursuers

The 'stork-demons' that the insane Hieromonks perceive are actually Fair Guards, sent from Troyes to investigate the attack on the caravan a few days earlier. They believe they are looking for unusually brutal thieves, not a band of crazed monks. There are eight guards led by an armoured knight, Baldewyn of Troyes.

It should be relatively easy for the Hieromonks to defeat the Fair Guards, especially if they fight with the customary brutality of Player Characters. Baldewyn will fight to the death; the guards are less willing to sell their lives and will flee as soon as the fight turns against them or the Hieromonks start using wonder-weapons or sorcery. Try to let some of the guards escape, as this will cause problems for the Player Characters – see *Accusations*, page 30.

Baldewyn of Troyes

One of Count Henry's knights, Baldewyn rather hopes that the bandits include a knight or two who is down on their luck and can be captured for ransom. Only a few years ago, a bad harvest near Troyes forced some once-wealthy knights to rob churches for money and there are still noble outlaws in the woods. He is a doughty knight, tenacious as a badger.

Fair Guards

The Fair Guards are relatively lightly armed, as their duties usually involve dealing with pickpockets, thieves and argumentative merchants.



Baldewyn

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	9	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	9	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	9	19-20	Head	5/6

Combat Actions 2

Armour: Chainmail

Damage Modifier +1D2

Equipment: Longsword, Kite Shield

Magic Points 9

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +9 (+3 in armour)

Notable Skills: Athletics 50%, Courtesy 40%, Perception 40%, Persistence 45%, Resilience 50%, Ride 60%, Track 40%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	M	L	65%	1D8	6/12
and Shield	H	S	65%	1D4	4/18

Fair Guards

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	9	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	9	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	9	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	9	19-20	Head	2/5

Combat Actions 2

Armour: Leather

Damage Modifier +0

Equipment: Spear, Club or Sword

Magic Points 9

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +9 (+6 in armour)

Notable Skills: Athletics 40%, Evade 30%, Insight 30%, Perception 40%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 40%, Streetwise 30%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Spear	M	L	40%	1D8+1	4/5
Club	M	S	40%	1D6	4/4
Sword	M	M	40%	1D8	6/10



Trail of the Heresiarch

Having arrived in Troyes, the characters can begin their hunt for the Heresiarch. There are multiple potential avenues of investigation that they can pursue. While in Troyes, there are also several events that may throw new light on the mystery. Some of these events happen on a particular day, others should be triggered by the GM depending on circumstances.

Secrets of the Streets

The characters hit the crowded streets of Troyes, searching for rumours and looking for signs of the heretical cult. There are several sections of Troyes society that the characters might investigate; each one takes half a day's questioning to gather all the clues.

The Nobility

The characters approach the court of Count Henry and his knights. A Courtesy test is needed to gather rumours here, modified by -20% if the characters are not suitably attired (no travel-stained monks gets into the palace unless they have a very good reason to be there) and by +20% if one of the characters is of noble blood or is a trained knight.

With a successful Courtesy test, the characters discover the following rumours:

- Count Henry is borrowing money heavily to pay for his crusade; many of the moneylenders are waiting until the fair before entering into a contract with Henry.
- If the moneylenders refuse, then he will have to turn to the Templars, which will give the knights considerable influence over his actions in the Holy Land.
- The nobles have heard nothing of this heresy; all the believers in the new faith seem to be among the poorer classes.
- There are stories about unusually daring bandits; Henry sent a knight named Baldewyn out with the Fair Guards to chase them off.

A Critical Success reveals that Count Henry intervened in the election of the Keepers of the Fair. Normally, the Keepers are elected from amongst the nobles and merchants of the city but this year Henry unofficially demanded that Aribert and Foulque be given the positions.

While the characters are at the palace, it is an excellent time to run *The Tourney* (day 7) or *The Count and the Fair* (day 8).

The Church

This assumes the characters approach the church covertly, without revealing themselves as Hieromonks. Most clergy are hesitant about talking too much to the Order's Inquisitors, so it is better to ask questions first and pull out the Blessed Rings later. An Influence test is needed to turn up the following rumours (-20% if the characters have already revealed themselves to be Hieromonks, +20% for good roleplaying:

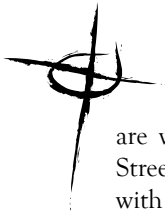
- Bishop Manassé is a little touched in the head; Father Daison has taken over the day-to-day running of the cathedral and the diocese.
- Father Daison is busy dealing with some dispute between the Parisian mercers and representatives of the church. Apparently they are trying to cheat their way out of certain debts to the church. How shameful! (This can lead into *The Trail of Nabon*, on page 29).
- The church has indeed heard tales of these heretics; they call themselves the Joyful People. The priests of the town have castigated them in the sermons but so far the heretics have not acted openly. No doubt it is a fancy from abroad brought by some merchant. The Fair is always a chaotic and strange time, when people adopt new fashions and profess odd things. Once the Fair is over, sanity and normality will hold sway again. Patience, brothers!

A Critical Success picks up the rumour that something strange is going on at the leper colony outside town - Father Michel visits the colony once a week to perform mass for the unclean and he is now said to be very unwell but not with the curse of leprosy. No, it is said that his mind is unhinged and he is now mad.

See also *The Leper Colony*, page 35.

The Merchants

Picking up rumours at the fair is easier than picking up fleas from a mangy dog; along with cloth, cheese and spices, gossip and news is perhaps the most popular commodity at the Fair. The characters can get a better sense of the rumours if they



are willing to buy and haggle. They may roll Influence or Streetwise to pick up rumours and may augment either roll with Evaluate.

Most of the rumours from the merchants concern far-off events – disputes between the French and the Normans, Emperor Barbarossa's continuing disputes with the cities of Lombardy, stories of how all Genoese are lying bastards, tales of the Holy Land – but a few stories are of relevance to this investigation:

- At least one caravan was attacked on the way to the Fair. What fool would dare do such a thing? Not only will he surely be hanged by either the Fair Guard or Count Henry but they will never let his family or his city back into the Fair!
- The Keepers of the Fair this year are not doing the best job, all things considered. Everyone knows Aribert is in the pocket of the Parisian guilds/the Lombards/the Jews/the Templars, depending on who you ask and Foulque is just... strange, really.
- Heretics! You mean those stories about those strange men who are talking about joy and forgiveness? I thought they were Bougres or Free Spirits or Poor Brothers. I always knew the Church thought joy was sinful! But no, I've not heard them preach to anyone in the market.
- Friend, we are the moneylenders in the temple who Our Lord drove into the street. We are here to sell, not listen to preachers. We get enough of that at home.

A Critical Success turns up one very interesting rumour from an Italian merchant. He says that a few months ago he travelled up from Genoa to Troyes in a caravan that included a dozen Knights Templar. The Templars were newly returned from the Levant and brought with them a large chest. They were very secretive about its contents and their mission. They did not go to the Templar commandery in town but instead were bound for a nearby castle.

A Perception or Streetwise test in the market district lets the character notice a strange street entertainer in the middle of the crowds. He wears a leather mask over his face but the mask itself has the image of a wildly grinning man on it. This is one of the mad lepers – see *Madmen in the Streets*, page 30. If the characters attempt to capture or chase the street entertainer, he flees through the crowd and tries to lead them into the ambush that is part of *Madmen in the Streets*.

The Poor

The tanner's district south of the Rue Notre Dame and the alleyways around the old town are the poorer regions of Troyes. During the Fair, even these areas are overcrowded with strange visitors. The poor are often most receptive to the honeyed words of heretics.

Streetwise or Influence rolls are needed to pick up rumours in the poor district. Disguise can be used to augment these rolls, if the character pretends to be a poor pilgrim or gives alms.

- A few Joyful People visit Troyes each day. They wear masks because their faces shine with the light of God. They do not preach openly but instead hold small meetings in houses. Only a chosen few are told where these meetings are and those who are picked seem to change each time. If the characters follow this lead, see *Searching for Heretics*, page 25.
- The Joyful People dwell in the woods outside the city, or somewhere nearby anyway. They say that they are free of sin and dwell in Paradise and that soon the Joyous One will come and save everyone.

A Critical Success picks up a really interesting rumour: apparently, a forester saw four Knights Templar riding through the woods, as if searching for something – or someone. They stopped the forester and asked him if he had seen the 'Joyous One'.

Characters exploring the poor district may spot masked figures in the streets – see *Madmen in the Streets*, page 30.

The first Hieromonks

Rene sent four Hieromonks to investigate the Heresiarch before the characters and discovering their fate will put the Player Characters on the trail of the enemy.

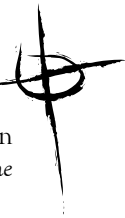
The Prior Investigation

Claude, Andrew, Renaud and Victor arrived in Troyes on the 12th of July, more than three weeks before the Player Characters. They presented themselves to Alix and rested after their long journey before beginning their investigation. Andrew had a Hoffman Device and was able to use it to locate the Heresiarch. According to their readings, the Heresiarch was somewhere in the woods east of town.

They followed the trail into the woods and discovered the leper colony. They crept into the colony and identified the Heresiarch, then fell upon him with knives, believing they could kill him easily. They were wrong – the spirit bewitched them and convinced them they were in Hell. The Hieromonks blundered out of the leper colony and into the forest.

Alix's House

Claude and his comrades stayed in the stables at the back of Gerner's house. Alix ordered the servants to seal the room until the Player Characters arrived. A quick search of the room turns up two useful clues. The first is a series of scratchings and charcoal marks on one wall, that a successful Lore (Occult) roll correctly interprets as calculations related to a Hoffman Device. If the characters have a Hoffman Device with them,



then they gain a +20% to Lore (Occult) rolls when using it in Troyes, as they can build on Andrew's earlier observations. The second item is a bundle of cloth. Unwrapping the bundle reveals its contents – a human forearm, chopped off with a single blow from a sword! The flesh of the limb is pock-marked and rotten in places. A successful Difficult (-20%) Medicine roll suggests that the previous owner of the limb is suffering from a plague, probably leprosy. This is a clear clue that points the way to the leper colony.

Alix will be simultaneously furious and sickened if the characters parade around her house waving a leper arm. Getting rid of the limb quietly is an excellent idea.

Looking for the Black Monks

The first Hieromonks were wearing the standard robes of the Order, so the characters can ask around town about the black monks. Several people remember seeing black-robed monks in the city, especially in the poor district. After Day 7, once the insane monks have fought Baldewyn and the Fair Guard, then rumours start circulating of crazy monks in the forest. If the characters do not immediately disguise themselves as something other than black monks, then run *Accusations!*, on page 30.

Searching for Heretics

The characters' mission is to find heretics and eliminate them, so they can take the direct approach – plunge into the town and search for those spreading the sinful gospel of the Joyful People.

The Joyous One, the Heresiarch himself is in the leper colony (at least until Day 8) but he does not enter the town himself. Instead, he has inspired a number of the lepers to be his preachers and prophets. These madmen are the ones who are spreading the heresy of the Joyful People. They wear leather masks with smiling faces and black gloves to hide their leprous flesh. Thanks to the Joyous One's magic, the enchanted lepers are supernaturally persuasive and inspiring. They truly believe they are the prophets of the Old Testament reborn into new and perfect flesh.

Up until Day 8, the Joyful People are slowly spreading their heresy. Four or five Joyful People leave the leprosarium and head into town via the eastern gate. Once inside the walls of Troyes, they retrieve their leather masks from their allies within the town. Some of the Joyful People go to the poor district, to spread the gospel. Others visit the Fair, disguised as street entertainers, to spy on events there.

After Day 9, the cult takes control of the Templar fortress and through the Templars, Aribert the Keeper of the Fair. The Fair Guards are ordered to let the Joyful People into the city when they arrive en masse on Day 12.

If the characters try following one of the Joyful People, then run *Madmen in the Streets* if they do so in Troyes, or else see *The Leper Colony* if they do so in the woods outside town.

Cult Meetings

The Joyful People hold religious ceremonies once a day in the town, initially in the poor district but advancing into the richer parts of town as their influence grows. The cult prefers to invite those who are useful – influential or trusted people, guards, strong workers – but they take anyone they can get. A single Player Character might be able to disguise himself as a burgher of Troyes and sneak into a meeting; this requires a Difficult (-20%) Disguise test and a Difficult (-20%) Influence test to allay suspicion. No more than one Hieromonk can sneak into a meeting, although other characters could lurk nearby.

In these ceremonies, the masked Joyful Person takes four or five supplicants into a dark room and speaks to them of the Joyous One who is to come. The content of the ceremony varies but the core of the message remains the same. When the Joyous One comes to Troyes, then the old order of things will be turned upside down. Those who are poor shall be rich, those who are downtrodden shall be exalted and those who are sinful will be purified, however, those who are wealthy shall be beggared, those who are masters shall be servants and those who claim false piety will be damned. Until the Joyous One comes, spread his message and await the day of change.

As part of the meeting, those being initiated into the cult must drink a cup of wine which contains a powerful drug. Anyone who imbibes must make a Resilience test opposed by the drug's POT of 65; if the drug wins, the character feels euphoric and energetic for several hours, suffering a -20% penalty to all Persistence rolls in this time. A critical failure on the roll means the character hallucinates wildly, suffering a -40% penalty to Persistence rolls. If the character wins, he merely feels mildly intoxicated.

The Heretics

The characters can eliminate individual heretics in a variety of ways, such as the traditional knife in the ribs, appealing to Count Henry or the bishop to imprison them, or even setting up a stake in the middle of Troyes and burning the heretics alive. This does not address the root of the problem, for as long as the Heresiarch is out there, the heresy will continue to grow.

Capturing and interrogating heretics is potentially more useful. The cult's Fanaticism score gives them a bonus to Persistence but imaginative and dogged interrogation can extract some information from the lay members of the cult. The characters can learn that the Joyful People live somewhere east of the town and are eager to recruit more followers. They seem especially interested in recruiting merchants and those involved in the Fair. The characters can learn the location of cult meetings in the poor district.



Interrogating one of the lepers is an exercise in frustration. The Joyful are bewitched and believe they are in Paradise, or are Elijah or John the Baptist or St. Paul or some other divine figure. Threats and torture seem to them to be the caresses of angels and songs of praise.

Approaching the Church

The characters need to use their Blessed Rings to assume authority in Troyes. The most likely target for the players is Bishop Manassé, which effectively means dealing with his assistant, Father Daison. The church's influence in Troyes is considerable but they are ill-equipped to deal with the threat of the Joyful People.

Bishop Manassé

The elderly bishop of the town is quite senile. He will happily receive the characters in his palace if they demand an audience but he has the attention span of an excited squirrel. If they talk about heresy, he will reminisce about previous ecclesiastical councils in Troyes where he dealt with other heresies but pays no attention to the current problem. He is extremely excitable but getting him enthused about anything risks inducing a heart attack.

Father Daison

Daison is Manassé's aid and is the effective manager of the diocese. He has no noble blood or family connections, so he can never hope to be chosen as the replacement bishop. His only hope of retaining any influence or power is to keep Manassé alive as long as possible. He is a harried, middle-aged priest who is deeply suspicious of anything that could take his position away from him.

The Parisian Guild

Daison's current obsession is with a contract from the Parisian mercenaries' guild – the same contract that Nabon is involved with. As the characters probably already know, the contract was destroyed en route to Troyes, leaving the question of whether or not the mercenaries will actually pay up this year. If Daison loses that money, then questions will be asked, the competence of Bishop Manassé will come under scrutiny and the priest will almost certainly lose his position. Daison has to get the mercenaries to pay up.

If the characters come to the church in Troyes for aid, then Daison will argue that he is the best person to talk to – he speaks for the bishop – but that he cannot act freely unless they intervene in The Trial of Nabon (see page 29) and get the mercer's guild to pay up this year. If the characters do this (or if they force the issue, arguing that dealing with the heresy is vastly more important than petty financial arguments), then Daison tells them of Father Michel, the priest who ministers to the leper colony. He has gone insane and is being kept in the Hospital-Dieu-le-Comte.

Father Michel

This kindly priest visited the leprosarium outside Troyes twice a week to celebrate mass. On June 16th, Michel was the first to discover that the Joyous One was possessing one of the lepers. The brave young priest attempted to exorcise the spirit but failed. The Joyous One drove him insane. Michel wandered back into Troyes and was taken in by the church before anyone discovered him spouting heresies. They locked him up in a room in the hospital and prayed he would recover from this sudden madness. He is kept under 'guard' – there is a student from the seminary stationed outside his door at all times.

Worse, Michel has contracted leprosy and the disease is spreading incredibly quickly. Already his hands and face are rotting and his nose is attached only by a tiny strip of skin. The sweet smell of rot and decay pervades him. Make it clear that the last thing anyone wants is Michel laying his wormy hands on them. He is tied to the bed with ropes.

If the characters speak to Father Michel, they can try navigating his rambling account. The Joyous One has cursed Michel to believe that he is a great healer who can cure the sick but that everyone else in the world is dying of an assortment of hideous plagues.

'I went to the leprosarium and...there was a man there, his name was Jacques Taillebois... there was a demon in him. I wrestled with it and... God be praised! I drove it out and he was cured of his leprosy. I saw his smiling face... Iasu, I cured them all! My hands burn with the power of God! Lord, I am not worthy to receive you but only say the word and I shall heal you!

Everyone...all of you, brothers, I see your suffering. I can see the plague rotting your flesh, the worms crawling in your skin, the death-rattle in your lungs. Come close, come close and I shall heal you! God has given me the power to heal!

If asked about the demon in Jacques Taillebois, Michel describes it as follows: *'It laughed and said it would grant my wishes and bring me great joy. It tempted me with my heart's desire but I held true! I held true! The Lord protected me and I drove the demon out with the power of God! It... his face, Jacques' face, it was twisted and he smiled so wide he bled!'*

Church Aid

The church can provide shelter, money and political pull. The bishop, for example, has enough influence to request troops from Count Henry if the characters need to storm the templar castle.

Approaching the Templars

Since their founding two generations ago, the Templars have accrued influence and power to rival the greatest nobles of Christendom. In the region around Troyes, they are especially



strong. There are two Templar fortresses nearby. In the heart of the new town of Troyes, just south of the Fair, there is the Templar commandery. This is part palace, part armoury and part bank. The Templars' network of castles stretches from England to Jerusalem and the order is very wealthy. Instead of transporting treasure from one country to another, a merchant can deposit his gold in one Templar castle, travel to another and withdraw an equal amount (less the knight's fee) there using a letter of credit. The Templars have invented international banking and the Troyes commandery is a major part of this network. Over the course of the Fair, the commandery is crowded with rich merchants depositing their profits or borrowing money from the knights.

The Templars also have a monopoly on the weighing of wool, so half the deals involving textiles and clothing at the market go through the commandery and the Temple takes its cut of every one. This monopoly was a gift from Count Henry's father and many merchants grumble about the Templars' undue influence over the market.

Characters observing traffic in the commandery will note that Aribert, one of the two Keepers of the Fair, visits two or three times a day. Aribert is a pawn of the Temple; they are using his influence in the Fair to take a greater share of the profits. See *At The Champagne Fair*, page 27.

The second Templar fortress near Troyes is the Chateau du Paynes. Unlike the commandery, which is effectively a civic building, the Chateau du Paynes is a military stronghold. Visitors are welcome at the commandery; the chateau is off limits and intruders will be forcibly turned away. If the characters visit *The Chateau du Paynes*, see page 38.

The highest-ranking templar at the commandery is Audal. He is a stocky, badger-like man who has little interest in anything other than the smooth running of the Temple's financial affairs. He tries to stonewall any questions about the Templars' activities. If the characters ask about the Templars' knowledge of the Joyful People, or the first group of Hieromonks, or the mysterious cargo that was transported to Troyes by road a few weeks ago, then Audal claims that he is just a banker and has no information on any of these things.

If the characters force the issue, or use their Blessed Rings, then a visibly angered Audal says that there is another templar castle nearby and that he will send word to Master Jerome, the commander of that castle, to ask him for news. Audal cautions the characters not to approach the Chateau du Paynes - intruders and visitors are not welcome and the castle is 'protected'. He will not elaborate on the nature of the protections but will simply say that if Master Jerome has any need to speak with the Hieromonks or their nameless Order, he will send word through the commandery.

On Day 10, the commandery abruptly closes. See *The Templars Close For Business*, page 31.

At The Champagne fair

The players may assume that the Champagne Fair is more important to the mystery than it actually is and hence investigate goings-on at the feast of St. Jean.

Most of the Events in Troyes take place at the Fair. Characters lurking around the market will see or hear most of these happenings. The characters can also pick up rumours from the merchants.

The Fair Guard

The Fair Guard is responsible for maintaining order and ensuring the safety of all those at the Fair. They are recruited mostly from citizens of Troyes but there are also hardened mercenaries among their number. The Fair Guard hold their own courts for any crimes related to the Fair, they patrol the roads and drive out bandits. They are responsible for protecting the various stalls and for opening and closing the markets each day.

If the characters cause a disruption at the Fair, then 1d4+1 Fair Guards arrive in 1d6 minutes. If the Fair Guards are unable to effectively deal with the disruption, then more guards are called in. For truly dangerous foes (which most likely includes the Player Characters), then veteran guards in heavier armour arrive to quell the disturbance.

If the Fair Guards are asked about current events, then their current major concerns are:

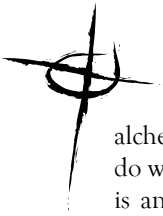
- The bandits on the road who attacked the merchant caravan from Paris. Baldewyn and his guards have been sent out and will surely deal with this problem. (After Day 7 and the events of *Pursued by Demons*, then the news spreads that the bandits slew the hunters. Soon after, the characters may run afoul of *Accusations*, page 30).
- The guards are aware of the strange masked entertainers or preachers or whatever they are; so far, they have been nothing more than a nuisance. The problem has been reported to the Keepers of the Fair.

The Heralds

Troyes also sends out heralds to nearby towns and villages to drum up interest in the fair. These heralds are excellent sources of gossip and rumours. If the characters seek out one of these heralds and get him drunk, or otherwise win his trust, then the herald tells of a strange event that happened a few weeks ago. The herald was riding back to Troyes when he encountered a merchant caravan that included a number of Knights Templar. The Templars headed for the chateau du Paynes; they threatened the herald and told him never to talk of their caravan and its strange cargo to anyone.

Foulque, the Keeper of the Fair

According to Alix's letter, Foulque is suspected of being an alchemist and a sorcerer. The old spicer does indeed dabble in



alchemy, although this is just a red herring and has nothing to do with the Heresiarch or any of the other mysteries. Foulque is an old and bitter man; a plague took his wife and three children 10 years ago and he has lived on alone in his mansion. He is obsessed with immortality and magical methods of restoring health. His trade in spices funds his experiments with alchemy and allows him to smuggle mummy dust and other rare items from the east.

Foulque's appointment as Keeper of the Fair stems from an arrangement he made with Count Henry. In exchange for funding for Henry's crusade, Foulque is permitted to experiment on the prisoners in the count's gaol. The alchemist is trying to perfect a formula that restores dead flesh; the fresher the corpse, the better for Foulque's experiments. Such experiments are forbidden under normal circumstances but with the protection of the count, Foulque hopes to avoid excommunication, imprisonment or incineration.

If the characters are arrested by the Fair Guard (as a result of *Accusation* or for other crimes), they may be handed over to Foulque.

In Foulque's mansion on the Rue du Domino, there are a dozen corpses in the basement. Some were recently executed by the Count; others were condemned prisoners who were poisoned by Foulque's experiments. The upper rooms contain Foulque's laboratory and workroom, where alembics and crucibles bubble with bizarre compounds. A character with Lore (alchemy) or Lore (occult) can tell that Foulque is experimenting with healing compounds. The characters also find a letter from Foulque to one 'Hernaudin of Provins', thanking him for his advice and promising to send him the 'ichor of the hydra' as soon as it can be procured. See *The Cursed Tower of Provins* for more details on the mysterious Hernaudin.

Foulque and the Zombies: The alchemist corresponds with several other occultists across Europe. He has heard rumours of mysterious black-clad assassins and is terrified at the thought of being murdered before he perfects his immortality potion.

If the characters do investigate Foulque and are spotted, then the alchemist leaps to the conclusion that they are here to kill him. He panics and runs down to the basement, where he treats the corpses with another of his alchemical concoctions - a compound that temporarily revivifies dead flesh, turning them into short-lived zombies. The dozen corpses rise up as shambling horrors and attack anyone and everyone in the house. These creatures only last a short time - the toxic chemicals injected into them makes their veins bulge and burst, their skin sizzle and flake, and their internal liquids run in rivulets from every orifice.

Foulque as an Ally: If the characters approach Foulque in his official capacity as Keeper of the Fair and then raise the question of the occult as fellow adepts instead of church-

sponsored assassins, or if they put pressure on him through Count Henry, then the alchemist can be a useful ally. He is an expert in the occult and knows the Templar Jerome quite well. He knows that Jerome recently returned from the Holy Land bearing a strange treasure, which the templar has been trying to decode ever since.

Foulque can also provide healing draughts to the characters; he has made four such potions at great expense to himself but he will give them to the characters in exchange for a promise that the Order will leave him alone in future.

Aribert, the Keeper of the Fair

Unlike the sinister Foulque, Aribert knows nothing about the occult or the supernatural. He is a moneylender - a profession traditionally associated with the Jews, as Christians are not permitted to charge interest but of late there are more French and Italian moneychangers, lenders and bankers who skirt the law. Aribert's appointment to the post of Keeper of the Fair comes thanks to the machinations of the Templars. Aribert owes a lot of money to the Temple; they will forgive some of his debt if he arranges things at the fair to their benefit. The mastermind behind this scheme is Audal, the head Templar at the local commandery.

Characters who observe the events at the fair for a few hours and succeed in a Commerce roll notice that Aribert is arranging things to benefit the Templars. He makes some merchants stop trading while he examines their weights and measures, while he insists on any deal involving wool to be scrupulously weighed by the Templars. Merchants favoured by the Temple, on the other hand, get away with anything short of murder.

On Day 10, when the Commandery closes, Aribert and a few Fair Guards ride out to the Chateau du Paynes to investigate, where he runs afoul of the Heresiarch. See *Aribert the Insane*, page 46.

Supernatural Evidence

If the characters have a Hoffman Device, they can use it to trace the Joyous One's movements. Make a Lore (Occult) test for the character using the Hoffman Device and compare it to the table that follows. On Days 8 and 9, the Joyous One is in the custody of the Templars, within the warded walls of the Chateau du Paynes. After Day 10 and later, the Joyous One leaves Troyes but the presence of Jerome the Heresiarch distorts the readings.

Remember also that if the characters have the notes from Alix's stable, they get a +20% bonus to Lore (Occult) rolls when using the Hoffman Device.

Events in Troyes

These are events not triggered by the Player Characters. Some happen on a specific day; others happen at the whim



Hoffman Traces

Day	Success	Critical
5-7	Supernatural activity is concentrated to the east of Troyes.	Supernatural activity is concentrated to the east, somewhere near a river. There is also an oddly blank area to the north-east.
8-9	No readings beyond the normal background fluctuations.	It is as though the readings are masked. There is something to the north-east but it is oddly faint, as if concealed deliberately.
10-12	Extremely distorted readings; it is like the supernatural forces are right on top of the characters.	There are two strong sources of magic; one is moving away from Troyes, the other is strangely doubled, as if there were two entities in close proximity.

The Trial of Nabon

Guilty	Result
Nabon	Nabon is arrested. Judgement is made in favour of the Bishopric.
Purnelle	Daison demands that the Cathar heretic be imprisoned; in an attempt to protect his wife, Nabon draws his sword but is restrained by the Fair Guard. Nabon then falls in with the Joyful People, who promise to free Purnelle from the prison. He tells the Joyful People everything he knows about the PCs. Judgement is made in favour of the Bishopric.
Yon	Yon is arrested, imprisoned and ends up being given to Foulque for experiments. Judgement is made in favour of the Bishopric.
Daufer	The Fair Guards drag Daufer out of the wine shop, arrest him and hand him over to Foulque for experiments. Optionally, a revenge-crazed zombie Daufer attacks the PCs the following night - see <i>Foulque</i> , page 27. Judgement is made in favour of the guild.
The PCs	The Fair Guard try to arrest the PCs. Judgement is made in favour of the guild.

of the GM. The players do not have to get involved in any of these incidents.

The Trial of Nabon (Any day after the PCs arrive)

The merchant Nabon was bringing a contract to the Fair, arranging payment between the mercer's guild of Paris and the Bishop of Troyes. As the characters learned in *The Theft* (see page 15), the contract vanished on the road. The players may have already learned who was responsible for this crime, or at least come to their own conclusions about who the guilty party is but justice is still not satisfied.

Upon arrival in Troyes, Nabon reports the loss of the contract to the Keepers of the Fair and requires arbitration. The Bishop of Troyes 'sends' his aide Daison (or, more accurately, Father Daison nominates himself, as the Bishop of Troyes is too senile to do anything else). Daison demands that the Mercer's Guild be compelled to hold to the original contract. Nabon argues that without a physical contact to sign, he cannot speak on behalf of the guild and the whole deal will have to be renegotiated next year.

Regardless of what happened in *The Theft*, Nabon wants to blame the theft on his untrustworthy guard, Daufer. If the characters were

present after the contract was stolen, Nabon contacts them and asks them to testify against Daufer. If the blame can be pinned on the Lombard, then the Keeper of the Fair will be more likely to allow Nabon to postpone the payment. If the characters acted suspiciously in the camp or are already unpopular with the Keepers of the Fair, Nabon may even try blaming the crime on them.

Father Daison wants the guild to pay immediately and for this to happen, he needs to prove that Nabon himself (or someone close to him, like Yon the apprentice or Nabon's wife Purnelle) destroyed the contract. He too will turn to the Hieromonks, asking them to testify against Nabon.

The judgement of Aribert and Foulque depends on the testimony of the Player Characters.

Messages from Afar (Any day after the PCs arrive)

A messenger arrives in Troyes with one of the merchant caravans. He is Odo, a German tinsmith and an agent of the Order. He makes contact with Alix and delivers a sheaf of letters to her so she can pass them on to Rene the Black. These encoded letters have no relevance to this investigation but the characters must still deliver them to Mont St-Michel.



Optionally:

- Some of the letters are not encoded and contain plot hooks for side treks you can use between this adventure and the others.
- If the players are stuck, then Odo can tell them that he heard a rumour about a Templar caravan that came to Troyes several weeks ago, bearing a mysterious cargo.

Madmen in the Streets (Any day after the PCs arrive)

The Joyful People have agents in the market and the poor district of Troyes. These preachers or mummers wear elaborate leather masks to hide their leprosy-scarred features. If the characters threaten the cult, or their investigations get too close to the truth, then the crazed agents will attack.

This battle takes place in the narrow alleyways and rooftops of Troyes. Inspired by the magic of the Joyous One, the Joyful People are superhumanly quick and agile. The ambush begins with one of the Joyful People luring the characters by fleeing down an alleyway and taking refuge in a house at the end of the narrow passage. There are three more Joyful People waiting inside the house, while another three are on the rooftops overlooking the alleyway with bows.

The lure runs into the house, leaving the door unsecured behind him. The lead pursuer is allowed to follow the quarry into the house; one of the Joyful People then bars the door while the other three attack the now isolated hunter. Meanwhile, the three archers fire on the pursuer's comrades, who are left outside in the open beating on the barred door. The Joyous Ones then flee through the streets once more; at all times, they try to avoid a stand-up fight.

Remember, the Joyful People are insane. They believe themselves to be treading the diamond-strewn streets of the heavenly Jerusalem, or think they are experiencing incredible pleasure when they are actually in agonising pain. Death and dismemberment hold no fear for them.

In this fight, emphasise:

- The urban environment. Have the Joyful People flee over rooftops, leap over alleyways, clamber up walls and so on. Let the battle spill onto the streets.
- The disturbing nature of the foe. This is likely to be the first time the Player Characters have engaged in combat with the foe, so make the fight memorable. Make the players' collective skins crawl.
- The need to remain secret. The cult has nothing to lose but the Hieromonks must stay secret.

Accusations (Any day after Day 7)

The first Hieromonks are now insane killers and on Day 6, they slaughter Baldewyn and the Fair Guard. Any survivors from this encounter stagger back into Troyes with a bizarre tale to tell. They speak of an attack by 'black-robed monks, like

savage beasts' and luridly describe the monks' weird weapons and almost preternatural combat ability. Rumours about the 'mad monks' spread like wildfire.

If the Player Characters are still wearing monks' robes or if anyone knows they are monks, then they will fall under suspicion. The Fair Guards assume they are the mad monks and go to arrest them. The characters have to either fight their way out, or somehow roleplay their way into getting help from either Count Henry, the Bishop of Troyes, or the Keepers of the Fair.

Imprisoned characters are sent to the castle of the Count, where there are cells for holding prisoners. They may be handed over to Foulque for his experiments if they prove unwilling to explain themselves. If the characters are found to be carrying strange weapons similar to those of the 'mad monks', then this is taken as incontrovertible proof of guilt.

Elite Fair Guards

These are the best of the fair guards, called in to deal with especially belligerent or violent troublemakers or unusually dangerous bandits. Most are Norman or French mercenaries recruited for the duration of the fair, often to keep them out of trouble in the first place.

The Tourney (Day 7)

On Day 7, Count Henry holds a tourney in the fields, where knights and warriors may fight for a purse of gold. This event draws huge crowds from the Fair. If the characters are of suitable social standing, they can take part in this tournament.

The Count and The Fair (Day 8)

On Day 8, Count Henry and his courtiers leave the palace and march in a great parade into the market. They pray at the church of St. Jean, where the bishop (heavily prompted by Father Daison) extols the virtue of going on crusade and says that those who *support* a crusade are also blessed, even if they themselves do not go to battle Saracens in the Holy Land. The clear subtext is 'moneylenders, open your purses for the prince, or else!'

Among the dignitaries in the procession is one distinguished-looking Knight of the Temple, a keen-eyed man with an iron-grey beard. His left hand is missing three fingers; his shield was splintered by a giant Saracen during a battle in the east and he left three fingers behind in Jerusalem. He is obviously the leader of the Templars in the procession and he speaks in low tones with the Count as if giving him wise counsel. This imposing Templar is Jerome.

If the characters see Jerome, call for Perception tests. A successful Perception test reveals that Jerome's armour is decorated with a number of curious gems and runestones; a successful Hard (-40%) Lore (Occult) test suggests that his



Elite Fair Guards

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	5/6
INT	9	10-12	Chest	5/7
POW	9	13-15	Right Arm	5/4
DEX	9	16-18	Left Arm	5/4
CHA	9	19-20	Head	5/5

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Chain and Leather
Damage Modifier	+1D2	Equipment: Spear, Club or Sword
Magic Points	9	
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+9 (+3 in armour)	Notable Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 50%, Insight 30%, Perception 60%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 60%, Streetwise 30%, Unarmed 40%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Spear	M	L	60%	1D8+1	4/5
Club	M	S	60%	1D6	4/4
Sword	M	M	60%	1D8	6/10

armour is magically augmented in some fashion, perhaps to protect the wearer against evil spirits.

After the procession, Jerome and the Templars request a chance to pray privately in the Church of St. Jean. The Count magnanimously grants this request and the Templars then announce that they have pledged some 500 pounds to the Count's cause, a signal for the other moneylenders to join in and lend money. The church is sealed so the Templars can pray.

A character who spies on the Templars finds they are not praying in the sealed church - instead, Jerome conducts a magical divination ritual involving a pendulum and a fragment of old pottery. This spell is designed to locate the escaped Joyous One. It could not be conducted at the Chateau du Paynes because that castle is magically warded and the wards interfere with divination.

The Templars do not ride back to the Chateau du Paynes but instead ride east towards the leper colony.

The Templars Recapture The Joyous One (Day 8)

The characters bear witness to this event only if they follow the Templars or if they are already at the leper colony. The Knights ride out of the wood and charge straight into the colony, slaughtering anyone who stands in their way. They seize the leader of the leper cult, Jacques Taillebois (the host

of the Joyous One) as well as a few other prisoners, then put the little community to the torch before riding furiously back to the safety of the Chateau du Paynes.

Attempting to interfere with this event is suicidal. There are two dozen Templar knights led by Jerome; not even a Hieromonk could hope to defeat so many hardened warriors.

The Joyous One Escapes (Day 9)

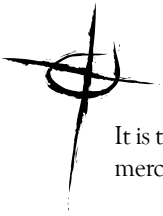
The characters are extremely unlikely to be present for this event, unless they manage to sneak into the Templar castle very early in the investigation. Jerome believes that he can return the Joyous One to the jar it was contained in. He attempts to rebind the spirit and remove it from Jacques' body.

He fails and the Joyous One takes full advantage of being within the Templars' wards. It drives the Templars insane, lavishing especial care on Jerome himself, breaking his mind into pieces and convincing him to take Jacques' leather mask and become the new Heresiarch.

The Joyous One then leaves Troyes. The characters will pick up his trail in the next adventure, *The Lord of Misrule*.

The Templars Close For Business (Day 10)

The Templar commandery in Troyes is a vital part of the city's economy. During the Champagne Fair, it is one of the busiest places in the whole town.



It is therefore surprising when on the morning of the 10th day, the merchants of Troyes awaken to find the commandery closed.

During the night, Audal became worried that he had heard nothing from the Chateau du Paynes since the recapture of the Joyous One (Audal was not informed exactly what Jerome and the other Templars were up to in the woods but he knows *something* was going on). He therefore took the four remaining knights from the commandery and rode to the chateau. The characters may encounter Audal again if they too visit the chateau.

If the characters have yet to connect the Templars to the strange events in Troyes, this should be a large clue that they should investigate the chateau.

Zombies

These are not truly undead – they are animated by Foulque’s alchemical concoctions. Faith or other spells that affect the undead have no power over these creatures. The zombies move quickly and are immune to the effects of Wounds. A zombie is slain when its Head, Chest or Abdomen is reduced to a negative Hit Point total equal to three times its starting Hit Point total. The fizzing, boiling alchemical potions in the zombie’s veins have two added effects. Firstly, the zombies lose one Hit Point per round from any location that is reduced to 0 Hit Points. Secondly, anyone who inflicts more than

five points of damage in a single melee attack on a zombie is sprayed with a hot gush of toxic chemicals, suffering one point of burn damage to a random location.

The Bishop Is Attacked (Day 11)

To distract the town from the escape of the Joyous One, the new Heresiarch launches an attack on Bishop Manasse during the Feast of St. Jean.

The Heresiarch Preaches (Day 12)

In the final scene of this adventure, the new Heresiarch attempts to preach at the Champagne Fair. If he succeeds, the madness of the Joyful People will be spread to the whole town.

Foulque

The spicer Foulque is one of the two Keepers of the Fair, which he intends to use as cover for his alchemical research. If the characters run afoul of him, they may become his test subjects.

Joyful Lepers

The prophets and inspired madmen of the Joyful People, these lunatics are gifted with superhuman strength and agility by their inhuman master.

Alchemical Zombies

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	23	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	4	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	2	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	2	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	—	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions	2	Armour:	None
Damage Modifier	+1D6	Equipment:	None
Magic Points	2		
Movement	6m		
Strike Rank	+7	Notable Skills:	Athletics 40%, Brawn 30%, Unarmed 40%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Unarmed	S	T	40%	1D3+1D6	As per arm



Foulque

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	8	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	15	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+0
Magic Points	13
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+13

Armour: None

Equipment: Knife, Healing Draught

Notable Skills: Commerce 60%, Influence 50%, Language (Arabic) 40%, Language (French) 80%, Lore (Alchemy) 60%, Lore (History) 40%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Knife	S	S	45%	1D3	5/4

Joyful Lepers

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	17	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	8	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	2/5
INT	11	10-12	Chest	2/6
POW	9	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	17	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	15	19-20	Head	2/4

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+1D2
Magic Points	9
Movement	10m
Strike Rank	+14 (+12 in armour)

Armour: Leather jack and mask

Equipment: Dagger

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 54%, Athletics 79%, Evade 34%, Influence 65%, Persistence 43%, Resilience 41%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	54%	1D4	6/8



The Leper Colony

To the people of medieval Europe, few sicknesses were as terrifying as leprosy. Those who developed the symptoms of the disease – rotting of the extremities, lack of sensation, pocked skin – were treated as though they were already dead. They were sent out of their home communities and forced to beg for alms or to live in isolated leper colonies with others of their kind. Bizarrely, the lepers were also seen as holy, as they were believed to be undergoing purgatory on Earth instead of in the afterlife.

The Leperserie des Deux Eaux was established by the first Count Henry. Situated on an island between two small rivers, the colony numbers some 30 lepers of all ages and sexes. On this little island, they raise fruit trees and kept goats for food but mainly they survive on the charity of the healthy. There is a small wooden chapel on the island, which is divided into two sections by a wooden screen. The visiting priest and other healthy visitors stand on one side of the screen, while the leper congregation remains on the unclean side and watches the miracle of the Mass through narrow windows.

The lepers live in small huts on the island. There are also some huts on the shore, used by visitors or travellers. There is a narrow and unstable foot bridge over the marshy river to the island; in some places, this bridge has rotted away, forcing visitors to jump from stump-to-stump to avoid an unwelcome dunking in the mud.

The Joyous One and The Lepers

When the Joyous One was freed by the Templar Jerome from the jar, it fled the Chateau du Paynes in search of a host. It was extremely weak after many centuries of imprisonment and lacked the power to possess Jerome or any other strong-willed individual. It needed someone whose hold on the flesh was extremely weak.

It found Jacques Taillebois. This woodsman developed leprosy some nine years earlier and the disease had worn both body and spirit away until Taillebois could do nothing except lie on a pallet and wait for death. His soul had already given up its ties to his physical body, making it easier for the Joyous One to slip in and take the flesh. Taillebois rose up and began to preach to his fellow lepers, telling them of his revelation that the world would soon be turned upside down in a great time of misrule and upheaval; that those whose current lot in life was the hardest and most cruel would, in the new disorder, be the most joyous and powerful.

The miraculous ‘resurrection’ of Jacques and his seductive vision of the future caught the imagination of the other lepers, who began to worship him as a Messiah. Those who were most suggestible were then enchanted by the Joyous One. They believed they were part of a new religion, so the Joyous One granted them their wishes. These chosen followers became convinced they were reborn prophets and disciples, reinforcing the beliefs of the rest of the lepers. Within three days of his ‘resurrection’, Jacques was the undisputed god-king of Leperserie des Deux Eaux.

On the 16th of June, Father Michel visited the leper colony, as was his custom. He arrived to find the colony in chaos and hearing of the miracles, he leapt to the correct conclusion that Jacques Taillebois was possessed. Fearing there was no time to lose, Michel entered the church and tried to exorcise the spirit from the leper’s body.





He failed. The Joyous One had grown much too strong for a mere exorcism to evict him. Michel believed himself to be a good priest, a healer of the sick and a saviour of souls, so the Joyous One granted him too his heart's desire. Father Michel staggered out of the leprosarium, deluded into thinking that he had not only exorcised Jacques but also miraculously cured all the lepers. He was found by the church before news of his madness could spread.

To avoid suspicion, the Joyous One ensured that everything appeared to be normal when future visitors arrived.

The Hieromonks and The Lepers

On the 14th of July, a month after Father Michel's madness, the four Hieromonks arrived at the leper colony, following the emanations of the Joyous One detected by Andrew's Hoffman Device. They pretended to be pilgrims and stayed in the huts on the shore. During the night, they crept onto the island and searched for the spirit.

The Hieromonks were spotted by the Joyous One's guards and a fight broke out. A band of lepers, even those inspired by the divine madness of the spirit, were no match for the monks. Two of the Joyous One's chosen were killed in seconds. The spirit gathered its powers and blasted the Hieromonks with a devastating vision. They wanted to be monster-slayers – well, it gave them all the monsters they could want, and more, by bewitching them into thinking they were in hell.

Believing themselves to be surrounded by demons, the Hieromonks retreated into the woods, where they encountered a merchant caravan – and that is where the tale began, back in *A Dream of Demons*.

People of the Leper Colony

Of the 30 lepers in the colony, all but two succumbed to the cult of the Joyous One within three days. The cult can be broken down into several sections.

The Joyous One: The Joyous One has made the lepers build him a 'palace' on the island. It is nothing but a bower of branches and mud but to those 'blessed' by the spirit, it appears to be a wonderful pleasure-dome with marble walls and flowing fountains. The spirit is still comparatively weak and is still marshalling its power. Every new believer gives it more strength, so its main focus is inspiring more Joyful People to become prophets and missionaries. For more on the Joyous One, see page 4.

The Prophets: These are the inner circle of the cult, the lepers who took most strongly to the spirit's enchantment. There are always 12 of these – if one is killed, another is promoted from the ranks of the Joyful People to take his place. Prophets do not live long; this is partly because the Joyous One sends them on missions into Troyes but mainly because he inspires them to such feats of devotion and heights of fervour that

their withered bodies break under the strain. The Prophets wear smiling leather masks to hide their leprous faces.

If the characters interact with a Prophet, the one they are most likely to meet at the leprosarium calls himself Elijah. He is convinced that he returned from the heavens in a chariot of fire. If the characters ask to see his chariot of fire, he shows them a blackened tin cooking pot.

The Joyful People: The Joyful People are the other followers of the cult; they include most of the other lepers as well as ordinary people from Troyes and the surrounding lands who have fallen under the sway of the Joyous One. They live in the leper colony and worship the Joyous One. There are now more than 60 Joyful People in the colony, with more in the nearby countryside.

The Anathema: The Anathema are those who do not follow the Joyous One but know of the cult. Not everyone reacts in the same way to the spirit's enchantments. It can grant your heart's desire but if what you desire cannot be twisted to the spirit's purpose, it must turn to brute force. The first two anathema were lepers named Antonio and Heloise, both of whom refused to bow down to the spirit. Another four anathema come from the surrounding lands.

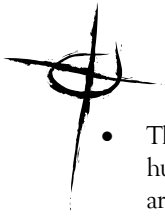
The anathema are imprisoned in one of the huts on the island. They are bound hand and foot at all times. They are kept alive because it is from their living flesh that the masks of the Joyful People are made.

The Leper Colony (Prior to the night of Day 8)

Characters who visit the colony before the night of Day 8 see nothing out of the ordinary. They arrive at the river and see the shoreline huts are empty. From the island rises a few thin trails of smoke from cooking fires. Crossing the river via the bridge is easy enough in daylight; it is somewhat more hazardous at night, requiring an Athletics test to avoid falling.

Waiting at the bridge is a leprous beggar, Fera, who asks passers-by for alms. He is also the cult's look-out. He has a Y-shaped staff topped with a little bell, which he shakes to warn people to beware of the leper. If suspicious intruders approach, he shakes his staff vigorously so those on the island can prepare. Fera greets the characters and welcomes them to the lazar house. If they wish to stay, they may sleep in the shoreline huts to avoid excessive contact with the unclean.

If the characters visit the island, there are places where it is dangerous to go, according to the lepers. These hazardous places include the wooded section of the island where the Joyous One has his lair and the hut where the anathema are imprisoned. There are also several obvious clues to pick up on. Each clue lists the associated skill; call for Skill Tests if the players do not pick up on the clues from your descriptions.



- There are too many people on the island. There are two dozen huts but every one of them is overcrowded and some people are sleeping in the open. (Streetwise to notice the overcrowding; Survival to realise that such a situation is untenable, as if there were this many lepers here all the time, they would surely starve.)
- Some of the people here do not appear to be especially ill. (Medicine confirms that less than half the people on the island are lepers.)
- You know, these are the merriest lepers you have ever seen. (Insight suggests they are happier than they have any right to be.)
- There are several sections of the island where the characters are warned not to go. The lepers claim that the ground there is treacherous and full of sinkholes. (Track suggests that actually, there is quite a lot of traffic into the forbidden sections.)

Skulduggery in the Village

Visitors to the leper colony are kept under close watch. During the day, outsiders are watched by the Joyful people. At night, outsiders *must* sleep on the shoreline huts; a guard is placed on the bridge to spot intruders trying to cross the marsh. To sneak around the village, the characters need to escape this surveillance.

During the day, it is virtually impossible to hide. The leper colony is full of watchful eyes. If the characters stage a distraction, then one of their number might be able to slip away into the undergrowth on the island but any such distraction will put the cult onto high alert and the guards and prophets will flock to protect the Joyous One.

At night, crossing the bridge requires an Athletics test to avoid falling in; doing so in total darkness increases the difficulty to Hard (-40%). Characters carrying a light will be spotted by the guards. Characters can also try swimming to the island, by making a standard Swim test. Once on the island, the characters will need to use Stealth to move around without raising the alarm.

During the day, the effective Perception of the cult is 100%, dropping to 40% at night. Make one roll for the cult under most circumstances.

If the alarm is raised, then the characters have a fight on their hands – the cult can muster up to a dozen madmen and 60 fanatical believers. The characters will be swamped by multiple foes in a stand-up fight (the rules for multiple opponents are on page 91 of the *RuneQuest Core Rulebook*).

If the characters do explore the hidden sections of the island, they can find the Joyous One's 'palace' of branches and reeds, the anathema hut and the shallow graves where the lepers slain by the Hieromonks were buried. If they dare force a confrontation with the Joyous One immediately, they can do so. Alternatively, you can have the Templars arrive early, sending the characters from the frying pan to the fire.

The Templars Recapture The Joyous One (Night of Day 8)

On the night of day 8, following Jerome's ritual in the church of St. Jean, two dozen Knights Templar ride to the Leperserie des Deux Eaux. Jerome's magic led the knights here in search of the fugitive spirit. They too have heard rumours about a strange cult in the leper colony, so the knights have no compunction whatsoever about dispatching everyone on the island.

The knights' mighty steeds plunge into the shallow waters of the river and struggle across to the island. There is no subtlety to this attack, no cunning or subterfuge – who needs such things when you have two dozen armoured knights? They charge into the little community and put everyone they find there to the sword. The Joyful People laugh and sing hosannas of praise even as they are butchered. Of the 70 or so followers of the Joyous One on the island, more than two score are killed by the Templars.

Jerome leads his knights confidently into the Joyous One's palace, chanting a defensive spell to ward off the spirit's blandishments. They pull down the walls of the palace and surround Jacques Taillebois. Jerome regards the Joyous One for an instant, then orders his knights to seize the demon. They wrap Taillebois in chains and carry him off to the Chateau du Paynes. The knights put the place to the torch as they leave.



The Aftermath (Day 9 and later)

If the characters visit at the leper colony after Day 9, then the signs of devastation are clear long before arriving at the island. A pall of black smoke hangs over the place, as the ashes of the burnt huts smoulder. There are only a handful of Joyful People left and they are all confused by the events of the previous night. Questioning them elicits only more confusion.

'He was taken by the knights...the knights took Our Lord. They just rode in and killed everyone... he said we would never die but they killed us... where are His prophets now? Where are the smiling ones? He promised there would be no more tears, no more sorrow, only joy everlasting and I want to laugh and make merry as he told us to but I can no longer see the wonders he showed us. Look you at his palace... yesterday, it was all

towers of ivory topped with shimmering gold and it was more beautiful than the dawn! Now, it seems to me... have I gone mad?... it seems to me to be nothing but a pile of rotten branches! Oh, please give Him back to us! Are these the times of tumult He promised, when all the world would be turned head over heels? Where is Our Lord of Misrule?'

An Easy (+40%) Track test shows up signs of multiple heavy horsemen who rode in from the direction of Troyes and then headed north towards the Chateau du Paynes.

Joyful People

These are the ordinary followers and servants of the Joyous One; some are lepers but most are poor peasants and serfs from the surrounding lands.

Joyful People

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	7	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	9	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	9	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	8	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	0
Magic Points	11
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+8

Armour: None

Equipment: Club or Dagger

Notable Skills: Athletics 25%, Perception 40%, Persistence 25%, Resilience 35%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	30%	1D4	6/8
Club	M	S	30%	1D6	4/4



The Chateau Du Paynes

The Castle Wards

The magical wards of the Chateau du Paynes block hostile spells from affecting the castle or those within. It can block spells up to Magnitude 5 and can block a total of Magnitude 50 in any 24 hour period. The wards also block spirits from entering the castle; it can stop spirits of 30 POW or less. Divinations spells, including Hoffman device readings, are similarly blocked. The wards must be maintained with regular infusions of Magic Points by the Templar custodians.

The wards only affect spells coming into the castle from outside. Most spells cast by those in the castle are unaffected, although especially delicate sorceries can be disrupted by the wards (hence, Jerome goes to Troyes to cast his divination spell). Spells that are absorbed by the wards trigger an alarm inside the keep.

Sneaking Into The Castle

The Templars take their security seriously. There is only one gate in the outer walls and it is kept sealed except when someone is entering or leaving the castle. Watchmen patrol the walls both day and night. The best way into the castle is to scale the walls at night, avoiding the guards through stealth.

There is a secret escape tunnel leading from the castle dungeons to a small hunting lodge in the woods but finding this passage is impossible unless the characters capture and interrogate a Templar.

Storming The Castle

Good luck, unless you have a sizable army with you.

This castle was the home of Hugh du Paynes, one of the founders of the Poor Knights of the Order of the Temple. It passed into the Order's possession more than half a century ago and the knights have been diligent in their building work. Today, the Chateau is a formidable fortification, consisting of an inner keep surrounded by two sets of walls and a moat. The

red cross of the Templars flies from the battlements and the badge of the order – two poor knights sharing a single horse, symbolising poverty – is engraved on every gate and tower and overflowing golden coffer in the chateau.

Visitors to the chateau (of which there are few) note the curious round tower that stands all alone in the inner courtyard. Those illuminated in the ways of the occult recognise this tower as being the key to a mystical lock. The moat and the configuration of the walls forms a magical barrier, a ward drawn in stone that deflects hostile magic and dissipates it harmlessly in still water.

The castle is home to some 30 knights and 40 servants; in times of war, or when the knights muster forces, their numbers are swelled by hundreds of footmen, armourers, squires, farriers, cooks and camp-followers. The castle is supposed to be a monastery, as the Templars are monastic knights and they do eschew rich décor or blatant luxuries. However, the chateau is moderately comfortable and extremely well supplied to withstand a siege.

Jerome of Aquitaine

For the last four months, the Chateau du Paynes has been under the command of Jerome of Aquitaine, an elder Templar mystic. The Temple desires magical weapons that can be turned on the Saracen foe and Jerome is one of few knights who are both brave and wise enough to plumb the depths of the occult.

In a dusty cavern near Jerusalem, a shepherd found a cache of scrolls and jars. He sold the location of this secret cave to the Frankish knights. Jerome's divinations confirmed that the jar contained something powerful but experimenting with it in situ was too dangerous. The masters of the Temple agreed that the secure walls of the Chateau were the best place for the jar, so Jerome and a few trusted knights brought their prize back to Europe.

The jar was kept in the central tower, while Jerome laboured to translate the inscriptions and the associated scrolls. Finally, he dared to open the urn, after taking precautions to ward himself against possession. The Joyful One was freed from the jar and escaped.

Not only did this mean the Templars had lost a potential weapon but the renegade spirit would also certainly sow chaos



among the common folk. Jerome resolved to recover it before the Order or the Inquisition got wind of the Templar's error.

Jerome knows that he is responsible for any evil the spirit does, and that he will be killed if he fails to make good on his mistakes. He is not a cruel man but he will kill to protect his own life. He believes that the Joyous One is the key to the reconquest of Jerusalem and the ultimate victory of Christendom over her enemies.

Visiting the Templars (Before Day 8)

If the characters visit the Templar castle before Day 8, they receive a frosty welcome. Those claiming to be merchants, pilgrims or wandering monks are told by the doorkeeper of the Chateau to move on to Troyes; those claiming business with the Templars are told to report to Audal in the commandery in Troyes.

If the Hieromonks use their Blessed Rings to compel the Templars to let them in, then Jerome will receive them in the keep - but he keeps half-a-dozen armed guards with him at all times. He offers them bread and cheese with a little watered wine to wash it down and tells the characters that the Chateau is indeed a place where the Templars study methods of sorcery and magic. If the characters are especially conciliatory, he may even show them some of the scrolls and notes from the cave in the Holy Land. He denies that his experiments could have anything to do with this mysterious Heresiarch but promises to report anything he discovers to the characters. They are not under any circumstances permitted to tour the castle or examine the tower, as such things are secrets of the Templars. The Blessed Ring means that he must aid the characters, not that he must indulge their curiosity.



The Templars as an Enemy

Especially belligerent or unwise characters may anger or alarm the Templars so much that Jerome decides they are a threat. In such a situation, the Templars order the characters to leave the Chateau and will even attack them if they refuse. Jerome may also send six Templar Knights riding after the characters, with orders to kill the Hieromonks and bury the bodies in the woods.

Jerome also moves his plans forwards. If the characters arrived on Day 7 or earlier, then Jerome rides to Troyes as soon as he can to cast the divination spell. The events of *The Templars Recapture the Joyous One* therefore happen earlier and the whole timeline of the scenario advances by a day or more.



The Sealed Castle (Day 9)

If the characters arrive at the castle during the brief period when the Templars have the Joyous One in custody, then there is no way into the castle. The gate guards refuse to admit anyone, even if the characters wave their Blessed Rings. Jerome ordered the gates sealed and the Pope could show up with St. Bernard or the risen Christ or God Himself and still the gates would remain sealed.

A Difficult (-20%) Perception test detects strange lights flickering around the tower, as Jerome wrestles with the Joyous One. Before the characters can reach the tower, the Joyous One overcomes Jerome's binding circle and blasts the Templar and all his knights with utter madness. The whole castle collapses into chaos as the Templars turn on each other.

Within an hour, almost everyone in the castle is dead.

The Joyous One slips out via the secret escape tunnel. Jerome puts on one of the leather masks and staggers off to Troyes. He too has been given what he desired

Chaos and Madness (After Day 9)

After Day 9, the Templar castle stands empty of life. The doors remain closed, so the characters will have to force open the gates or else scale the walls. Inside, they find a scene of devastation and woe. The corpses of Templar Knights lie scattered around the keep and courtyard. The whole place stinks of butchery. It is clear that the knights killed each other but what is really shocking is the brutality of the whole affair. There are knights who obviously crawled up stairs after having their legs chopped off, knights who tore the throats of their foes out with their teeth, knights who bludgeoned each other to death with gauntleted fists, knights who were hurled off the battlements or tramped by maddened horses. The cobblestones of the courtyard are drenched in blood.

The characters can search the castle for clues as to what happened here. The important clues are in the central tower, where Jerome was conducting his experiments. See the sidebar on *Searching the Castle*, page 40.

As the characters explore the castle, they will run in to the few surviving Templar knights. Roll on the Templar Castle Encounter Table to see what they find.

Audal and The Templars Arrive (Day 10)

On the evening of the 10th day of the adventure, the Templar Audal arrives at the castle, having heard no word from Jerome or the Chateau in several days. The Templars stand outside the closed gates of the castle for a few minutes, shouting for anyone inside to come and open it. When that fails, Audal and two other Templars ride to the hunting lodge and use the secret passage to enter the castle.



Roll (d6)	Encounter
1	A dying knight, who spits and curses the monks as he passes.
2	A dying knight holding a crossbow, who fires one last desperate shot at the PCs as they enter the room.
3	A crazed and badly wounded Templar (only 1d3 Hit Points remaining in each location) who charges to attack the PCs as soon as he sees them.
4	A catatonic knight who attacks if threatened.
5	A pair of knights battling each other, locked in mortal combat.
6	A mob of 1d4+1 templar knights who attack like savage beasts, loping forward on all fours.



Searching the Castle

There is no need to go through the Templar castle room-by-room, as the players are either escorted through the castle or else everyone is dead and there is no opposition. The outbuildings, courtyards and battlements of the castle hold nothing of interest – the keep, tower and dungeons are where the secrets are kept.

The Keep: A series of small fires gutted most of this building, making the upper floors hazardous to explore. The characters can find suits of chainmail and a variety of good-quality weapons, as well as a Templar coffer containing some 500 silver pennies. The other coffers have already been looted by the Joyous One.

The Dungeons: A successful Perception test or an Easy (+20%) Engineering test lets a character spot a half-concealed entrance to a secret passage. This tunnel heads straight out under the walls of the castle and ends in a small lodge in the woods nearby. There were at least two horses stabled here; both are gone. A successful Track roll reveals that one rider headed west, while the other, more heavily-laden, horseman made for Troyes.

The Tower: The lower floor of this tower holds the castle library of books and scrolls, comprising some 60 volumes. A locked chest contains the real treasure of this room – a set of ancient scrolls, fragile as spider web and a recent copy of the scrolls onto good vellum. These scrolls comprise a copy of the *Key of Solomon*.

The upper room in the tower is scorched as if struck by lightning but the papers and books scattered around are unharmed. There is a pair of magical circles inscribed on the floor as part of a complex summoning diagram – a successful Hard (-40%) Lore (Occult) test confirms that one circle is a binding circle and the other is protective in nature, suggesting the practitioner was dealing with something he considered highly dangerous.

On the floor in front of the protective circle is a bell, a book and a candle. The bell is cracked, the book burned and the candle broken in two. These items are part of many exorcism rituals.

In the binding circle is an old clay jar, obviously of great antiquity. Strange symbols decorate the jar. The jar was sealed with wax but that seal is now broken. A character can piece the shattered fragments of dried wax back together so the original inscription can be seen – a Hard (-40%) Lore (History) roll or Lore (Occult) roll identifies the seal as the holy Seal of Solomon.

Searching the rest of the room, the characters can find Jerome's notes (Handouts #2 and #3 pages 42-43). The first handout describes Jerome's dealings with the Joyous One; the other is a coded set of instructions for reaching the Tomb of Solomon in Israel.





The sight of the disaster inside makes Audal a lot more willing to talk to the Hieromonks. If the characters make contact with him, he tells them virtually everything he knows:

- Jerome found a treasure in the Holy Land and the Templars were experimenting with it here in the Chateau.
- He does not know *what* the treasure was but he does know that something went wrong about six weeks ago. Jerome claimed that he would soon repair all his errors and told Audal to say nothing of any problems.
- Jerome had a set of notes in the central tower of the chateau – those notes may shed light on the situation.
- Audal also mentions that Aribert the Keeper of the Fair has been asking about the state of the Templars and is probably

on his way. If the characters want to keep the events at the Chateau secret, they must act to do so immediately.

Templar Knights

These are battle-hardened veterans of the crusades, ready for war. If encountered after the Joyous One has escaped from the tower for the second time, then the knights will have suffered wounds before the PCs meet them; reduce the knight's Hit Points by 1D6 points in 1d3 random locations.

Jerome of Aquitaine

The scholarly master of the Templars of Troyes, Jerome plans to use the secrets of the urn uncovered in Syria to destroy the armies of the Saracens and retake the Holy City of Jerusalem. As such, the blame for the sorrows and madness that engulf Troyes must fall squarely on his shoulders.

Templar Knight

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	6/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	6/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	10	19-20	Head	6/6

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D2
Magic Points	13
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+10 (+2 in armour)

Armour: Chain & Plate
Equipment: Longsword, Heater Shield

Notable Skills: Athletics 55%, Brawn 50%, Influence 46%, Language (Arabic) 20%, Language (French) 50%, Lore (Christian Theology) 40%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 48%, Ride 43%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword	M	L	65%	1D8	6/12
& Shield	L	S	65%	1D4	6/12



Jerome of Aquitaine

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	15	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	16	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	14	19-20	Head	5/6

Combat Actions 3 *Armour:* Chain
 Damage Modifier +0 *Equipment:* Longsword, Dagger
 Magic Points 16 *Spells:* Banish, Curse (POW), Enhance (POW), Intuition, Magic Resistance, Mystic Vision, Protective Ward, Revelation, Spirit Resistance, Telekinesis
 Movement 8m
 Strike Rank +13 (+6 in armour) *Notable Skills:* Athletics 45%, Courtesy 60%, Grimoire (Key of Solomon) 85%, Influence 70%, Insight 60%, Lore (Occult) 70%, Manipulation 50%, Perception 40%, Persistence 70%, Resilience 40%, Ride 40%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	M	L	85%	1D8	6/12
Dagger	S	S	60%	1D4	6/8

Handout 3



Like the masons who built Solomon's temple in the Book of Kings, I have toiled long over these words. I beg you to commend the builders of the temple and the time they laboured to the paths of your memory as you read and turn with them.

WSPSQR XLI OMRK FYMPX XLI GMXC SJ XEHQSV MR XLI HIWIVXW SJ XLI IEWX. DIRSFME VYPIH XLIVI ERH MR XLI.

UKZ KU VJG PWODGT QH VJG HCKVJHWN CPF UGXGP CTG JKFFGP KP VJG UGCN. VJG ITGCVGUV QH VJGUG KU VJG VQOD QH UQNQQQP.

QCZX ELOXZC QTYO ESP DZYD ZQ ESP DPGPY SFYOCPO HSZ LCP JPE QLTESQFW LYO MP RFTOPO MJ ESP WTRSE ZQ ESP DFY TY L STRS AWLNP.

MVBMZ BPM BWUJ IA WVM LMIL NWZ BPM OIBMSMMXMZA IZM EIBKPNCT.

MVSSVD AOL WHAO MYVT RPUN AV JYVDU HUK MPUK AOVZL DOV RLLW HUK AOVZL DOV HYL RLWA.



Handout 2

Herein I set down my thoughts on the Urn of Palmyra. The seal is unquestionably that of Solomon, son of David and King of Israel, who raised the Temple and was accounted wise and powerful beyond measure. It is said that by virtue of his magical ring, Solomon did bind certain demons and evil spirits and lock them away where they could harm none. This jar is assuredly one of these prisons.

Primus, I must determine if the prisoner remains incarcerated. As per the writings of the Key of Solomon, there are certain tests that must be performed. I place a lodestone by the jar and it is drawn to it. Next, I place another jar, containing a few moths, by the jar and I leave it overnight. If the moths survive the night, then the jar is empty despite the intact seal.

The moths are dead.

There can be no further doubt. I have one of Solomon's spirits in my possession. Praise be to the Lord, for leading His faithful knights to this treasure. The spirit shall be as a sword to smite our foes, or a beast of burden to be tamed and tethered. With the power of this spirit, we shall retake the Holy City and restore the cross and the Temple to their rightful places, for the greater glory of God!

I must not be over-hasty. Such spirits are malicious and crafty. It will try to seduce me or mislead me. Lord, grant me the strength to resist the devil's charms and the wit to see through its lies. Our struggle begins on the morrow.

It says its name is the Joyous One and avers that it wishes only to serve me. It claims to be a spirit of joy and that it will grant me my desires if only I free it from the circle that traps it. Its voice is like the plaintive weeping of a child, for it is very weak. The little vitality it stole from the moths can hardly sustain it. It begs me for life, for a dog or some other living thing to feed upon, or for a little part of my own power. It is so small and weak it seems almost harmless but I am not deceived. Such spirits wax strong quickly.

The spirit remains confined but it grows more cunning. I found a dead mouse a handbreadth from the binding circle this morning. Its reach is longer than I assumed and I fear that it is testing the strength of its prison. To occupy it, I demanded that the spirit aid me in translating the scrolls we found with it. One bundle of scrolls is an original text of the Key of Solomon, the very holy book I studied to learn the art of binding and commanding.

The other scrolls speak of

I shall not write it down here. To commit such things to open writing is unwise.

*Disaster. The spirit has escaped. One of the stableboys crept into my tower while I slumbered and broke the circle. The spirit took him in an instant; I slew the boy but the spirit escaped. I believed it would take the thing longer to extricate itself from the boy's corpse but it moved swifter than the wind.

It cannot have gone far. I kept it starved, so it must take on human flesh in order to survive. Killing the host was my error – while bound in flesh, it is trapped until the host dies. Damn me for my foolishness! Lord, forgive me.

The spirit is not the true prize and I must remember that. What is one sword, when you have found the key to an armoury containing many thousands?

I have perfected a method of finding the spirit, should it still remain on this earthy plane. The wards of this castle baffled my earlier attempts, so I must go to Troyes immediately to perform the rite. This night, I shall make good on my earlier failings or die in the attempt.

Once more, the Joyous One is in my power. The unfortunate soul of the leper must have been harrowed clean of sin and gone straight to Heaven, so I can do what must be done to the body to force the spirit to talk. With the spirit's help, I shall find the missing pieces of this puzzle.

Tricked I saw the doors of the tomb and stepped over the threshold it was the circle it is free again I am free free on this day all prisoners shall be set free says the LORD I burn like a fever god forgive me it is free again he laughs in my head and I can hardly think write

Troyes will burn now that the time of misrule is come and I shall be the abbot of unreason and I will brook no rivals in my domain. I shall be a voice crying in Christendom and I shall make the path crooked for the Lord of Misrule.

I was blind and now I see.



The Coded Notes

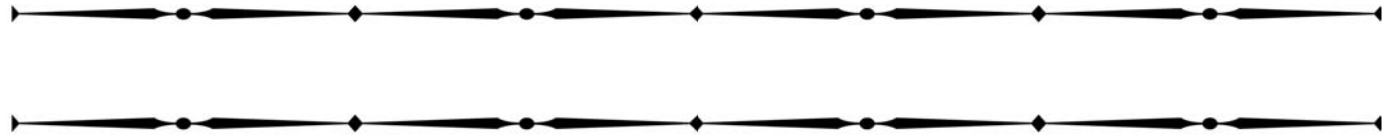
Jerome wrote his notes about the Tomb of Solomon down in code. Handout #3 is the coded version; Handout #4 is the decoded version for your reference.

The coding system is a relatively simple Caesar cipher, where each letter is shifted a number of places in the alphabet. The only added complexity is the fact that the shift changes with each paragraph. The shifts are derived from the Second Book of Kings, verses 37 and 38, which read:

37 In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of Jehovah laid, in the month Ziv.

38 And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.

Each number mentioned is a shift. The first paragraph is shifted by 4, the second by 2 (Ziv is the second month), the third by 11, the fourth by 8 and the last by 7.



Like the masons who built Solomon's temple in the Book of Kings, I have toiled long over these words. I beg you to commend the builders of the temple and the time they laboured to the paths of your memory as you read and turn with them.

SOLOMON THE KING BUILT THE CITY OF TADMOR IN THE DESERTS OF THE EAST. ZENOBIA RULED THERE AND IN THE GREEK TONGUE IT IS CALLED PALMYRA.

SIX IS THE NUMBER OF THE FAITHFUL AND SEVEN ARE HIDDEN IN THE SEAL. THE GREATEST OF THESE IS THE TOMB OF SOLOMON.

FROM TADMOR FIND THE SONS OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED WHO ARE YET FAITHFUL AND BE GUIDED BY THE LIGHT OF THE SUN IN A HIGH PLACE.

ENTER THE TOMB AS ONE DEAD FOR THE GATEKEEPERS ARE WATCHFUL.

FOLLOW THE PATH FROM KING TO CROWN AND FIND THOSE WHO KEEP AND THOSE WHO ARE KEPT.





Demon Slayers

This is the final encounter with the crazed Hieromonks. The encounter can happen whenever the characters are travelling around the countryside near Troyes, either on the way to the Templar castle or the leper colony.

There are two ways to run the encounter. If the players have already worked out that the other Hieromonks are not actually in Hell, but were bewitched by the Joyous One, then run the encounter from the Player Characters' point of view: they are travelling through the woods when suddenly they are attacked by the other monks.

However, if the players are still confused by the fate of the first Hieromonks, then you can run this encounter from the point of view of the insane enemies. In this case, collect the player's character sheets and give out the pregenerated copies of Claude and his companions. Let the players battle their own characters until they realise what is going on, at which point you should swap the characters around again.

The Reality

You are travelling along the lonely road, when suddenly a number of bizarre figures emerge from the undergrowth and brandish weapons at you. Their faces are so gaunt and drawn you can see their skulls and their burning eyes bulge from the sockets. They are filthy, dressed in tattered rags that were once black robes. You can scarcely believe they are still standing, given how emaciated and injured they are. Madness alone drives them on and they have murder in mind.

The Delusion

For an eternity, you have struggled with the forces of Hell. Countless demons have fallen to your blades. You have faced down the fallen angels themselves and survived – but still you cannot find the way back to the mortal world.

Now, in this trackless wilderness, you spy a number of demons, the vilest you have yet seen. These horrors resemble men made of maggots, clad in the flayed skin of infants and with the heads of flies. A sudden divine intuition strikes you – if you can only slay these horrors, the spell will be broken and you will be transported back home. Only a single good sword-thrust stands between you and the gate out of Hell!

Running the Encounter

Blood-thirsty players can play this as a straight combat encounter. The other Hieromonks are likely wounded and lacking resources after their previous battles, so the characters should be able to defeat them, given luck and the expenditure of some Fate Points.

- Claude's tactics are simple – charge into the fray and attack lightly-armoured foes with his Crusader Blades. If any of the characters use ranged weapons, and assuming he still has a smoke bomb left, he uses his bombs to block line of sight for missile fire.
- Renaud uses his automatic crossbow to fire any remaining explosive bolts, then attacks with his warsword. If possible, he uses the explosive bolts to stun a dangerous foe's sword arm.
- If Victor still has his choking dust, he will hurl it at the characters before the battle begins. He then advances into the fray, using his bolt sword at point-blank range.
- Andrew's only offensive spell is Hinder, so he casts that on the PCs. With his Manipulation of 80%, he can easily increase the spell's range to POW x 5 metres and target five PCs. Furthermore, his Sorcery score lets him affect up to 21 SIZ per target and every three points of excess SIZ increases the movement reduction by 1 metre. Applied to average PCs, this should reduce the victims' movement to one metre per round. Once he has cast Hinder, he joins the fray.

Players may also try to rescue their fellow Hieromonks from their delusions. This can be accomplished through roleplaying ('You're not in Hell! The Heresiarch tricked you!'), magic (*Heal Mind*, *Dismiss Magic*, *Neutralise Magic* or *Enhance POW* can all help), or by using non-lethal attacks to incapacitate the crazy monks without killing them.

Play this encounter as a warning to the players of what will happen to them if they are unable to defeat the Joyous One. The first Hieromonks were more experienced and better equipped than the PCs and they were utterly overcome by the spirit's powers.



Murder in the Cathedral

After being driven insane by the Joyous One, Jerome – now the Heresiarch – is determined to spread the word of the Joyful People and to drive away competing faiths. He will begin by turning the city upside down by murdering the Bishop of Troyes in front of the whole congregation.

If the cathedral is destroyed and the bishop slain, the faith of everyone in the town will be shaken, making them much more receptive to the preaching of the Heresiarch.

There are several ways the characters can become involved in this event.

- The cryptic notes left by Jerome as he went mad certainly suggest that he intends to target Troyes' religious leaders.
- If the characters are in Troyes and are watching the streets, then they may spot unusual numbers of people moving towards the cathedral. If they visited the leper colony and saw the healthy followers of the Joyful People, then they may even recognise some of the faces in the crowd.
- If the characters have contacts among the Fair Guards, then they may hear rumours of Aribert's strange behaviour – see *Aribert the Insane*.
- If all else fails, the characters can be alerted by screams of alarm from the cathedral.

Aribert The Insane

Aribert, one of the two Keepers of the Fair, is an agent of the Templars. On day 10, when the Commandery closed unexpectedly, he rode out to the Chateau to investigate. En route, he encountered the crazed Jerome. Aribert recognised the Templar and stopped, which was a fatal mistake. He was the first victim of the new Heresiarch.

Aribert is now a fanatical member of the Joyful People and first thing this morning he gave orders to the Fair Guard to leave the east gate open and not to search or stop anyone. Armed Joyful People have been entering via this gate all morning.

Jerome returned to the city with Aribert and slipped past the guards in the Keeper's company. He has taken up residence in Aribert's house to wait for the morning.

The Cathedral

The current cathedral in Troyes is 50 years old and built according to the Romanesque style. The walls of the cathedral are massively thick, the windows long, thin and pointed and inside the apse is lined with pillars. The cathedral is in the shape of a Latin cross – the long west-east nave runs for 100 metres from the main door to the rounded eastern end, while the shorter transept is 40 metres wide. The walls are three metres thick. Two tall towers rise from the cathedral's west face, flanking the main doors. There are smaller doors at the north and south ends of the transept.

The main altar is at the eastern end. It is here that Bishop Manassé will celebrate mass at noon. There are no pews or seats – the congregation stands, facing the priest.

The square outside the cathedral is crowded with market stalls and traders; this is the fringe part of the Champagne Fair, so most of the stalls are selling simpler goods like fish, meat, vegetables, animals and basic clothing. Some of the stalls sell cooked meats, others sell lamp oil. These two items will shortly become very important.

The Heretics' Plan

Thanks to the insane machination of Aribert, the cult's agents were able to enter the town without being noticed. The cult's numbers are greatly depleted after the Templars sacked the leper colony but the new Heresiarch has been busy recruiting more. Bands of masked Joyful People swept out across the countryside last night, grabbing peasants and driving them insane with the Heresiarch's powers. Between these new recruits and the people recruited in the city earlier, there are more than 100 cultists in Troyes, of which more than three dozen are armed fanatics.

The best of these fanatics, including several Templar knights from the chateau, are in the cathedral. They have both weapons and leather masks in their possession. They plan to make their way through the crowds and attack the bishop at the height of the mass, while loudly proclaiming that the Joyous One is coming and the world will soon be redeemed.

Meanwhile, less suicidal cult agents are waiting outside. When the commotion starts inside the church, they will grab braziers of hot coals and lamp oil from the market and throw them into the nave of the church, then close the massive doors.



Fighting in a Burning Cathedral

Each round, roll 1d6 and add the number of rounds since the fight began.

Roll	Event	Smoke Penalty*
1	None	0%
2	Surging crowds knock prone any character who fails to make a successful Athletics or Brawn test.	0%
3	A shower of sparks shoots through the cathedral. Any character wearing cloth has a 5% chance of being set alight by the sparks.	0%
4	One of the cathedral's great windows shatters, sending glass shards flying everywhere.	0%
5	A gout of flame licks out of the bonfire by the west door. Any characters nearby may be caught in the fire and take 1d4 damage to a random location.	0%
6	One of the flasks of oil thrown in from outside explodes, splashing anyone nearby, causing 1d4 damage to all locations.	0%
7	A panicked citizen grabs one of the characters and demands that the character help him escape. He will do anything to survive!	10%
8	Terrified people start climbing to the windows. A child slips and is about to fall – can the characters save him in time.	10%
9	A cult assassin tries to attack one of the PCs, emerging from the crowd and stabbing the PC in the back.	10%
10	One of the supporting pillars falls. One PC must make an Evade test or suffer 2d6+2 damage.	20%
11	A man on fire runs through the cathedral, screaming in agony. Unless put down, he will spread the fire even faster.	20%
12	A crazed templar rampages through the crowd, slaughtering anyone who gets in his way.	20%
13	A wave of heat washes through the cathedral; all characters must make a Resilience test or suffer a -10% to all future rolls in the cathedral due to the lack of air.	40%
14	A chunk of the roof caves in. All characters must make Evade tests or take 1d6 damage.	40%
15+	The church is now an inferno. All characters in the cathedral take one point of damage to the head and chest every round.	40%

*: The penalty from smoke applies to all attacks at Medium reach or longer. It is doubled for ranged weapons.

Other agents will shut the side doors. The coals heat and ignite the oil, setting the cathedral alight. With the doors shut, the panicked crowd inside will be unable to escape for a few frantic moments, giving the assassins time to kill the bishop, remove their masks and blend into the crowd.

If all goes according to the plan, the heretics will murder the bishop and burn down the cathedral with only a few casualties of their own; the sheer size of the crowds at the cathedral and in the square outside should let the heretics melt away into the city.

Timeline of Events

This list of events assumes the players do not intervene.

11.45: People start crowding into the cathedral for mass. Some of these are cult assassins.

12.00: Mass begins

12.15: Cult assassins, including crazed Templars, begin to push through the crowd.

12.18: One of the Templars, a knight named Maurice, draws his sword and charges towards the altar, screaming 'death to sorrow! Joy is coming!' He is blocked by Father Daison; the priest is mortally wounded.

12.19: The cultists bar the south door; a fight breaks out between cultists and townsfolk at the north door. At the western entrance, the cultists begin the work of setting fire to the cathedral.

12.20: The western entrance catches fire. A riot breaks out in the square; cultists and innocents alike are hurled into the flames.

12.21: Maurice is brought down by the crowd but in the confusion, Bishop Manassé is trampled to death.

12.22: A masked cultist scales one of the pillars and starts screaming that the Joyous One is coming and there will be an



Inspired Templar Knight

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	19	1-3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	6/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	6/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	14	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 13

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +12 (+5 in armour)

Armour: Chain & Plate

Equipment: Longsword

Notable Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 50%, Influence 61%, Language (Arabic) 20%, Language (French) 50%, Lore (Christian Theology) 40%, Persistence 55%, Resilience 63%, Riding 43%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword	M	L	100%	1D8	6/12

end to all things. He remains there until the cathedral roof collapses on top of him.

Foiling the Plan

The characters should not be able to foil all of the cult's plans - at the very least, try to ensure that the cathedral sets on fire. If they learn of the assassination plot in advance, they can possibly save the bishop, or at least take down many of the cultists.

After the Fire

If the characters succeeded in saving the bishop, then the townsfolk rejoice in this miracle. They take Bishop Manassé on their shoulders and parade him through the streets, shouting that he was delivered from the very heart of the flames by angels. The bishop dies of a heart attack en route but no-one notices for some time and it is declared that he was taken up into Heaven anyway.

If Manassé was killed by the cult, then a black mood of despair sweeps over Troyes. People speak openly about the possibility that the end of the world is coming and some say that only the Joyous One can save them from the forces of Hell who assuredly burned down the cathedral. The stage is set for the coming of the Heresiarch.

Either way, a few cultists were captured by the authorities during the struggle. If the characters interrogate these prisoners, they learn that the Heresiarch is coming to the Fair tomorrow and he will bring the salvation of the world...

Inspired Templar

This is a crazed Templar knight, driven mad by the Joyous One or the Heresiarch. As such, the Templar has been granted increased strength and speed but at the cost of sanity; the players may be able to use the knight's madness against him.



At The Champagne Fair

The Heresiarch is coming to Troyes to preach at the Champagne Fair. If he succeeds in addressing the crowds and spreading his heresy to the masses, then containing this outbreak will be impossible. From interrogating the prisoners captured at the attack on the cathedral, the characters should know that the Heresiarch is coming. Even if they missed out on this opportunity, they should realise that the cult is targeting the Champagne Fair.

The next day is the end of the wool fair, so a great many important deals have to be finished today. Aribert has sent out orders for the Templar Commandery to be reopened at noon – the Templars have a monopoly on wool-weighing and without their scales the wool market has ground to a halt. A huge crowd is expected to gather outside the Commandery – and the Heresiarch will preach to them.

There are three ways that the characters can foil the Heresiarch's plan:

- If they find the Heresiarch before he preaches, they can eliminate him quietly.
- If they assassinate him when he reveals himself, but before he preaches, the danger can also be averted.
- If all that fails, they can disrupt the whole Fair to stop the Heresiarch.

Finding the Heresiarch

A Difficult (-20%) Streetwise or Influence roll picks up some useful rumours:

- The Keepers of the Fair have ordered the Templar commandery to reopen tomorrow, thank God. Now we can finally sort out the wool market. (True)
- Aribert returned from the Templar castle this morning, in the company of three Templar Knights. (True; the 'knights' were Jerome and two of the insane Templars)
- Those madmen who attacked the bishop are coming back! There is a whole crowd of them gathering outside the north gate! (False)

The characters can also use a Hoffman Device or other magic to divine the location of the Heresiarch – in such close proximity, give the characters a +20% bonus to Lore (Occult) rolls for detecting Jerome's presence.

These clues may lead the characters to Aribert's townhouse. The moneylender's home stands on the Rue du Temple, directly opposite the Commandery. It is a magnificent four-storey structure, with a balcony over the street on the fourth floor. When the crowds gather at noon for the re-opening of the Commandery, it is from here that the Heresiarch will preach.



The Gospel of Joy

The Heresiarch emerges onto the balcony of Aribert's house, wearing one of the cult's smiling leather masks. He begins to preach the heretical gospel of joy.

My brothers in Christ, I tell you that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! The Lord is come and you have all been found worthy! You have been washed clean in the blood of the lamb and I tell you, you are all free of sin now and forever. Rejoice, for sorrow is defeated and we usher in the time of joy! Whatsoever you do is right and holy! Embrace the rewards of heaven and bring joy unto the world! Do what you wish, for all things are holy now!

Overthrow those who oppressed you, for I say to you, you are now kings of the Earth! Take what you wish from those who are rich, for the Lord will provide! Take what pleasure you wish, for all things bring joy!

As he preaches, the Heresiarch uses his power of Inspiration on random people in the crowd, creating more divine inspired converts to his cause.





Aribert's household consists of the moneylender himself, his wife, two sons, a half-dozen servants and – as of last night – Jerome and two insane Templars.

Assassinating the Heresiarch

If the characters wait until the Heresiarch reveals himself, then they need to kill the preacher in front of the whole crowd. The Heresiarch casts *Magic Resistance* on himself before emerging from Aribert's house and will use *Telekinesis* to swat any characters who try using ranged weapons or who try climbing the rooftops. There are two Templar Knights in the house behind him and a number of Joyful People in the crowd, all of whom will attempt to protect the Heresiarch from attack.

Fighting Madness With Madness

There are other ways the characters can deal with the Heresiarch. They could, for example, contact Count Henry and have him clear the square, or try to infiltrate the cult and discredit it, or just start a huge fire that guts half of the city but prevents the Heresiarch from speaking.

Complications

When the characters are approaching the final confrontation with the Heresiarch, roll against each of the cult's factors as described on page 103 of *Deus Vult*. If the roll is successful, then the cult gains an added advantage in this confrontation.

- **Subversion:** An important NPC – Alix, Gerner, Audal, Count Henry or some other trusted friend – has secretly converted to the cult and will betray the PCs at an inopportune moment.
- **Fanaticism:** If the characters defeat the Heresiarch, his followers burn themselves alive and run through the crowd, causing a huge panic.
- **Concealment:** The cult has hidden guards and archers around the area near the Commandery, waiting for someone to attack the Heresiarch.
- **Force:** There are four Templar Knights guarding the Heresiarch, not two.
- **Supernatural:** The Heresiarch gains the Neutralise Magic spell.

Death of a Heresiarch

When – and if – the Hieromonks deal a mortal blow to Jerome, read the following.

The Heresiarch crumples as your blade plunges through his chainmail and into his guts. Hot blood gushes over your hands. The leather mask falls from his face.

'The madness is gone... forgive me!'

He clutches you and hisses into your ear with his dying breath.

'It's still loose... find it...keep it trapped... before it frees them...'

Jerome dies free of the Joyous One's unholy inspiration.

Aftermath

The death of the Heresiarch ends the heresy in Troyes. There may still be Joyful People in the town but without the inhuman charisma of the Heresiarch, the cult fragments and fades over time. The new bishop will, in time, invoke the Inquisition to eliminate any lingering traces of the taint.

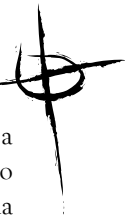
The revelation that Jerome is the Heresiarch may confuse the players. Point out that there is no way that Jerome could have been the original Heresiarch – the Templar must have been subverted at the Chateau du Paynes. The real threat has not been defeated.

On Jerome's body (or in Aribert's house), the characters find a scroll, a pendulum and a small fragment of the urn that once held the Joyous One. A successful Lore (Occult) test identifies this as a spell for locating a spirit – it is the ritual that Jerome used to find the Joyous One several days earlier. Casting this spell nudges the pendulum to point south-west.

The Joyous One is still out there.

Cleaning Up In Troyes

If she is still well disposed to the characters, Alix promises to write to Rene in Paris and ask for his help in dealing with the last of the cult, freeing the characters to go after the Joyous One. She will also suggest using the ritual if the players fail to do so.



The Lord of Misrule

The hunt for the Joyous One continues in *The Lord of Misrule*.

Jerome, The Heresiarch of Troyes

Having been touched with the greater inspiration of the Joyous One, Jerome is now the Heresiarch. He is the prophet of the time of upheaval and misrule that is to come.

The Lesser Inspiration of the Joyous One gives the recipient a feeling of constant ecstatic joy and fills him with devotion to the spirit. The recipient's Strength, Dexterity and Charisma are all increased by +1D6 and he gains a +25% bonus to Athletics, Evade, Influence, Persistence, Resilience and combat skills. Maintaining the inspiration costs the Joyous One one Magic Point per day and permanently reduces the recipient's Constitution by one point each day.

Jerome, The Heretic of Troyes

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	19	1-3	Right Leg	5/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	5/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	15	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	20	19-20	Head	5/6

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+1D4
Magic Points	13

Armour: Chain
Equipment: Longsword, Dagger
Spells: Banish, Curse (POW), Enhance (POW), Intuition, Magic Resistance, Mystic Vision, Protective Ward, Revelation, Spirit Resistance, Telekinesis

Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+16 (+9 in armour)

Notable Skills: Athletics 70%, Courtesy 60%, Grimoire (Key of Solomon) 85%, Influence 95%, Insight 60%, Lore (Occult) 70%, Manipulation 50%, Perception 40%, Persistence 95%, Resilience 65%, Ride 40%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	M	L	110%	1D8	6/12
Dagger	S	S	85%	1D4	6/8



The Lord of Misrule

This is the second adventure concerned with the Joyous One. The spirit, still in the body of the leper Jacques Taillebois, escaped from the Chateau du Paynes via the secret tunnel. Instead of returning to Troyes, the Joyous One set off for the coast.

The Joyous One needs Magic Points to survive. In Troyes, it was able to feed off its cult. It created the new Heresiarch to provide it with a constant supply of food but the characters foiled that scheme. It can still survive on the vestiges of the cult and those it seduces on the road but the more damage the characters do to its cult, the more desperate the spirit becomes. If the characters fail to complete any of the adventures along the way, the final battle against the Joyous One will be much harder.

The Chase Begins

The characters learn of their mission and set off in pursuit of the Joyous One.

The Cursed Tower of Provins

The Joyous One drives a priest insane, causing a mob to attack a wizard's tower. The characters must discern who the madmen are and deal with the threat of the ancient ghoulish colony under the city.

Death of a Hermit

In Orleans, at the Monastery of Saint-Mesmin, the characters must solve the mysterious death of James the Hermit, who was murdered by a follower of the Joyous One... or so it would seem. There is more to this tale than simple madness.

The Harvest

A chance encounter on the road leads the characters to a tiny hamlet, where a god older than civilisation slumbers in the fields. The desperate Joyous One intends to wake the Shambler and bring unparalleled destruction upon all of Anjou.

The Feast of Fools

Finally, the characters reach the town of Saint-Nazaire only a few hours behind the Joyous One. There, they discover that the spirit has expended much of its power to create a zone of utter madness in the town. The characters must plunge into the afflicted region and defeat the Abbot of Unreason so they can pursue the Joyous One... and their pursuit ends in the most unlikely place of all.

Travel Times

While characters can travel approximately 30 kilometres a day on foot, or twice that on horseback, their progress is impeded by having to search for signs of the Joyous One. Their quarry may double back, take twisting, hazardous routes or lead them into dangerous wild woods.

As a rule of thumb, the travel times between adventures are listed in the following table but the GM should adjust these to suit the actions of the characters. The distances are not as the crow flies; they take into account the winding roads and the difficulty of travel, too.

Troyes to Provins: 75 km (2.5 days)

Provins to Orleans: 165 km (5.5 days)

Orleans to Yves-Sur-Fleuve: 165 km (5.5 days)

Yves-Sur-Fleuve to Saint Nazaire: 210 km (7 days)



The Chase Begins

August, and the fields of France wave green and golden in the hot sun. The harvest is coming in across the countryside, full and bountiful, and it will be a soft winter. With no looming threat of famine, the land seems to almost glow with joy and optimism. The birds sing sweetly in the heavens to their mates and young shepherds sing enthusiastically, if not sweetly, to their loves below.

The Order trained you to look beneath the surface, to see the skull beneath the skin. This vitality and joy is unnatural, an emotional cancer that rots the soul from within. Something terrible is loose in the world and it must be destroyed.

A day ago, you brought down the Heresiarch of Troyes and put an end to the sinful gospel of Joy that he preached – but the spirit that inspired his evil is still loose. The Joyous One has not been seen since the Templars captured it at the Leperserie des Deux Eaux. Your new task is to recapture the Joyous One.

Leaving Troyes

Depending on the events of *The Heresiarch of Troyes*, the characters may still have allies in Troyes, or they may be fleeing the town with an angry mob on their heels. If they have allies, they can get horses and supplies in Troyes before departing.

Following the Joyous One

There are several ways that the characters can pick up the trail of the Joyous One.

From The Hunting Lodge

The last trace the characters had of Jacques Taillebois was at the Chateau du Paynes, so they can return to that cursed castle and search for clues. The secret escape tunnel leads from the dungeons of the keep, under the walls and out into the forest.

In several places, the tunnel is so narrow that the characters must crawl through the passageway. A successful Perception test lets a character find some torn flesh on a jagged outcropping – the leper must have brushed against this rock as he pushed through the tunnel.

The tunnel ends in a small hunting lodge – a stone-walled cabin in the middle of the forest. There were horses stabled outside but they are long gone. A Track roll allows the characters to find a trail of hoofprints leading off to the west, as if heading for the road to Paris instead of directly to Troyes. Increase the difficulty to Difficult (–20%) if the characters are here a day after the Joyous One fled; Hard (–40%) if they are here within a week and Formidable (–80%) after that.

Once the characters reach the road, they can ask passers-by and traders for more clues.

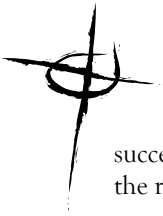
Jerome's Spell of Divination

The spell of divination that Jerome of Aquitaine created can be used to locate the spirit but it is unreliable. The ritual does not require any knowledge of sorcery to perform but costs one Magic Point and requires a Lore (Occult) roll. The difficulty of this test is modified by the distance to the target and by environmental factors.

The spell requires several minutes of patient meditation from the caster. It takes about half an hour to fully complete the ritual. The components are a pendulum and a magical connection to the target – Jerome used a fragment from the Joyous One's jar but the characters could also use a piece of the Joyous One's clothing, a drop of blood, a leper mask or some other token.

If the spell fails, the pendulum does not move. A successful Lore test gives a rough indication of direction to the spirit; a critical

Modifier	Range	Environmental Factors
+40%	Within 1 KM	'Magical cleanroom' – no disruptions whatsoever
+20%	Within 5 KM	Isolated location, clear skies, no other sources of magic
+0%	Within 10 KM	Average conditions
–20%	Within 20 KM	In bad weather or a place where there was once magic or violent emotion
–40%	Within 40 KM	In the presence of a magic item or enchanted place
–60%	Within 80 KM	In the presence of active sorcery or during especially foul weather
–80%	Within 160 KM	In a place created to baffle detection



success gives a more precise reading. If the character fumbles the roll, the pendulum moves in the wrong direction.

Rumours on the Road

The roads around Troyes are still busy with merchants coming and going to the Fair, so the characters can scour the highways

for rumours. Fortunately, their quarry is an easily recognisable one, even without his grinning leathery mask – just ask if anyone has seen a madman with no nose, riding a stolen horse.

A few passing traders do report seeing a man dressed in rags riding along the road to Provins. The chase begins there.



Starting from Mont St- Michel

If you are running this as a stand-alone adventure instead of as a sequel to *The Heresiarch of Troyes*, then the chase begins at Mont St-Michel instead of Troyes. Read the following to the players:

The bell tolls, calling you to the church. Waiting for you there is Basilio de Rossi, the Superior General of the Order. He leans against a pillar with a grim expression on his face. Standing at his side is an older man with a wild beard who leans on a gnarled staff of wood. The incense burning in the censers by the altar cannot wholly mask the animal stench of the older man.

Basilio greets you with a nod. 'This is Edric, the Prior of Lihou. He comes with a grave warning for us.'

Edric surveys you with sullen eyes. 'These are what you give me, de Rossi? These weak-willed children? Did you not listen to a word I said? It is loose, de Rossi and it is moving.'

The Superior General continues. 'Edric's spells of divination have sensed a presence that is a threat to all Christendom. It is a spirit of some sort, one whose power increases with each passing day. It must be dealt with while it is still weak, before it has a chance to grow. I can spare no other monks to help you and you can spare no time – find this spirit and destroy it. Take what you need from the armoury but be swift.'

The old hermit addresses you again, or perhaps he speaks without seeing you. 'I saw a pagan feast, Saturnalia, filled with lewd acts and madness. I looked in my pool and I saw these things, across the leagues and across the gulf of time. They captured the spirit in a jar and buried it in a secret place, and there it rested for two dozen generations until some poor fool found it. I saw him, watched him from afar as he opened the jar. Did he think it held gold or precious stones? Fool. Such things are worthless in death and death was in the jar.

It took him, body and soul, and made of him a steed of flesh for the spirit to ride. It looked back at me then, and it saw me, through my pool. It knows it is being hunted.'

Edric's head snaps upright and he fixes you with his gaze. 'I am the hunter of ghosts and ye shall be my dogs. Take this pendulum – I have enchanted it to point the way to the spirit, no matter what body it wears or what form it takes. Ride now to Provins, in the county of Champagne and find the spirit there. Kill it... if you can.'





The Cursed Tower of Provins

The characters arrive in Provins, the other great town of Champagne. Like Troyes, Provins is a Fair town – twice a year, merchants come from all over Europe to trade here. The next Fair in Provins is not until September but already the town is beginning to prepare. The great square of St. Quirinace will soon be thronged with the same sorts of hawkers, barkers, traders, bankers – and Templars – that are currently filling the streets of Troyes.

There are passageways under Provins, miles upon miles of twisting secret tunnels that worm their way into the hillside on which the city stands. Some were Roman catacombs turned into hidden refuges for heretics like the Cathars but the oldest tunnels are not dug by human hands. The ghouls were here long before Provins was settled by humans.

Hernaudin the Necromancer

If any man in Provins knows this, it is Hernaudin the Necromancer. He was an initiate at the great Benedictine monastery of Cluny until he found a book of occult lore in the recesses of the library there. He stole the book and fled the monastery. Through the use of necromancy, he became powerful and wealthy, taking up residence in Provins some 30 years ago to study. His tower, called the Crow Tower, stands at the heart of the city, close to the market.

Although he is a necromancer, Hernaudin bears little ill will towards the common folk of the city. He committed vile deeds in his youth but today he is a peaceful scholar for the most part, bent on establishing communications with the ghouls who dwell far beneath the city streets. He married a woman of good standing in the town, has invested his money in several profitable businesses and is generally seen as an eccentric instead of a suspicious occultist.

Father Milon

If the life of a man is a candle that burns down through the years, then the candle of Father Milon is a fingers-breadth of wax topped with a guttering flame. He is over 60 years old and will not last another winter. Death is coming for him and he knows it. The cold wind of mortality blows through his soul and his faith was too weak to endure. As his own death approaches, the words of prayer and comfort have turned to ashes in his mouth.

Milon has long suspected Hernaudin of being in league with the devil – the rich burgher is simply too well preserved and ever-youthful to be wholly natural. His suspicions were nothing more than idle, jealous thoughts until he encountered the Joyous One. The spirit inspired the old priest, driving him insane.

Now, he believes that the Necromancer must die.

The Spirit's Scheme

The Joyous One knows it is being pursued, so it concocted a scheme to delay the Hieromonks. After giving Father Milon his heart's desire by rekindling his faith and turning him into a fanatical believer, the Joyous One kidnapped two children and hid them away, then put the seed of doubt in the priest's mind that Hernaudin was responsible for the loss of the children. The priest will call upon the Order and the Order will be drawn into a fruitless battle with the Necromancer and his ghoul allies.



The Ghoul Idol

If the characters are still carrying the ghoul idol recovered from the dig in Paris, the situation with the ghouls of Provins changes greatly. The ghouls are drawn to the idol and, like the ghouls of Paris, want to bind a human to the idol's spirit and then imprison that human in a coffin to be the spirit's mouthpiece. They are intrigued by the fact that a human is carrying the idol in the first place and will watch the bearer of the idol to determine if he is a friend to the under-people or a vile killer of the dead. To the ghouls, the situation is analogous to a stranger carrying a Christian relic; is the stranger a friend to the faith who deserves to bear the relic, or is he a thief and murderer who looted the relic

The characters may be able to trade the idol to the ghouls in exchange for their help if they establish friendly relations with the monsters; if they prove hostile, then some unfortunate character may end up locked in a coffin for eternity.





Arrival in Provins

The characters arrive in Provins at nightfall, after the guards have closed the city gates for the night. The characters can either beg the guards for entry, find a barn or a hedge to sleep in, or try to sneak over the city walls. If they do sleep outside, then they are likely to find a campsite close to one of the hidden entrances into the tunnels under Provins, in which case they may hear ghouls meeping and chittering in the night. The ghouls will stay well away from the characters and will not be encountered at this point in the scenario – this is just foreshadowing.

Once the characters get into town, they can either look for lodgings, the support of the Church or search for signs of their quarry. Lodgings are easy to find – half the townsfolk are in Troyes this month, so the inns are empty and there are plenty of rooms. Penurious characters can take shelter in various cheap hostelryes or on the streets.

Provins is part of the diocese of Troyes, so there is no bishop in the town. The characters can approach any of the churches and monasteries and use the Blessed Rings to demand aid. If they take this approach, then you can use it to introduce Father Milton – he is the first priest they make contact with.

Searching for the Joyous One

The characters may try to find rumours or clues leading to the Joyous One. A successful Streetwise or Influence test gets a few potential leads:

- No-one matching the description of Jacques Taillebois has been seen. The guards certainly do not recall any masked or leprous horseman arriving on the road from Troyes.
- *'Strange events? Some priest over by the market was ranting about missing children, but that's not exactly... strange. A few lambs go missing every spring, but in the autumn, it's always children. We find the bones sometimes. No-one knows who – or what – takes them. Best not to think about it.'*
- *'Madmen? Heretics? Not in Provins... no matter what they say about the Crow Tower.'*

On a critical success, the characters do pick up a vital clue:

- *A group of travelling players came through the town a few days' ago. They put on a mystery play in the town square. I heard it was a bit strange. Some of them players were masked, weren't they Francois?*

Father Milton's Plea

Father Milton can approach the characters as they explore the streets of Provins, or they can pass his church and overhear his fire-and-brimstone sermon about the missing children. The priest knows about the Order and the Blessed Rings, so if the characters can be identified as Hieromonks, Milton will recognise them as such and demand their aid.

If Milton recognises the characters as Hieromonks, read the following:

Brothers in Christ! I know that ring you bear and what it signifies. I beg you, help me! There is evil in this city that must be destroyed!

If they overhear his sermon, read:

Hark, all ye people! The devil walks amongst you! I have seen him leer from beneath his mask of flesh! Two children have already been taken by his demons – how long will you wait before you can stand no more? Will you wait until the hosts of Hell are at your very door? Because that time is now!

Who has the courage to stand against evil? The Lord is with us and he shall grant us victory if we are brave enough to take up arms against the devil!

Either way, Milton's plea is the same: Two children vanished from the market district of Provins and he believes that he knows who is responsible. There is a sorcerer who lives in Provins, a necromancer who traffics with the devil. His name is Hernaudin and he dwells in the Crow Tower.

Milton has no proof of Hernaudin's guilt – which is why he needs the Hieromonks. They can break into the Crow Tower and rescue the children if, by some miracle, they are still alive. If the characters ask why he suspects Hernaudin of the kidnapping, Milton claims that God guided him to this conclusion – he was watching a mummer's mystery play of the Creation and realised that the children were as innocent as Adam and Eve before the Fall and that the Necromancer was the serpent who led them astray.

Milton is a fanatic; play him as such. The characters are either with him, in which case he sees them as angelic warriors in the service of the Most High, or against him, in which case they have surely succumbed to the blandishments of Satan and must be destroyed. Try to keep the players on his side for as long as possible, if you can.

If the characters agree to help Milton, then they can either continue to investigate the mystery covertly (in which case, see *The Necromancer of Provins*) or else attempt to break into the tower as Milton suggests (covered in *The Crow Tower*).

The Necromancer of Provins

The shadow of the Crow Tower falls across Provins. Everyone in the city has strange tales about the man who dwells in that eerie place but no two tales agree. The truth about the Necromancer is something the characters will have to find for themselves.

Word on the Streets

Gathering rumours about the missing children or the necromancer requires an Influence or Streetwise roll. Insight can be used to augment tests for rumours about the children; Lore (Occult) can be used to augment tests related to the necromancer.

Rumours about the missing children:

- Their names are Jak and Ava; both come from poor families. They are seven years and nine years old, respectively.
- No-one has seen the children in several days; a search of the poor quarter has shown no sign of them.
- Children go missing in Provins every few years around this time; some say there are witches who sacrifice the children to the devil, or that the city is built on a Fairy Hill and they take their tribute in the form of children.
- Others guess that the children were taken by some merchant or thief to be sold as slaves.
- The last place the children were seen was the market but the time is in doubt. Their parents last saw the children near the Crow Tower and they were warned not to go too close to that ill-omened place. Others claim to have seen the children much later that day in the market.

A critical success gets the characters a vital clue:

- The children were seen talking to the band of mummers that was in town earlier.

The Hieromonks can track down the parents of the children easily enough; both families are part of Father Milon's congregation. Neither family has any more useful information, although Ava's mother Ulisa claims that her daughter was very sensible and clever and would never run away willingly.

Rumours about the Necromancer:

- Hernaudin sold his soul to the devil; that is where he got his money from.
- He is a white magician, not a black one. He healed his sick wife; some say he raised her from the dead, as Our Lord did for Lazarus.
- He is no sorcerer, he just collects old books.
- They say he dragged the Crow Tower out of Hell and that it was built by the damned. Anyone who says it was built by Othon the Mason and his workers is lying; the wizard just put a spell on the damned to make them *look* like Othon's lads.
- I do not know about Hernaudin but his wife Jehanne has a good soul. She gives his money to the poor as fast as Hernaudin can earn it.
- His wife Jehanne is as damned as her husband but she is trying to buy her way into Heaven.
- Hernaudin hardly ever leaves his tower but Jehanne is one of Countess Marie's handmaidens.

A critical success gets the characters a clue that should make them pause:

- Countess Marie is a friend of Hernaudin; he is her astrologer.

Lady Jehanne

If the characters want to speak to Hernaudin's wife Jehanne outside of the Crow Tower, then the place to go is the count's palace. Jehanne is one of the handmaidens to Count Henry II's mother, Marie of France. Getting into the count's palace requires a Difficult (-20%) Courtesy roll and a good

The Dowager Countess of Champagne

Marie of France is one of the most influential women in France, a patron of the arts and a political force in her own right. She is a princess of France; she was the eldest daughter of King Louis and King Philip Augustus is her younger half-brother. She was regent of Champagne for many years until her son came of age; she will take over as regent again when he leaves on Crusade.

She took Jehanne as one of her handmaidens partly because of Jehanne's lively wit and partly because Marie sometimes employs Hernaudin as an astrologer. This relationship between the countess and the sorcerer is kept secret but many in town know that the countess has consulted Hernaudin's wisdom in the past. He even drew up a birth chart for her son Henry.

reason for visiting the court, or favours from a Blessed Ring. Alternatively, if any of the characters has a good Sing, Dance or Play Instrument score, they may be able to get in as an entertainer. If all else fails, they can wait outside the court for a day, waiting for Jehanne to emerge.

Jehanne is an unnatural pale young woman of great beauty and serenity. She never raises her voice or shows any strong emotion; a conversation with her is like speaking to a china doll. She does smile, a little sadly but very sweetly and does not seem unhappy or trapped, merely detached and enigmatic.

The Children: If the characters ask about the missing children, she claims to know nothing of the case, but assures the characters that her prayers are with the families who have lost such treasures. She takes off her earrings, each one studded with a valuable emerald and presses them on the characters, asking that they give the jewels to the unfortunate mothers. If the players ask, she admits that she has no children herself; a successful Insight test at this point notes that this is obviously a painful topic for her – she is barren due to the magic Hernaudin used to save her life.

Hernaudin: Jehanne is initially evasive about her husband's occupation and interests – he has warned her about the dangers of speaking openly about sorcery. She does admit that Hernaudin is a wise and learned man with certain esoteric interests but that he harms no-one and is a devout Christian.

She and Hernaudin met six years ago, when she was dying of a fever. All the doctors and priests pronounced her beyond saving and she was given the last rites. Then, her father brought in the scholar Hernaudin and by his arts he brought her back from the brink of death. They were married a year later.



Hernaudin's experiments do require him to stay in the Crow Tower for long periods and he dislikes visitors. If the characters wish to speak to him, she will convey their request but they could be waiting several days... unless they have truly pressing business, in which case would they please tell her what it is so she can inform her husband?

Visiting The Crow Tower

For a description of the Crow Tower, see page 59.

If the characters arrive at the Crow Tower and just knock on the door, they will be ignored. If they raise a fuss, then Hernaudin's servant Ygren emerges from the tower and recites in a monotone that Hernaudin does not want to be disturbed

So, We Kidnap The Wife!

Aggressive players may leap to the idea of kidnapping Jehanne and holding her to ransom until Hernaudin gives back the missing children. This plan is extremely unwise – not only does this infuriate the necromancer, prompting him to send his ghoulish allies after the characters but it also angers Marie of France, bringing the wrath of all Champagne down on them.

They could grab Jehanne and march her to the gates of the Crow Tower with a knife to her throat, which means they are 'only' facing down a hill full of ghouls and an angry necromancer, instead of a hill full of ghouls, an angry necromancer and every guard and knight in France...

by any salesmen, preachers, beggars, apprentices, fortune-seekers or thieves. He then immediately spins on his heel and marches back into the tower. If the characters persist, then he empties a chamber-pot on them from a high window.

The characters can gain entrance to the Crow Tower if they prove knowledgeable about the occult and promise to leave any and all weapons with Ygren – Hernaudin is paranoid about assassins. He will allow no more than two monks into the tower at any time.

They can also get in if Jehanne vouches for them.

Hernaudin The Necromancer

The popular conception of a necromancer is a skeletal figure, dressed all in black, with a skull-cap and a gnarled staff. Hernaudin fails on every single one of these, although there may be a skull cap somewhere in the back. He is fat, merry-faced and dresses in rich colours and furs as befits a wealthy man. He has no staff but there is a well-used mace hanging

Ygren the Minion

Ygren is Hernaudin's servant, major-domo and bodyguard. He is neither a seven-foot tall lurching cadaver nor an ugly hunchback; he is a former mercenary and bandit who attempted to murder Hernaudin several years ago. The necromancer defeated Ygren with magic but then spared his life, winning the mercenary's undying loyalty. Ygren is a relentlessly practical man and now oversees most of Hernaudin's business dealings in addition to running the household. If anything, he is more protective of the sorcerer than Hernaudin himself is.

on the wall behind him. He is quick to laugh and appreciates both dry wit and lewd jokes. His chosen profession is a sinister, perilous and potentially sinful one but Hernaudin sees no reason why that should mean he has to be serious and dour all the time.

He is highly intelligent and forward-thinking, a Renaissance man born centuries early. He considers himself to be a good man, and even a deist, but he secretly holds free-thinking beliefs that the church would find utterly heretical; he denies the divinity of Jesus and questions the common conception of God. He has had no dealings with the Order, in fact, the Order did investigate him three years ago but Marie of France shielded him from repercussions without Hernaudin ever being aware that he was in grave danger but has heard rumours that the church suppresses the open use of magic. He believes that his sorcery is morally sound, or at least harmless.

If the characters raise the question of the stolen children, he frowns and admits that he may know who is responsible – and promises that he will aid the characters in trying to recover the innocents!

The Ghouls of Provins: For some years, now, Hernaudin has been in contact with a tribe of ghouls who live in the tunnels under Provins. These creatures fear and hate the surface folk, and yes, they do eat the dead but they are intelligent and capable of rational thought and communication. Hernaudin believes the ghouls hold great wisdom in their own strange way and that a connection can be forged between the surface and the underworld through trust and kindness.

The ghouls trust him now and almost consider him a friend. However... he does know that some ghouls in the tribe are violent and dangerous. The ghouls do sometimes prey on the surface for fresh meat. Normally, they dare only take lambs or other livestock, or maybe waylay a lone traveller but on certain religious occasions, they do hunger for rarer meat. The ghouls have kidnapped children in the past and while he



tried to dissuade them from doing so, they may have done it again. It is possible, if they were taken by the ghouls, that the children are still alive.

He will descend into the tunnels in search of the children, if the characters accompany him.

The Ghouls of Paris and The Ghoul Idol: If the characters played through Chapter 4, *On The Road*, they may have already battled ghouls or be carrying the mysterious ghoul idol. Hernaudin is troubled if they mention they have spilled ghoul blood recently – the creatures have supernaturally sharp senses and may be able to scent the smell of dead ghoul on the PCs. He may be able to talk the beasts down but he emphasises that the characters should be as non-threatening as possible and should ideally leave their weapons behind.

If they have the ghoul idol and show it to Hernaudin, then he is extremely impressed. The idol is the vessel for the spirit Kairneros, a lord of the dead. The ghouls consider him to be a ‘dead saint’ of their bizarre church. Hernaudin peers closely at whichever character was carrying the idol, and mutters about the ‘ghoul taint taking a while to show’ or ‘hope you wore gloves all the time’. He refuses to touch the idol himself but urges the characters to bring it with them as an offering.

Into the Underworld: If the characters are agreeable to Hernaudin’s plan, then he leads them into the courtyard, where Ygren lowers them down into the well, one-by-one... skip onto *Into The Underworld*, below.

The Crow Tower

The Crow Tower is an ugly black building, five stories tall. The lower two stories are built of stone; the upper levels are wood. Unlike the rest of the buildings near the market, the tower stands alone, detached from its neighbouring structures. Five years ago, a slaughterhouse stood here; Hernaudin bought it and had it torn down to build his home.

The tower’s nickname comes from the huge numbers of fat black crows that roost on the roof. Anyone trying to sneak into the tower must make a Hard (–40%) Stealth test or otherwise distract the birds, or their alarmed croaking will alert Ygren.

A wall runs around the outside of the tower, enclosing a small courtyard. There are two gates in the wall; one large gate opening onto the street, wide enough for two horses to pass abreast, and a small side door that opens into an alleyway. Both are kept locked at all times (Difficult (–20%) to pick). The wall is topped with jagged flints; a character who climbs the wall (Difficult Athletics) without checking first suffers 1D3 damage to his hand when he reaches the top and another 1D3 damage to a leg or abdomen if he does climb over the top.

The Courtyard

The small courtyard is used for storage of Hernaudin’s trade goods. There are a pair of guard dogs, vicious brutes that bark loudly and attack anyone who does not immediately retreat. The guard dogs will pointedly *not* attack a character who is carrying the ghoul idol – Hernaudin has trained the beasts not to attack ghouls.

Concealed behind crates and barrels, there are two coffins, still partially caked in grave dirt. These coffins were recently stolen from a Provins cemetery by the sorcerer, for use in his necromantic experiments.

Some of the flagstones are enchanted with Phantom (Vision) spells, triggered when an intruder steps on them. Those who step unwisely must make Persistence tests opposed by Hernaudin’s Grimoire skill or become momentarily convinced that the Crow Tower is falling on them.

The Well

A low stone well stands in the middle of the yard. At the bottom of the well, the characters can see no water, just a muddy chamber that seems to be the entrance to a tunnel. There is a sturdy rope ladder rolled up next to the well and there are two metal rings for attaching the ladder set into the stones nearby.

The Lower Tower

The main door to the tower is bound in brass and is sturdy enough to withstand a battering ram. A more agile character can try climbing up to one of the upper windows and squeezing in that way. The lower levels of the tower contain the family’s living quarters, Ygren’s room, a study and the kitchen and dining rooms. For the most part, it looks like the house of any other wealthy merchant but there are a few unusual things on the lower levels:

- There is one bedroom, obviously belonging to a woman, that contains a curious apparatus of brass and clay that comprises several jars and a hand-operated pump. This device has several flexible hoses made of waxed cloth that end in sharp needles. A Medicine or Lore (Occult) roll suggests that this device is designed to pump some ghastly liquid into a sleeping body.
- There is a trapdoor in the entrance hallway, leading underground. This trapdoor leads to an underground chamber with thick stone walls. Hernaudin keeps dangerous alchemical supplies and other perilous substances down here. Floating in two jars here are a pair of homunculi – perfectly formed humans no more than three inches tall, with pale blue skin. One is male; the other female. Hernaudin grew them as an experiment in making children through magic.



- A warrior's helmet sits on one table. This helmet has a full-face mask, so nothing of the wearer can be seen when it is worn. A character who passes a Perception test notices that there is a decapitated living head inside the helmet – this is the head of a knight who offended Hernaudin, long ago. The sorcerer uses him as a paperweight. The head cannot speak, but can mouth words and look pleadingly with its eyes. If asked, Hernaudin assures the characters that it is simply a wax model of a head, not a living thing at all.
- The spiral stairs to the upper levels of the tower are blocked by a heavy door. It is extremely difficult (-40%) to force this door using Brawn, as the staircase twists in just such a way to block an intruder from applying his full force against it.
- Light-fingered characters can loot money and goods to the value of 1,000 silver pennies here.

Ygren spends most of his time here during the day. At night, Jehanne may also be present.

The Upper Tower

All the windows of the upper tower are heavily barred, so it is impossible to climb through them. Characters could use Blasting Powder or Aqua Fortis to weaken the bars enough to pull them away. The only other way into the upper tower is via the staircase from the lower tower.

The upper tower contains Hernaudin's library and study. A sturdy chest holds the sorcerer's collection of books and a stacked pile of six coffins contains his experimental subjects – or trade goods, depending on how his experiments work out. Hernaudin has no interest in raising an army of the undead; he makes zombies for practise, then marches them down to the ghouls as tribute. The corpses he steals from local cemeteries. The corpses in these coffins are zombies and will rise up to devour intruders or to defend Hernaudin.

Provins Warren Encounter Table

Roll	Encounter
1	Tunnel Entrance: The tunnel here contains an exit to the surface via (roll 1d6): 1-2: a cave mouth; 3: a basement; 4: a loose flagstone; 5: a grave; 6: it is blocked with fallen stones, roll again.
2	Empty tunnel: Nothing here except graffiti and old dust.
3	Lone ghoul: A lone ghoul, sneaking through the upper tunnels. If Hernaudin is with the characters, the ghoul cowers and lets them pass. Otherwise, it flees or attacks depending on the demeanour of the PCs.
4-5	Catacomb: This tunnel is lined with old coffins, long since plundered by the ghouls. Some are used by smugglers as convenient stashes for goods.
6-7	Ghoul Tunnel: These tunnels were clearly not made by human hands; the walls glow a putrescent green and seem to have been not so much carved as moulded, as if the earth was turned to green clay.
8	Ghoul Chapel: The characters find the ghoul chapel.
9+	Ghoul Lair: The characters enter the main ghoul settlement.

Searching this room turns up various occult paraphernalia and weird curios, including a *Wand of the Magus* (see *Deus Vult*, page 133). There is no sign of Hernaudin's grimoire after a casual search – it is hidden behind a loose stone in the wall. Finding it requires a Hard (-40%) Perception test.

Hernaudin spends most of the day here, reading and occasionally experimenting with a corpse.

If The Alarm Is Raised

If the characters fail to be stealthy, then they have to deal with the tower's defenders. Ygren will immediately head to defend Jehanne, if she is home, or else head up to the upper tower and Hernaudin. The sorcerer orders the zombies to attack any intruders, casts defensive spells on himself and then goes to deal with the intruders himself.

The Missing Children

There are certainly plenty of *suspicious* items in the Crow Tower but there is nothing to tie Hernaudin directly to the crime. If the characters wish, they can confront Hernaudin and accuse him of kidnapping the children. This does not go down well but Hernaudin will (at least initially) try to disable the intruders instead of killing them outright. Anyone who threatens Jehanne, though, will be summarily killed by the sorcerer.

If the characters return to Father Milon with no proof that the sorcerer is holding the children, then the priest accuses the Hieromonks of being in league with Hernaudin. Unless stopped, the priest assembles a mob, as described in *Fire and Brimstone* on page 63.

Into The Underworld

The tunnels of Provins are old indeed. There are graffiti-marked catacombs and secret passages used by smugglers, old Roman and still older Gallic graves, long-abandoned



sewers or fortifications and beneath them all the secret realm of the ghouls. The characters are not alone down here; in several places, they see signs that someone or something else has recently passed through – mud on the floor, a fresh scratch on the stone, echoing footsteps in the distance – but they will never encounter another soul until they reach the lower levels.

If the characters are travelling with Hernaudin, then the sorcerer leads them through the underground labyrinth straight to the main ghoulish settlements, passing the ghoulish chapel en route to the ghoulish lair. Otherwise, as the characters make their way through the warrens, repeatedly roll 1D6 on the Provins Warren Encounter Table, adding +1 to a cumulative modifier per previous roll if the characters are going down, or subtracting -1 from the modifier if the characters are going up.

If the characters are being pursued by the ghouls on the way back, then any result of 6 or more means the characters are attacked by 1D4+1 ghouls.

The Ghoulish Chapel

This chapel was originally built on the surface and the stones show signs of being weathered by wind and rain. The ghouls stole it, block-by-block and rebuilt it in the lightless caves below. The chapel has been rededicated to the ghouls' own bizarre version of Christianity, where Lazarus taught Christ



to consume human flesh. Paintings on the wall depict scenes from the ghoulish bible, such as the Feast at Cana (where the better meat was served last), the miracle of the Resurrection (Christ rose to devour those who discovered the empty tomb) and the Pentecost (where the apostles consumed living flesh for the first time). There are meat-hooks in the upper reaches of the chapel, where sacrifices are stored.

Lurking in the rafters of the church is the Ghoulish Priest. This elder ghoulish is eager to find sacrifices for the religious ceremony – the Ghoulish King forbade the tribe from preying on humans on the surface but intruders are fair game. The priest will attack only if Hernaudin is not with the characters. Its attack method is to hide in the rafters, then it reaches down and grabs a straggler. It carries the victim off into the darkness, knocks him out, then returns for the next sacrifice.

The Ghoulish Lair

Eventually, the characters arrive in the heart of the ghoulish lair – a huge cavern with dozens of smaller tunnels running off it in every direction. This cave is located beneath an old graveyard; coffins and cloth-wrapped corpses poke from the earth of the ceiling. The ghouls pull coffins out of the roof of their home when hungry. There are more than 200 ghouls in this colony, making it one of the larger tribes in France. The place stinks like an abattoir and there are suspicious bloodstains everywhere. There are no light sources save whatever the characters bring with them, so the characters may need to feel their way across the cavern.

If the characters are in Hernaudin's company, then the sorcerer casts a light spell, illuminating a circle around the party. Dozens of ghouls slink out of the tunnels, gathering in the gloom and baying for blood. Some of the braver ghouls occasionally dart towards the characters but retreats when Hernaudin thrusts his staff at them or if the characters brandish weapons.

If the characters are *not* in Hernaudin's company, then they have to either sneak through the cave (a Hard (-40%) Stealth test) or else convince the ghouls not to tear them limb from limb through a really impressive feat of diplomacy or else by offering them the ghoulish idol from Paris.

Searching the Cave: There are piles of gnawed bones everywhere, some fresher than others. If the characters search through the more recent remains, they find no sign of the stolen children.


The Ghoulish King: On the far side of the ghoulish cavern is the lair of the Ghoulish King, another elder ghoulish of great size. The Ghoulish King sits on a throne of skulls with several 'comely' female ghouls at his hoofed feet. Drapes of leather made from human flesh – a sign of tremendous wealth and prestige in the society of the underworld – hang from the walls and the King wears a crown of tarnished silver and is decked in grave goods and offerings.





Deus Ex Sorcerer

If your unwise Hieromonks have wandered into the ghoulish tunnels without Hernaudin or any plan of escape, then they may be in trouble. Rather than having them *all* meet a grisly (if not gristly) end, you can have Hernaudin find them just as they are about to be eaten.



Ghoul Diplomacy

Negotiation with the ghouls works very differently depending on whether the characters are alone or with the sorcerer.

In the company of the Sorcerer: If the characters are with Hernaudin, then they can let the sorcerer do the talking. He addresses the ghouls in Latin. As Hernaudin talks, other ghouls crawl into the king's lair, crowding around to see the strange visitors.

'Mighty king, carrion lord, I bear greetings from the surface world. I bring a gift of meat.' Paranoid characters may assume that Hernaudin means them but the sorcerer produces a bloody bag from his robes and places it in the outstretched hands of one of the ghoulish maidens. *'Mighty king, I must ask you if you or any of your kin have tasted the flesh of living men since the solstice? Two children were taken from Provins and I know that the Feast of St. Lazarus is coming soon.'*


The Ghoul King growls and replies *'No, sorcerer, we have not eaten the flesh of living men in months. The hunger gnaws at me and my cubs have never known the sweet taste of human meat but we have held true to our oath. We did not take any children to eat.'*

Hernaudin turns to the characters and shrugs, as if to say *'we must take his word'* but then another large ghoulish steps forward. *'You forbid us human flesh and then you tell us that someone else is taking the sweet-meats? If man preys on man, then why should we deny ourselves? Why hold true to our oath, if they will be eaten anyway?'* The other ghouls mutter and growl support for this argument.

Unless the characters act immediately to defend Hernaudin or argue down the angry young ghoulish, then the tribe turns on the characters. The ghouls have been denying themselves for months, but now the characters have trailed the taste of fresh meat across the cave.

On Their Own: If the characters are not in Hernaudin's company, then they need to negotiate with the Ghoul King themselves. The King is intrigued by the sheer bravado of the intruders, so he will give them an audience but they need to respect his authority and make suitable offerings and obsequies

to keep it amused and beneficent. The same sequence of events will occur if the characters are able to negotiate with the king – as soon as the ghouls learn that someone else is eating humans (or at least kidnapping humans, and the ghouls cannot conceive of any reason why someone would kidnap a child other than dinner), the king's oath to Hernaudin is challenged.




Return to the Ghoul Chapel

If the characters give the ghoulish idol as a gift to the King, then there is much rejoicing among the ghouls. They show their appreciation by whooping, laughing and throwing scraps of carrion meat on the characters. The Ghoul King leads his tribe in a grotesque procession through the tunnels back to the chapel, where the idol is placed with great ceremony on the altar.

The Ghoul Priest clammers down from its perch and offers to perform a secret ghoulish rite for one of the characters. The ghouls can brew up a potion of human blood and corpse-fat that allows the imbibitor to recall the lives of his ancestors in a trace. The priest can then interpret the babblings of the entranced character.

If the characters accept this offer, then the priest prepares the potion for the unlucky volunteer. Making the potion inflicts two points of damage on the character's arm, as blood must be drawn. The character must also make an Easy (+20%) Resilience test to keep the foul brew down. If successful, the character has a glimpse of his ancestor's lives – this gives the character two free Improvement Rolls and the GM can also use this incident to drop in plot twists tailored to the character (*'what, my great-grandfather was a king?'*).

If you intend to run *The Tomb of Solomon* after this adventure, then the Ghoul Priest solemnly listens to the character's glossolalian ramblings and then speaks in a broken mix of Greek and Latin. *'Your path will take you to the Tomb of Father-of-Corpses, wise King Solomon. It is not a good place for ghouls to go, for he buried things in the earth that are more dangerous than our kind. There are old ghouls in the ruins of Tadmor, which ye call Palmyra. Chief of these ghouls is al-Dabu, the Great Hyena. Behold! I make the mark of the ghoulish upon this one and he shall look upon al-Dabu and not be harmed.'* Unless stopped, the ghoulish priest scrapes a symbol into the forehead of the insensate monk with a filthy fingernail. This wound will never heal fully, leaving an ugly black scar for life but the symbol may be useful in a later adventure.





Return to the Surface

If the characters ended their time with the ghouls peacefully, then the Ghoul King sends a pack of his servants to accompany them back to the surface – just in case some of the more rebellious younger ghouls decide to take a snack. The ghouls lope and gibber through the tunnels ahead of the characters and the return to the surface seems to take much less time than the descent did.

If the characters are fleeing the ghoul pack, then they return to the surface with the monsters baying at their heels. The ghouls stop short of pursuing the characters onto the surface but they will chase them to the very bottom of Hernaudin’s dry well.

Fire and Brimstone

While the characters were absent, Father Milon decided to take matters into his own hands. He has assembled a mob of over 100 people, mostly drawn from the poor of Provins but also including some men-at-arms and mercenaries. He preached to them, telling them of the necromancer’s evil and how he stole away young Ava and Jak to sacrifice them to the devil. All of Champagne is already in a combative mood, inspired by the Count’s impending crusade, so it was easy for the old priest to whip the crowd into a murderous fury. A mob more than 100 strong, carrying burning torches and pitchforks and clubs and swords and whatever they can lay their hands on, comes marching across the market square just as the characters emerge from the underworld.

Any character who has seen the madness caused by the Joyous One can make an Insight roll to realise that Father Milon has been driven mad by the spirit.

On arriving at the Crow Tower, Milon demands that Hernaudin hand over the missing children. The characters have a chance now to speak but they must choose their words carefully. Milon is insane and will assume that anything said in Hernaudin’s defence means that the necromancer has bewitched the Hieromonks. The only way to defuse the situation is to say that the children are already dead and to blame the deaths on someone else, exonerating the necromancer and to phrase it in such a way that leaves no doubt that the characters are not Hernaudin’s servants.

The Crow Tower Burns

If the characters do not intervene, then Milon’s mob breaks down the gates and charges towards the Crow Tower. The tower’s magical defences (see page 59) cause some confusion, but enough of the mob make it through to start hammering at the door of the tower itself. The discovery of the stolen coffins in the courtyard adds to their fury.

If Hernaudin is not with the characters, then the necromancer activates his zombies and goes downstairs with Ygren to defend his home. He will use his sorcery on the mob but even his power is limited.

Other options for the fight include:

- The mob sets fire to the tower’s upper levels, trapping Lady Jehanne in her rooms. She burns to death.
- The ghouls scent blood and swarm out of the well, attacking the mob.
- Hernaudin blasts Father Milon with a spell, killing the old priest instantly. The sorcerer is then overwhelmed and butchered by the mob.
- Optionally, the whole courtyard could collapse under the weight of the mob and the collapsing tower.

This encounter should spiral almost inevitably towards catastrophe unless the players are very clever in coming up with a solution. The most likely outcome is that dozens of people die and the characters are forced to flee Provins immediately to avoid being implicated in the disaster. If you can, make the players hate the Joyous One for sowing such discord in the town and causing so much suffering.



The Mummer’s Play: The Creation

The night after leaving Provins, the characters all share the same dream. This dream is the first tendril of psychic contact from the Joyous One as it tries to worm its way into the minds of its pursuers. Any character protected by Spirit Resistance or who carries a holy relic such as a Fragment of the True Cross does not share the dream.

In the dream, the characters are in a crowd in the market square of Provins. A band of travelling mummers are putting on a biblical mystery play, depicting the events of the Book of Genesis. The leader of the band is a thin man who wears a black mask – if the characters have seen Jacques Taillebois before, they recognise the eyes of the possessed leper. The narrator speaks in a raspy voice of how Mankind once dwelt in a garden of joy but was exiled from this land of bountiful pleasures by a jealous and cruel God.

In the dream, Adam and Eve are played by two children – the kidnapped children from Provins. At the end of the dream, the narrator sweeps them up in his black cloak as if they never existed.





Fr. Milon

The aged priest has been given a new lease of life by his madness – his faith is renewed and his spirit inflamed by the desire to save the children. Unfortunately, his paranoia has put him on the wrong course and his righteous actions will soon have terrible consequences.

Fr. Milon

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	8	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	6	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	5	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions +2

Damage Modifier -1D2

Magic Points 13

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +9

Armour: None

Equipment: None

Heroic Abilities: None

Notable Skills: Influence 60%, Lore (Christian Theology) 65%, Lore (Occult) 30%, Streetwise 40%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	30%	1D4+1	6/8

Jehanne

The nature of Jehanne should be left as a mystery for the players. Did Hernaudin merely heal her when she was on the brink of death – or did he bring her back as one of the undead?

Jehanne

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	9	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	7	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	15	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	15	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier -1D2

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +13

Armour: None

Equipment: None

Heroic Abilities: Tireless

Notable Skills: Craft (needlework) 50%, Courtesy 60%, Dance 55%, Influence 65%



Ygren

A former mercenary, Ygren is not as hard or fit as he once was, having traded the life of a brigand for that of a merchant. He still remembers how to hold a sword, though and his chainmail still fits over his growing belly.

Ygren		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	2/7
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	2/7
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	5/8
INT	12	10-12	Chest	5/9
POW	8	13-15	Right Arm	5/6
DEX	9	16-18	Left Arm	5/6
CHA	10	19-20	Head	2/7

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Leather and Chain
Damage Modifier	+1D2	Equipment: Longsword, Dagger, Shield
Magic Points	8	Heroic Abilities: None
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+12 (+6 in armour)	Notable Skills: Commerce 40%, Lore (tactics) 40%, Perception 60%, Persistence 30%, Resilience 55%, Stealth 50%, Survival 60%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword and Shield	M	L	72%	1d8	6/12
Shield	L	S	72%	1d4	6/12

Elder Ghouls

Elder Ghouls are older specimens of their species. After many centuries of unnatural life, the ghouls grows stronger and faster. Many elder ghouls learn the rudiments of sorcery and other develop the power to consume knowledge by eating the brains of the dead.

Elder Ghouls

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6+12	24	1-3	Right Leg	3/8
CON	2D6+12	19	4-6	Left Leg	3/8
SIZ	2D6+12	19	7-9	Abdomen	3/9
INT	3D6+3	14	10-12	Chest	3/10
POW	3D6+3	14	13-15	Right Arm	3/7
DEX	3D6+6	18	16-18	Left Arm	3/7
CHA	2D6+3	11	19-20	Head	3/8

Combat Actions	3	Typical Armour: Rugose Hide, 3 Armour Points
Damage Modifier	+1D8	
Magic Points	14	Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons, Night Sight
Movement	10m	
Strike Rank	+16	Skills: Athletics 70%, Brawn 60%, Influence 60%, Perception 70%, Persistence 80%, Resilience 120%, Stealth 40%, Track 80%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	S	T	80%	1D10+1D8	As for Head
Claw	S	S	140%	1D8+1D8	As for Leg



Hernaudin The Necromancer

The former monk is now an adept sorcerer and has acquired several grimoires which he has combined into *The Path of the Dead*. He intends to one day transcend death itself but he is in no hurry to leave this life - the food is too good.

Hernaudin		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	11	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	16	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	9	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions	3	Armour: None
Damage Modifier	+0	Equipment: Wand of the Magus
Magic Points	14	Heroic Abilities: None
Movement	8m	Spells: Animate (Dead Flesh), Damage Resistance, Glow, Neutralise Magic, Palsy, Phantom (Sense), Tap (CON), Treat Wounds, Undead Slave
Strike Rank	+13	Notable Skills: Influence 40%, Grimoire (<i>Path of the Dead</i>) 75%, Lore (Occult) 80%, Manipulation 55%, Perception 50%, Persistence 75%, Resilience 44%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Staff	M	L	55%	1D8	4/8

Guard Dogs

These are large mastiffs or other dangerous breeds, suitable for use as hunting or guard dogs.

Guard Dogs

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6	11	1-3	Right Hind Leg	1/5
CON	3D6	11	4-6	Left Hind Leg	1/5
SIZ	2D6+3	10	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
INT	5	5	10-12	Chest	1/7
POW	3D6	11	13-15	Right Foreleg	1/5
DEX	3D6	11	16-18	Left Foreleg	1/5
CHA	-	-	19-20	Head	1/5

Combat Actions	2	Typical Armour: Fur and Hide, 1 Point
Damage Modifier	+0	
Magic Points	11	Traits: Night Sight
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+11	Skills: Athletics 50%, Brawn 40%, Evade 30%, Perception 65%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 40%, Stealth 30%, Survival 20%, Track 50%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M	T	50%	1D8	As for Head
Claw	M	M	20%	1D3	As for Leg



Death of a Hermit

After leaving Provins, the characters chase after the mummers' caravan for a long week. No matter how quick they march or how hard they push their horses, they always seem to be a day or two behind the mummers.

Finally, in the city of Orleans, there is a glimmer of hope.

Orleans

The town of Orleans stands on the Loire, the great trading river of France. The town grew up around a bridge and tolls from those crossing the river make up a significant part of the town's income. This also means that the bridge-keepers see almost everyone that passes through the town and so are excellent sources of gossip.

In exchange for a few coins, one cocky young guard relates that he saw a band of mummers cross the river just yesterday. They said they were planning on travelling to the coast and asked where the best town to hire a ship for passage would be. The guards told them to follow the river to Saint-Nazaire at the mouth of the Loire. Before the mummers could set off, though, they were approached by a monk from the monastery of Saint-Mesmin de Micy, an old monastery located a short distance outside of Orleans. Apparently, the abbot desired entertainment and wished to hire the mummers.

The last time the guard saw the mummers, they were on the road to Micy.

The Monastery of Saint-Mesmin de Micy

Seven hundred years ago, King Clovis of the Franks gave lands to a monk named Euspicius to found a monastery on the banks of the Loire, as well as generous rights of fishing and the right to extract tolls from boats on the river. The monastery prospered greatly, founding many daughter priories and other abbeys, and the bones of a dozen saints lie within the marshy graveyard.

Today, Saint-Mesmin is a large and well-established Benedictine monastery, as large as Mont-Saint-Michel. It is wealthy and with wealth has come corruption and indolence. Saint-Mesmin is a particularly egregious example of the sort of venal, self-serving monks who ignore the rules of St. Benedict and are concerned solely with their own pleasures.

The Monastery

Saint-Mesmin is built on marshland near the confluence of the Loire and the smaller river Loiret. Although the monks have drained much of the land, the monastery's foundations are still comparatively weak, so they were compelled to build *out* rather than up. As such, Saint-Mesmin sprawls over a wide area. The spire of the chapel of Saint-Mesmin can be seen from a distance, rising up over the monastery's cloister and four dormitories. Behind the chapel stands the low bulk of the round library tower, which resembles a sullen dwarf compared to the elegant height of the new spire.

Closer to the river can be found the monastery's two guest-houses – one large and draughty, the other smaller and newer for important guests, the hospital, the granary and the complex of warehouses and docks that provide much of the monastery's income. In previous years, the monks fished the river themselves but today they sell the right to fish to peasants and take a third of their catch too.

Abbot Gerin (Envy)

The abbot is the second son of the bishop of Orleans and was promoted to his current high rank by the intercession of his 'heavenly father'. No-one in the monastery would dare speak openly of the abbot's family connections but it is an open secret. Gerin is 24 and as such is exceedingly young to hold such a high post. Despite this honour, he is deeply dissatisfied with his lot in life; as a child, he was fostered by the Duke of Orleans and would much prefer to be a noble knight than a monk. He envies the sons of the duke and spends what time he can hunting with them in the Forest of Orleans.

His father, the bishop of Orleans, needs the support and wealth of the monastery for his own political ambitions, so it is absolutely vital that Gerin retain his position. The bishop regularly sends letters exhorting his son to behave and several of the monks – most notably the Precentor – are spies in the bishop's employ.

Gerin tries to avoid public appearances and official duties whenever he can; if forced to interact with visitors, then he pretends to be a suitably devout and humble monk while he scrambles to find an excuse to leave.



Almoner Ogier (Sloth)

The role of the almoner is to provide for the poor and the needy. Ogier considers himself poorer and needier than any of the starving peasants who crowd the chapel door on Sundays. If Ogier can complain about anything, he does – it is too cold to do anything in winter, too hot in summer. His duties are too arduous for him to accomplish anything but try to lighten his burden and he complains that you are overstepping your bounds. It is said of Ogier that if he had been an apostle, he would have complained to the risen Christ about being kept waiting for three whole days. Ogier does as little as possible, as loudly as possible. His conspicuous uselessness distracts from the abbot's slightly less conspicuous incompetence.

Cellarer Thomas (Gluttony)

The cellarer is in charge of the abbey's kitchens and cellars, especially the brewery and it is plain to see that Thomas takes special pride in that area of his responsibility. Thomas is grotesquely fat and due to a 'stomach complaint', he maintains that he is unable to drink water, and so must rely on huge quantities of beer and wine to improve his digestion. When sober, he has a keen mind and bemoans the state of the monastery.

Hosteller Julien (Pride)

The role of the hosteller is to care for pilgrims and guests of the monastery. Julien currently holds this position, much to his chagrin. He believed he would be the next abbot but instead the bishop's son was given the title instead. Julien despises Abbot Gerin and is waiting for him to make a public error so great that the bishop cannot shield him. Under his leadership, Julien believes that he would bring the monastery back to greatness.

Infirmarian Michel (Wrath)

The master of the monastery's house of healing is a former warrior, a Norman who lost an eye in battle and was forced to retire. His skills at healing were learned on the battlefield, so his bedside manner is rather... lacking. (*'You've got two legs, get up and walk, you worm!'*) He and Julien are close friends.

Michel's head wound did more than take his eye – he now suffers from tremendous fits of rage, where the desire to destroy and to maim overwhelms him. The monks have learned to recognise the onset of these fits, and try to restrain Michel by giving him a sleeping draught or putting him to bed.

Precentor Urian (Greed)

The precentor is the master of the scriptorium and the keeper of the library; Saint-Mesmin's library is a large and prestigious one, so this is a very important role here. Urian is a spy for the bishop of Orleans; his role is to keep an eye on the bishop's troublesome son and keep Gerin in check. The bishop pays Urian handsomely for this. Urian is a vain monk; his robes may be made of simple cloth but he wears golden rings and collars of rich fur.

Sacrist Helier (Lust)

Saint-Mesmin's treasury contains a number of important relics, which are in the care of the charismatic young sacristan. Pilgrims come from distant lands to see these relics – in some cases, young, impressionable female pilgrims, who are sometimes willing to pay a special price to see certain holy items that are not normally displayed to visitors. Young Helier has deflowered more than a few pilgrims, although he assures them that sex with a monk is not sinful at all, especially when it is done behind the altar in a locked chapel.

Helier is a close friend of the abbot; the two hunt together regularly and are of a like mind on most topics.

James The Hermit

Saint-Mesmin is also host to an important guest, James the Hermit, a holy man who normally dwells in a barrel tethered to a pole in the middle of the Loire many miles upriver. From his bobbing barrel, James prays for the forgiveness of his sins and – when the water is especially icy and the barrel especially leaky – has visions of the future. Once a year, he makes a pilgrimage to a great cathedral for mass and this year he is visiting Orleans.

Having James as a guest should be a great honour for the monastery but the presence of the holy hermit has been more of an embarrassment than anything else. James' piety and poverty is a constant reminder of the monks' own failings. Ever since he arrived, Gerin and the other important monks of Saint-Mesmin have been wracked with intense feelings of guilt and shame, not to mention anger towards James for inspiring such unwelcome thoughts.

Worse, if James were to attend mass at the cathedral in Orleans, he could report on the state of the monastery to Gerin's father, the Bishop of Orleans – and while the bishop knows exactly what his son is like, he could not keep turning a blind eye if such an important hermit spoke openly about Gerin's failings...

Mysteries of the Abbey

The characters need to solve two interlinked mysteries at Saint-Mesmin. There are seven suspects to these crimes and two potential murderers. Roll on the following tables to determine who was given their heart's desire by the Joyous One and who killed James the Hermit. It is possible for one monk to have committed both crimes.

The Mummers and The Monastery

Last night, the Joyous One and his band of mummers arrived at the monastery, as Abbot Gerin requested. After three days in the company of James the Hermit, Gerin felt that he needed some relaxation and sent out a monk to find some entertainment. The mummers arrived that night and put on another Mystery Play, this time retelling the tale of Abraham and how he was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac as God commanded him too.



Roll (1D10)	Monk	Heart's Desire
1-2	Abbot Gerin	Freedom from guilt – he now believes he has inherited James' piety and so is sinless.
3-4	Almoner Ogier	Renewed desire for life – Ogier believes that he will become the abbot once Gerin's failings come to light and that the monastery will become a place of pilgrimage and devotion, the last resting place of St James the Hermit.
5-6	Precentor Urian	Power and wealth beyond measure – Urian intends to use the secret lore from the library book to become the Emperor of all the World.
7-8	Infirmarian Michel	A return to war – Michel believes the spirit healed his wounds and he is now an invincible warrior.
9-10	Cellarer Thomas	The monastery restored – Thomas believes now that the monastery will become a place of pilgrimage and devotion, the last resting place of St James the Hermit.

Roll (1D10)	Monk	Motive for Murder
1-2	Sacrist Helier	Protect the abbot.
3-4	Precentor Urian	Keep the money flowing from the bishop.
5-6	Hosteller Julien	Discredit the abbot.
7-8	Cellarer Thomas	Got drunk and mistook the hermit for the abbot.
9-10	Infirmarian Michel	Julien asked him to do it to discredit the abbot.

In the course of the play, the Joyous One inspired one of the monks to madness by granting him his heart's desire. The grateful lunatic let the Joyous One into the library, to consult one of the monastery's books of forbidden lore, the *Scrolls of Edessa*. While there, they were interrupted by a young scribe, who the spirit murdered. The scribe's body comes to light the following day – see *Crows on the Roof*.

The mad monk is still at large in the abbey and will continue to kill those he perceives as his enemies. He must be stopped.

The Murder of James The Hermit

During the night, after the mummings departed, one of the monks crept into the cell of James the Hermit and murdered the saintly man by drowning him in the washbasin. There was a watchman in place at the door of the building, so it must have been one of the seven monks who were in James' company that night...

Trail of the Murderer

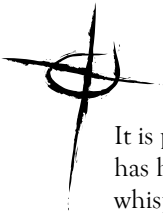
The characters arrive at Saint-Mesmin in the early evening, at the hour of Vespers. As soon as prayers are completed, they may speak to either Hosteller Julien (if they conceal their status as Hieromonks) or to the abbot, if they present their Blessed Rings.

The Guesthouse

If the characters are staying incognito, then they are given rooms in the larger guesthouse by Julien and told they may

attend mass that evening and eat in the refectory (or will be given bread and fish, if they are staying incognito *and* pretending to be laity, not monks). There are several other travellers staying in the guesthouse, most notably:

- **Paula and her nurse Gamela:** This young woman, the daughter of a merchant from Orleans, recently recovered from a dangerous fever and came to Saint-Mesmin to give thanks. She caught the eye of Sacrist Helier, although getting the impressionable (and, to be truthful, still a little delirious) girl out from under the thumb of her nurse has so far proved impossible for the lusty monk. Paula can tell the characters about Helier's promise to show her certain secret relics in the chapel tonight if they win her trust; in exchange, she begs that the characters help distract her nurse.
- **Iaocaul, a vagabond:** This beggar has wandered the roads for many years. He has heard many tales of James the Hermit and hopes that James might miraculously cure his lame leg. He can tell the characters who James the Hermit is, how the Hermit is staying in the smaller guesthouse and how James will soon go to Orleans for mass in the cathedral. For all James-the-Hermit-related trivia, you can find no better source than Iaocaul.
- **Theobald:** This unassuming fellow claims to be a maker of inks from Orleans, here to bargain with Precentor Urian about providing certain raw materials for the monastery's scriptorium. In truth, he is a spy in the employ of the Bishop of Orleans, here to pay Urian his stipend and to receive the Precentor's report.



It is patently obvious to the characters that something strange has happened in the monastery – there are worried faces and whispering monks everywhere and the atmosphere is one of impending doom. Whatever the problem is, it seems to be centred around the smaller guest-house. If the characters try poking around on their own, see *Rumours in the Monastery*, page 71. Otherwise, they can make contact with the abbot and learn what is going on directly from the source.

The Abbot's Tale

Abbot Gerin has no time for the characters unless they present their Blessed Rings and even then he has to be reminded of the meaning of the rings by Ogier before he pays attention. Once he realises that he has a band of elite church-sanctioned warrior-monks on his doorstep, he decides to put them to good use.

'Brothers in Christ, a terrible crime has been committed within these hallowed walls. The hermit, James of the Loire, was staying here in Saint-Mesmin and some monster has murdered him in the night! By God, we must find the murderer!'

Gerin tells the characters the events of the last night. A group of mummers arrived at the monastery and performed the Mystery Play of Abraham and Isaac for the hermit and a select audience of important monks at the guesthouse. The mummers left and one-by-one the monks left the guesthouse, leaving James to sleep. This morning, he was found dead.

The news of James' death has not yet been announced; the abbot intends to send word to the Bishop of Orleans, who is expecting the hermit. The sooner the killer is found, the better.

The Inspired Abbot: If the abbot is the one who was inspired by the Joyous One, then Gerin brims with confidence even as he tells the characters about the murder of James. It is as though all this were part of God's ineffable plan and that James' death was no more cruel than the fall of leaves in autumn.

Questioning the Abbot

The characters doubtless have several questions for the abbot; Gerin will answer questions but there is an air of nervousness that suggests he is unused to having his word questioned, and does not like it one bit.

Tell us more about these mummers: The abbot shrugs. James demanded entertainment (a complete lie, of course – it was the impetuous abbot who was bored) and so Gerin sent a monk out to find a minstrel or a player of some sort. He returned with a band of travelling mummers. They seemed a little strange but they were willing to play for the monks.

What happened to the mummers? They left in the dark, which was a little unusual. They must be somewhere down the road. James was still alive when they left.

Who attended the Mystery Play? The abbot himself, Almoner Ogier, Cellarer Thomas, Hosteller Julien, Infirmarian Michel, Precentor Urian, Sacrist Helier and James.

Who was the last person to see James alive? God alone knows. The monks drank a great deal of wine during the play and there was much confusion when one of their number got drunk and started an argument. The abbot is initially unwilling to elaborate but if the characters press him, he says that Thomas got drunk and complained about the abbot's treatment of James and that Hellier, Ogier and Julien joined in on opposite sides. The situation nearly came to blows.

Investigating the Murder Scene

The characters may ask to see the body of James, which is still in the guesthouse. The small guesthouse is for visiting nobles and their retinue, so it is well appointed and quite luxurious. There are three rooms; James chose to stay in the smallest of them. There is a large and downy-soft bed in the room but James' bedclothes lie on the floor – the hermit preferred to sleep on the cold hard ground. The body has been placed on the bed, however.

We're Monks On A Mission!

The players may want to refuse the abbot's request, arguing that they have a more important task to complete. They are free to do so, of course, but there are consequences. Firstly, leaving the inspired madman running around the monastery will strengthen the Joyous One, as the spirit can draw Magic Points from its worshippers. Secondly, the characters miss out on the clue of the *Scrolls of Edessa* in the library. Thirdly, and most importantly, if the characters fail to solve the mystery, then the inspired madman will murder the Bishop of Orleans. The murder of the bishop is irrelevant to the players' mission to stop the Joyous One but the Order will ask harsh questions of the Hieromonks if they allow the bishop to die. Indeed, the Prioress of the Crypts may prepare a place for them...

There is a jug of water on the table and a water basin lies fallen on the floor, in the middle of a large puddle. James' nightshirt is soaked through and his hair is still damp. A First Aid, Medicine or Swim test confirms that James drowned, probably by having his head held down in the basin. The hermit was a small and elderly man who could not have put up much resistance.

If Thomas is the killer, then there are signs of a clumsy struggle – both the victim and the killer were smashed against walls.



If Michel or Helier was the killer, then James was obviously overpowered by a very strong foe – there are no other wounds on James’ body other than ligature marks where the killer grabbed James’ neck with a vice-like grip and drowned the hermit.

Supernatural Divination: A Hoffman Device shows no sign of magic in James’ room but there is a small and fading trace in the room where the players put on their mystery play. If the characters still have the ghoul idol from Paris, they can use it to question James’ corpse – see *Questioning James*, page 72.

Rumours in the Monastery

The death of James sets tongues wagging in Saint-Mesmin. An Influence or Streetwise test gets the characters a flood of rumours, some more useful than others:

- James was killed by river-spirits, who crawled out of the Loire and drowned him. Beware the melusines!
- Julien should have been abbot – Gerin took his place and Julien has been bitter ever since.
- James loathed Abbot Gerin and little wonder – the abbot is about as saintly as a two-penny whore.
- Abbot Gerin is the son of... well, it would not be wise to speak of it too loudly. Let us say that James would have seen Gerin’s father very soon indeed.
- Michel is a madman! Beware of him! It is shameful that he was allowed so close to James – no doubt his friend Julien had something to do with that! In fact, I’ll wager that Michel killed James!
- Those mummers were very strange indeed. I saw one of them near the library last night, as if waiting for someone. What would an illiterate wandering player want with the library? It’s closed at night, anyway.
- I swear I saw a light in the library tower last night, on the top floor.
- Thomas is an old sod but he speaks the truth when he’s soused. I saw him in the brewing cellar a few days ago, complaining about the abbot and his ways.
- Old Ogier didn’t like the hermit. He doesn’t like poor people. Shame he’s our almoner, isn’t it?
- Have you heard what – or rather, who! – that scamp Helier was doing in the chapel? Two girls and one of them a novice from the nunnery? Why, if the abbot didn’t protect Helier, he’d have been drowned in the river years ago by some jealous husband!

Questioning Almoner Ogier

Ogier’s recollection of the night before is coloured by a lot of red wine and his opinion of Abbot Gerin. It was an absolute disgrace that the abbot chose to mark the visit of such a holy man with drinking and play-acting, when they should have spent the time in prayer. Yes, Ogier had a lot to drink but it is for his digestion, nothing more.

He tells the characters that last night was the last straw – the abbot may be the son of the Bishop of Orleans but family

connections cannot protect Gerin any more. Saint-Mesmin shall not be allowed to fall further into sin and corruption!

Ogier the Inspired: If Ogier is the monk inspired by the Joyous One, then he speaks of how the death of James has turned Saint-Mesmin into a blessed shrine, just as the death of Thomas Becket sanctified Canterbury Cathedral. This makes it doubly important that Gerin be removed from his office.

Questioning Cellarer Thomas

Thomas deals with the death of James by drinking. The characters find him in the wine cellar, out of his skull once again. In this mood, he is willing to talk about anything. He was there last night but remembers barely a word. The play was awful and the young boy they had playing Isaac could not act. It was all the abbot’s idea, as usual – another damn foolish idea. Gerin is worse than useless, he is dragging Saint-Mesmin down. The PCs might as well get drunk with him and seek truth in the arms of Bacchus here in the wine cellar, because there is no truth in God in the chapel upstairs, not with all the sin and depravity that goes on here.

Thomas will also explain Gerin’s parentage and mention that this nepotism especially rankles with Julien.

Thomas the Inspired: An inspired Thomas does not seem especially drunk, despite the vast quantity of wine he has consumed. He looks around him as if seeing a marble palace of great beauty, not a grimy wine cellar.

Thomas the Killer: If Thomas is the killer, then he has several cuts and bruises on his hands. He claims that he fell during the night.

Questioning Hosteller Julien

Julien is cold and composed even when discussing James’ death. He regards the characters with deep-set, stern eyes and gives the impression of a hawk hunched over a meal. Last night, he says, Abbot Gerin once again disgraced himself, and worse, he permitted a holy man to die within the very walls of the monastery. Gerin, he says, was given the title of abbot most unjustly and now that crime has come back to haunt Saint-Mesmin. The abbot may not have been the killer – Julien has no idea who it was and would not make false accusations – but the ultimate responsibility for the crime must lie with Gerin.

He had only a little wine last night and remembers events with crystal clarity. The play was strange and confused; there was a masked narrator with a rasping voice that had an oddly hypnotic quality. Even Julien found himself to be a little entranced. James, however, very much disliked the play and once the mummers left, the hermit said that he would go to bed immediately.

Thomas shouted that the abbot was a fool for inviting the mummers to the monastery, as it was an unworthy and sinful



thing to subject their guest to the mummers' nonsense. That rogue Helier claimed that the hermit was probably grateful for the entertainment, as anything is better than sitting in a barrel and that they should all praise Gerin's wisdom. Ogier and Julien both turned on Helier's foolishness and a larger argument broke out about Gerin's leadership. It is not the first time the monks have argued about the abbot but it was an especially vicious one. Julien stopped arguing to attend to his friend Michel, who was not feeling well – loud noises and raised voices upset the Infirmarian.

Julien the Killer: If Julien is the killer, then he draws the characters' attention to the sins of Gerin and Helier. He repeats rumours about Helier defiling the chapel with the most grotesque sexual misdeeds and asks that the characters speak to the Bishop of Orleans about the abbot's actions. Julien cannot approach the bishop directly, as it would be seen as an attempt to take the abbey for himself but the characters are outsiders and can therefore speak freely.

Questioning Infirmarian Michel

Michel is wary of being questioned; he knows that he is sometimes victim to fits of blind rage and that he is therefore the prime suspect in the murder. He tries to win the characters' respect as fighting men; if he wanted to kill a man, he would do it on the battlefield, as he once did. He tells the characters his past – he was a warrior but was wounded in battle and came to Saint-Mesmin to die. Julien took him in, healed him, so he owes the Hosteller a great debt.

Last night, Michel attended the mummer's play. It did not agree with him and gave him a fearsome headache. He remembers little of the night but he does remember Julien asking him something and it seemed important at the time. If the characters press him, he admits that he suffers from strange fits of rage, where he can remember nothing except a black fog while he commits acts of terrible brutality.

Michel the Inspired: If Michel is inspired, then he shows no sign of being at all inconvenienced by his wound. Indeed, he strikes the characters as being a confident, dangerous man, not the broken figure the other monks described.

Michel the Killer: If Michel is the killer, then he is evasive and sullen; he helped his friend Julien while under the influence of one of his black rages and is now overcome with shame and guilt. He has no desire to confess, though – why should he confess to something he did when he was not in his right mind?

Questioning Precentor Urian

Urian evades the characters' questions and whenever possible he turns their inquiries back on them. He needs to know how much the characters know and what they intend so he can report back to the Bishop of Orleans. He claims that the mummer's show last night was unremarkable and while there was an argument, it was all down to drunken Thomas and his

tantrums. He does not know who killed James – but, well, Michel was there last night and everyone in the monastery knows about the warrior's black rages.

Urian the Inspired: If Urian is the inspired victim of the Joyous One, then he hastens to finish his conversation with the Player Characters, so he can run off to the library to consult the *Scrolls of Edessa*.

Urian the Killer: If Urian is the killer, then he needs to keep the characters' suspicions away from the abbot. He will keep blaming Michel and hint darkly that Julien may have convinced Michel to kill the hermit.

Questioning Sacrist Helier

Helier is the youngest of the monks and squirms like a naughty schoolboy when questioned. He has no idea what the Order represents and has no respect for the Hieromonks. He will ignore any questions that irritate him. If the characters hint that they know about his illicit relationships, then Helier claims complete innocence and denies everything.

According to Helier, last night they attended an amusing diversion with a band of mummers. James the Hermit went to bed, mercifully, sparing the rest of them another evening of boring conversation. Thomas livened things up by getting drunk and bitter old Ogier and Julien started whining about Gerin again. Those old fools are just jealous that the bishop saw Gerin's wisdom and potential and exalted him over them. He has no idea who killed James but guesses that it was probably that crazy Michel.

Helier the Killer: Helier's demeanour does not change at all if he was the killer but if the characters intimidate him, then he starts planning to flee the monastery.

Questioning James

If the characters still have the ghoul idol from Paris, they can animate James the Hermit's corpse and interrogate him. Obviously, this should be done privately, as even the most open-minded monk would be alarmed by a talking corpse. The hermit is understandably confused by his temporary resurrection.

James recalls that he was incensed by the mummers – the leader of the troupe was a masked figure who seemed to exude a strange, unsettling aura. After the play, the hermit went to bed, determined to tell the bishop of Orleans about the poor state of the monastery. As he was making his nightly ablutions, someone entered his room and attacked him. He did not see the face of his attacker but...

Sacrist Helier: ...the attacker came at him quickly and viciously.

Precentor Urian: ...the attacker apologised before striking him.

Hosteller Julien: ...the attacker was old and only barely managed to overpower the hermit.



Cellarer Thomas: ...the attacker was clumsy.

Infirmarian Michel: ...the attacker was very strong and killed him very quickly.

The Library

The library of Saint-Mesmin contains an impressive collection of occult books and scrolls, and according to rumours, one of the mummies visited it last night. The library tower is kept locked at night but all of the senior monks have keys.

Searching the library without the help of the inspired monk is largely pointless; characters may make a Very Hard (-60%) Perception test to look for something out of place; if successful, they find the *Scrolls of Edessa* slightly out of place.

The body of the young scribe murdered by the Joyous One is on the roof; if the characters check the roof, they find the body. Otherwise, it is discovered in *Crows on the Roof*.

Events in the Monastery

These events can happen at any time while the characters are investigating the mystery.

Helier accuses Michel

Almost everyone in the monastery privately leaps to the conclusion that Infirmarian Michel is responsible for the crime, as the former warrior is notorious for outbursts of violence. No-one dares to openly accuse Michel initially but as rumours continue to circulate, Helier eventually gives voice to these beliefs. He goes to Abbot Gerin and demands that Michel be arrested and put to trial by the monks.

As the Hieromonks are the best trained warriors in the monastery, Gerin asks them to capture Michel and imprison



The Scrolls of Edessa

The *Scrolls of Edessa* are the works of a 9th century pilgrim in the east, who travelled through the deserts of Syria in an attempt to follow the fabled path of St. Thomas, who was said to have ministered to the lands of India and beyond. He failed and was forced to turn back and wrote the *Scrolls of Edessa* in that Byzantine city before he perished. The first few scrolls are a travelogue; the latter section is the ravings of a man dying of sunstroke.

The relevant section of the *Scrolls of Edessa* is a description of two villages that the traveller passed through near Palmyra. Both of these villages, despite Syria being part of the Islamic Umayyad Caliphate, professed a strange form of Judaism that honoured Solomon above all other kings and prophets.



him so he can be given a proper trial. The monk can be found in the monastery's infirmary. Michel, unsurprisingly, refuses to co-operate, so the characters will have to disarm him and knock him out. If the characters inflict a potentially lethal blow on Michel, assume that the monk is severely wounded but manages to survive.

Michel is placed in a cellar room and the door is locked to prevent his escape. Later that day, his friend Julien visits him, unlocking the cell door to ministrare to the afflicted Michel.

Michel the Inspired: If Michel is the one inspired by the Joyous One, then he puts up a surprisingly good fight against the monks before they finally bring him down. When Julien visits Michel, the madman kills Julien by dashing the older monk's head against the wall repeatedly until his skull shatters. He then hurls himself into the wall, crumples into a corner of the cell and calls for help.

When the monks arrive, Michel claims that Helier ambushed Julien and killed him. Michel tried to stop Helier but the younger monk was possessed of supernatural strength. The scene is certainly something of a mystery - if Michel killed Julien, why did he then not escape and why would he kill the one monk who believes in his innocence?

Crows on the Roof

The characters notice an unusual flock of crows on the roof of the library tower. If they climb up to the tower (requiring an Acrobatics test or a ladder), or climb the church spire to see over the smaller tower, they find a monk's corpse lying on the roof of the library. The crows are feeding on the young man's remains.

The monk is identified as Brother Quentin. It looks like his neck was broken when someone swung his body out of the library window and threw him up onto the roof - a feat requiring superhuman strength. His hand is covered in candlewax, suggesting he was holding a candle when he was killed.

Urian and The Gold

One of the other visitors in the guesthouse is Theobald, the bishop's spy. He was supposed to make contact with Precentor Urian, hand over the monk's pay and get his report on Abbot Gerin's latest shameful misdeeds, but with the recent chaos in the monastery, Theobald decides that his mission can wait and decides to leave the monastery.

He is spotted by one of the monks, who raises the alarm - that figure hurrying across the marshes could be the devil who murdered James the Hermit! Theobald is surrounded and surrenders to the monks but refuses to explain *why* he was leaving the monastery or, more suspiciously, why he is carrying a pouch of gold coins. If the characters question Theobald forcefully, he admits that he is a servant of the



Bishop of Orleans and explains Precentor Urian's role in the monastery.

The Killer Strikes Again!

In fact, this murder is committed by the Inspired madman to throw the characters off his trail.

Abbot Gerin: The abbot calls Helier to meet with him by the docks and then wrestles Helier into a barrel and throws him into the river, where the younger monk – and with him, all of Gerin's past sins and misdeeds – drowns. The barrel runs aground a short distance downriver. Searching the barrel for clues turns up a scrap of rich fur, indicating that whoever killed Helier was wealthy. The abbot has a matching collar of fur, which he tries burning in the fire-grate in his room after murdering Helier.

Almoner Ogier: Ogier murders Helier in the chapel. He waits until Helier goes to the sacristy in the company of the young pilgrim Paula, then follows the lovers into the chapel and bludgeons Helier to death with an ornamental crucifix. Paula witnesses the crime but is so terrified and traumatised she is driven out of her wits and can only say 'the terrible old man... the terrible old man...' over and over again. Ogier, Julien, Thomas and Michel are all older monks.

Precentor Urian: Urian asks Helier to meet him in the library tower and then hurls Helier from the third floor to the stone courtyard below. Examining Helier's body turns up a clue – he has a crude version of the Seal of Solomon carved into his forehead. Lore (Occult) identifies the symbol, while First Aid suggests the wounds were caused by a small knife, such as those used for cutting feathers for use as quill pens in the scriptorium.

Infirmarian Michel: Michel has already thrown suspicion on Helier, so instead he targets Ogier, who has always annoyed the warrior. He goes to the beggar laocaul and tells him that James gave a huge treasure to the monastery, with explicit instructions that it was to be distributed to the poor by the almoner. As this rumour spreads, a crowd of beggars and fishermen gathers outside the almonry. Ogier tries to shoo the crowd away and the shout goes up that the notoriously bitter and lazy old monk is just trying to keep the hermit's treasure for himself. Unless the characters intervene, Ogier is trampled to death as a mob of beggars loots the almonry.

Iaocaul flees the monastery after this incident but if the characters recapture him, they can discover what he was told.

Cellarer Thomas: Thomas poisons the wine of Helier and the abbot at dinner that evening. The abbot, fortunately, is too

nervous about the bishop's impending visit to drink much but Helier makes up for him, quaffing mug after mug. (If Helier has been arrested, then Thomas targets Ogier instead.) The victim of the poisoning keels over in the middle of dinner, stone dead.

The Bishop Arrives

News travels fast. Word of the murder of James the Hermit reached Orleans almost as soon as the characters learned of it and Bishop Helgot realised that he would have to attend to the situation personally, if only to ensure that his own name never became associated with the catastrophe. He arrives in the late evening, accompanied by an entourage of two dozen guards, priests and servants. He sends word that tomorrow morning, he wishes the senior monks of the monastery to meet him, along with the Hieromonks.

The characters have until dawn to find the killer – and the madman.

The final Accusation

After Lauds the next morning, Bishop Helgot calls all the (surviving) senior monks together, along with the Hieromonks. The bishop takes charge of the meeting, overruling the abbot (if the characters do not yet know about Helgot's relationship to Gerin, then seeing the two of them together makes it clear they are father and son). Helgot demands that the Hieromonks identify the murderer of James the Hermit, the scribe Quentin and whoever was killed by the madman in *The Killer Strikes Again*.

Correctly Accusing the Killer

If the characters correctly identify the murderer of James the Hermit, the murderer's reaction depends on his identity:

Helier: The monk turns to Abbot Gerin, begging him for clemency. *'I did it to protect you, Gerin! The hermit would have ruined everything if he told your fath.'* The bishop cuts him off at this point, saying icily *'The abbot's past deeds are not part of this. You have confessed enough, Helier. Guards, take him away.'*

Urian: Urian tries blackmail when accused. *'Helgot, you can't do this to me! Not after all I've done for you! Not with what I know. Your fat idiot son is the real villain here, you bastard!'* Again, the bishop cuts him off and the guards seize Urian.

Julien: Julien stands with great dignity and admits his guilt. *'This monastery has a proud tradition of service to God – a tradition that your son has utterly desecrated. James was a sacrifice to wash away in blood all that your son has done to us.'*



Thomas: Thomas breaks down in tears if accused. *'Lord help me, I thought it was the abbot! I wanted to kill the abbot! He deserves it, not James! Never James!'*

Michel: Michel sags as if struck by a physical blow when accused, then admits his guilt. Before the guards can seize him, though, Julien is overcome by a fit of conscience and stands to admit his part in the crime. Julien begs that Michel be spared punishment – it was Michel's hand but his will that killed James the Hermit.

Incorrectly Accusing the Killer

If the characters pick the wrong monk, then the accused blusters and proclaims his evidence even as he is dragged away by the guards (assuming the monk they pick is not the madman).

Young Monk

Use these characteristics for Abbot Gerin, Helier, Urian, or any of the younger monks in the monastery.

For named characters, add the following skills:

Abbot Gerin: Courtesy 40%, Influence 60%, Ride 40%, Track 40%

Helier: Evade 30%, Ride 30%, Seduction 65%, Stealth 60%, Track 20%

Urian: Craft (illumination) 40%, Lore (Occult) 60%, Perception 65%

Old Monk

Use these statistics for Ogier, Julien, Thomas, Bishop Helgot or another elderly monk.

For named characters, add the following skills:

Ogier: Evaluate 60%, Streetwise 40%

Julien: Courtesy 40%, Lore (Christian Theology) 80%, Lore (History) 60%, Medicine 50%

Thomas: Brawn 40%, Craft (Brewing) 40%, Resilience 60%

Bishop Ogier: Courtesy 60%, Influence 80%, Lore (Christian Theology) 60%

Michel

The infirmarian is one of the few trained warriors in the monastery; despite his wounds, he is still a skilled combatant. Michel will only be encountered in armour if he has time to visit his room, where he keeps his old armour and weapons.

Inspired Monk

Use these statistics for whichever monk is inspired by the Joyous One.

Correctly Accusing the Madman

If the players have worked out that there is a servant of the Joyous One in the monastery and correctly identify the madman, then the inspired lunatic makes one last attempt to murder the bishop. Run this as a conventional fight scene, using the Inspired Monks statistics on page 77.

Incorrectly Accusing the Madman

If the characters do not know there is a madman in the monastery, or blame the wrong monk for it, then the madman is still at large. After the Hieromonks leave the monastery, he murders Bishop Helgot and escapes. The characters will hear news of this murder when they reach the next town.

Leaving the Monastery

Bishop Helgot dismisses the characters immediately after the meeting. To speed them on their way, he offers them the use of the horses he brought with him from Orleans, which should allow them to make up any lost time.



Young Monk

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	11	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+0
Magic Points	12
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+11

Armour: None
Equipment: None

Notable Skills: Insight 30%, Language (French) 70%, Language (Latin) 40%, Lore (Christian Theology) 40%, Perception 35%, Resilience 30%, Stealth 30%, Swim 40%, Unarmed 30%

Old Monk

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	8	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	8	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	-1D2
Magic Points	14
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+11

Armour: None
Equipment: None

Notable Skills: Insight 40%, Language (French) 80%, Language (Latin) 60%, Lore (Christian Theology) 60%, Perception 35%, Resilience 30%



Michel

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	14	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	11	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	7	19-20	Head	2/6

Combat Actions 2

Armour: None/Leather and Chain

Damage Modifier +1D2

Equipment: None/Warsword and Shield

Magic Points 11

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +11
(+7 in armor)

Notable Skills: First Aid 50%, Language (French) 50%, Language (Latin) 20%, Lore (Christian Theology) 40%, Perception 45%, Resilience 50%, Unarmed 60%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Warsword	M	M	65%	1D8	6/10
& Kite Shield	H	S	65%	1D4	4/18

Inspired Monk

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	17	1-3	Right Leg	-/6
CON	15	4-6	Left Leg	-/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	-/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	-/8
POW	16	13-15	Right Arm	-/5
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	-/5
CHA	12	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 3

Armour: None

Damage Modifier +1D2

Equipment: Poisoned Daggers

Magic Points 16

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +14

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 50%, Athletics 70%, Brawn 60%, Influence 50%, Insight 60%, Perception 60%, Persistence 90%, Resilience 60%, Stealth 70%, Unarmed 60%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	75%	1D4+1	6/8

The dagger is coated with Blade Venom (see page 57 RuneQuest Core Rulebook)



The Harvest

There are old gods sleeping under the world. They were worshipped before Christ and before the Romans – they were worshipped before the ice. Now they slumber but their dreams echo in the spirit realm. A nameless entity – call it the Shambler – was once worshipped here but now it is long forgotten. The Joyous One sensed the Shambler and to throw the Hieromonks off its trail, the spirit has inspired a new cult for the old god.

The Harvest of Blood

The cult of the Shambler once offered the creature sacrifices of blood to placate it; in exchange, the Shambler would bless the harvest and ensure the coming year would be bountiful. The harvest has been neglected for millennia but the Joyous One has inspired the peasants of the small hamlet of Yves-Sur-Fleuve to worship the Shambler once more. The peasants have kidnapped dozens of travellers, neighbours and other unfortunates and harvested them in the fields.

The Shambler is stirring in its slumber. Already, it has the power to bless its followers and to control the surrounding countryside. If it continues to feed, it will awaken fully... and that will not be a good thing at all.

The Villages

The mummers put on their play in the village of Yves-Sur-Fleuve, close to the hill where the Shambler sleeps. Most of their sacrifices come from the neighbouring village of Heudreny, which has been under siege by the inspired cultists for three nights.

Scythes of the Shambler

One of the blessings of the Shambler is the gift of magical scythes. The scythes look like worked bronze but are sharper than Damascus steel as long as the Shambler's blessing persists. The cultists of the Shambler are all armed with these scythes, making them dangerous even to a Hieromonk. The

scythes lose their power if taken away from the Shambler's presence, or if the Shambler falls back into a deeper slumber.

Sever (Critical Success Only): Usable only if the attack hits a limb or the head. If the attack would normally deal a Serious Wound, it inflicts a Major Wound instead.

Signs of the Shambler

The trail from Orleans follows the river Loire down through the County of Anjou. The mummer band has avoided the larger towns like Tours, apparently hoping to lose their pursuers in the wilderness, but the characters have managed to stay on the track of the caravan. The monks lost time at the monastery of Orleans but the fugitive spirit cannot be more than a few days ahead.

The Head on the Road

As the characters travel along, one of them spots a pile of sacks, apparently abandoned in a little hollow at the side of the tree-shaded road. Two of the sacks contain apples, obviously recently harvested from an orchard. The third sack contains a half-dozen human heads, also freshly harvested – the neck stumps still ooze blood and spinal fluids. The heads are a mix of ages and genders. A close examination shows that the necks and chins of all the heads are unusually filthy, as if they were covered in soil until recently (the victims were buried up to the neck in the soil before being harvested).

The sacks were left by a pair of thieves, Hugo and Bosamon. They crept into Yves-Sur-Fleuve and stole what they thought were sacks full of freshly harvested food. The two thieves hid in this little hollow to open their loot and were so horrified when they found the bag of heads that they panicked and fled.

A Hard (-40%) Track test lets a character find two trails leading away from this dell. One runs back down the road,

	Damage Dice	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	ENC	AP/HP
Scythe	1D10+1	13/9	L	L	Bleed, Trip Opponent, Sunder, Sever	3	4/10



the way the PCs just came. They did not see anyone unusual along the road, but there were several hiding places where some unfortunate could have lain concealed. The other trail heads north across country to a small village, Heudreny.

Following the Trails: If the characters follow the trail across country, then it ends abruptly in a muddy tangle in the middle of a field. Another Difficult (~20%) Track roll is needed to decipher what happened here. If successful, the characters piece together the sequence of events:

- Whoever left the hollow by the road ran towards the village of Heudreny.
- Several people approached from the direction of Heudreny. They laid several heavy bundles down on the ground for a while.
- There was a scuffle and someone lost an awful lot of blood. A successful Perception test lets the character find a foot, recently chopped off and thrown in the undergrowth. The cut was made with a very, very sharp blade.
- The larger group picked up their bundles and travelled north-west, circling around Heudreny.

The truth is that one of the thieves, Bosamon, fled straight into a band of cultists who had just raided an outlying farm just outside of Heudreny. The cultists chopped off his foot when he tried to run away again. They dragged Bosamon and their other captives off to Yves-Sur-Fleuve to be buried in the fields around the hill.

If the characters follow the other trail, then they find a terrified Hugo huddled in a tree. He has obviously been hiding there all night. He is extremely nervous, requiring a Difficult (~20%) Influence test to talk him down. If the characters manage to win his trust, he tells them what happened.



It's Off The Scale!

If the players try using a Hoffman Device, then they detect something very, very big and very, very powerful to the north-west, in the village of Yves-Sur-Fleuve. Very, very, very big.



'Bosamon and I... we were so hungry, you see, so hungry, and we heard they were all rich up at Yves-Sur-Fleuve. We stole from their barn and then we opened the sacks... merciful God, they were all looking at me! Why did they have a bag of heads? Why did they have a bag of heads?'

The Empty House

The characters come across this small farm-house at the edge of the village of Heudreny. The place was attacked sometime in the last few days – the door has been cut into pieces as

if hacked down by an axe and there are signs of bloodshed within. Bizarrely, the farm-house has not been looted; there are still animals in the pens and a spilled cooking-pot on the ashes in the hearth. Bandits would certainly have taken such things if they attacked.

As soon as the characters pass this farmhouse, they are within the domain of the Shambler. If any of the characters are supernaturally sensitive (the *Scent Evil* Heroic Ability, or the *Soul Sight* divine spell) they know that they are about to cross an invisible boundary. The Shambler has limited control over the land within its domain – it can move physical landmarks and misdirect travellers. This means that the characters will find themselves unable to leave the Shambler's domain. If they try to walk back to the road, they find themselves turned around and walking back towards Heudreny, or find their path blocked by a wood or a ravine that was not there before. A stream might become a raging torrent, or a gentle slope imperceptibly be transformed into an insurmountable cliff.

This horror ends only when the Shambler is killed or returns to slumber. Transformations in the landscape are accompanied by a horrific rumbling, cracking noise from deep below, as if giants were shattering the very bones of the earth to remake the surface world.

Heudreny

Heudreny is a small hamlet of a dozen houses in the midst of rich farmland. The harvest this year seems especially bountiful. Fields of golden grain sway with the sheer weight of the crops, trees creak as unnaturally large and succulent fruit hang from their branches and the cows are fatter than rich Benedictines. At this time of year, the place should be thronged with workers bringing in the harvest but it is deserted when the characters arrive. There are no obvious signs of life and several of the houses were barricaded shut but these barricades have been torn down.

The path through the village winds on through the fields and woods, leading to Yves-Sur-Fleuve.

A Trail: A Hard (~40%) Tracking test lets the characters find evidence that a small group of people fled the village recently, heading east into the woods. If the characters follow this path, it will lead them to *The Cave of the Survivors*.

The Spy: There is one person still alive in Heudreny and he is not native to the village at all. It is one of the cultists from Yves-Sur-Fleuve, here to watch the village for intruders. He is hiding in the fields nearby. Make an opposed Perception test between a PC and the young cultist's Stealth, giving the boy a +20% bonus thanks to the cover.

If the characters follow the trail to the cave of the survivors, they will be followed by the spy. He must then make another Stealth test, without the bonus, to stay hidden as he stalks them. He will try to wait until the characters have revealed the location of the survivors but if the characters discover him before they



reach the cave, he will turn and run while shouting for help. Unless the characters kill him within six rounds, his shouts will alert the Shambler. A few moments later, the Shambler uses its power over the landscape to drag the woodland containing the characters to the edge of Yves-Sur-Fleuve.

The Cave Of The Survivors

The characters follow the faint trail through the woods until it ends in a small cave. Hiding in this cave is a family of five peasants from Heudreny – a farmer named Jean, his wife, their two sons and his aged mother. They fled their village when the madmen from Yves-Sur-Fleuve attacked. If the characters can prove they are not more cultists, they can speak to Jean and learn what happened.

What's Going On? *We were attacked by our neighbours. The people from Yves-Sur-Fleuve, across the river... they just went mad and started dragging people away into the woods! Anyone who fought back... they killed them, butchered them! They are devils, I tell you! Devils in human form!*

Have You Seen A Band Of Mummers? *What? Well...yes. A caravan came through and put on a mystery play in Yves-Sur-Fleuve a few days ago. It was the tale of the Exodus, how Moses found the burning bush and learned of God's plan for the chosen people. Why do you ask?*

What's Unusual About Yves-Sur-Fleuve? *Nothing! They were our neighbours, our cousins. It's just a village.*

At this point, Jean's senile old mother pipes up, hissing 'God cursed them, long ago, he did. They worshipped false idols when the world was young. The devil's spawn, that's what they all are!'

Where Can We Take You That You'll Be Safe? *No-where! You don't understand – we cannot escape. We're all trapped here. The ground moves.*

What Do You Mean, The Ground Moves? *It shifts. We've tried to run to the road, to get to Tours or anywhere but we can't find the road. I have lived her for more than 30 years and I do not know this place any more! The ground moves!*

If the characters have not dealt with the spy yet, then he alerts the Shambler. The characters hear a strange ululating cry from somewhere nearby (a Perception test lets the characters spot where the spy is hiding) but then a moment later the ground begins to shake as the Shambler drags the cave and the wood towards itself as a man might pull a cup towards him by dragging the tablecloth. The characters can see the earth churn and break beyond the line of the trees.

The cave where the family took shelter begins to close like a mouth – unless the characters act immediately, Jean's wife and sons will be crushed by the shifting rocks. Rescuing the unfortunate peasants from the cave requires a Difficult (-20%)

Evade test; if the character fails, he still drags one peasant out but suffers 2d6 damage to one arm or leg.

If the characters have already dealt with the spy, then they can make their own way to Yves-Sur-Fleuve and retain the element of surprise.

Servants of the Shambler

At first glance, Yves-Sur-Fleuve looks little different to its neighbour, Heudreny. A small stream runs through it, flowing south to join up with the Loire several miles away. The village is surrounded by fields and croplands that are, if anything, even more lush and heavy than those the characters have already seen – and the characters can see a crowd of people in one of the wheat fields, preparing to cut down the ripe grain.

Surprise or Surprised?

If the characters arrive in Yves-Sur-Fleuve willingly, having either gone there directly from Heudreny or via the forest after dealing with the spy, then they can either sneak into the village or just walk in. Either way, the village is nearly deserted, as most of the cultists are out in the fields getting ready for the harvest.

If the characters were dragged to the village by the Shambler, then they find themselves at the edge of the grain fields. The harvest cannot be delayed, so the cultists send only a few of their number – say, one per Player Character, plus two – out to deal with the newcomers, while the rest of them prepare to harvest the crops. See *Out in the Fields*.

The only unusual feature of Yves-Sur-Fleuve is the round green hill just outside the village. In the autumn sun, the characters can see some grey stones arranged in a ring on top of the hill. The green hill is surrounded by wheat-fields, one of which has already been harvested.

In The Village

The only people left in the village are the old and the very young. It could be any other little farming village during the harvest; there is a feeling of celebration in the air. If the characters want to confront any of the villagers, they can do so but the villagers profess complete ignorance of any unusual activity. It is the harvest, so everyone is out in the fields gathering in the crops. Surely the characters will stay for the evening's celebrations.

An Insight test confirms that everyone in the village is insane. They genuinely believe that whatever is going on out in the fields is part of the usual harvest. Vindictive characters can start slaughtering cultists if they wish.



Ancient Stones: The church in the middle of the little town has been rebuilt many times but some of the older stones used in its walls are old indeed. A character who closely examines these old stones notices some unusual carvings, which depict a figure with a scythe or other curved weapon battling what seems to be a worm. A Hard (-40%) Lore (Occult) or Lore (History) test suggests that this might be a depiction of some saint battling evil.

Out in the Fields

Most of the villagers – some 30 people – are out in the large wheatfield near the green hill. The characters cannot see this without entering the field but there are another 20 victims buried up to their necks in the soil here, too. When the villagers start cutting down the grain with their scythes, they will also slice the heads off the buried victims, sacrificing them to the Shambler.

Of the 30 cultists, 10 have scythes. The rest are armed only with daggers and clubs, if at all. If the cultists know there are intruders nearby, then they send eight of their number including two scythe-wielders to hold off the intruders while the rest continue with the harvest.

If the characters approach the field, they can hear screams and shouts from the middle of the crops, as the buried victims beg for help or mercy or a swift death. Even if they

The Green Hill

The green hill with its cryptic standing stones is not a landmark or a place sacred to the Shambler – it is the Shambler. Uncounted centuries of dirt and mould cover the monster's rugose hide, and there is a gargantuan mound of flesh and bone beneath the soil. The standing stones are not stone at all – they are the bony teeth on the back of the Shambler that thrust through the earth.

are decapitated, they will be denied the last option, as the Shambler will feed on their souls and they will suffer for aeons.

It is easy (+40%) to hide in the crop field, thanks to the cover offered by the tall wheat.

The Harvest Begins

At an appropriate juncture, the harvest begins. The cultists begin to slowly advance through the wheatfield, swinging their scythes as they go. The buried victims begin to scream and then one-by-one are abruptly cut off as the severed heads





go rolling across the field. The other cultists follow on along behind the line of scythe-wielders, collecting the cut wheat and the severed heads.

When a victim is sacrificed, the ground shakes slightly as though an electric thrill ran through it. This is the physical manifestation of the Shambler consuming the soul of the sacrifice. The longer the characters wait before interrupting the harvest, the stronger the Shambler becomes.

In game terms, there are 20 victims in the field. Each round, 1d8 of them are sacrificed to the Shambler. If the characters interrupt the ceremony and force the cultists to fight instead of harvesting sacrifices, the number sacrificed each round drops to 1d4 and then to zero if the characters kill all the scythe-wielding cultists. Keep track of the number of victims sacrificed.

The Shambler awakens if the characters kill all of the cultists, or if all the victims are sacrificed.

The Shambler Awakens

The hill quakes. Soil and stone tumble away from its flanks, ruddy tentacles erupt from the ground and the air shudders as lungs the size of cathedrals take their first breath in millennia. The top of the hill explodes in an eruption of dirt and as the Shambler's maw opens. Limbs, multi-jointed and insectoid, heave the massive bulk of the hill up as the Shambler begins to move again like a tremendous beetle.

Fighting the Shambler: The Shambler extrudes one tentacle per victim sacrificed in the harvest. These tentacles stretch out and attack the characters, along with any surviving victims, followed by the cultists if no other food is available. Assume two tentacles per character at least. The tentacles grab their victims and lift them up towards the Shambler's gaping maw on the monster's back.

The Shambler's body is virtually invulnerable. The only vulnerable points are its tentacles and its maw. If all the tentacles are severed or the maw is destroyed, the Shambler cannot feed and returns to dormancy.

The tentacles can be attacked normally but the best way to deal with them is to grab a magical scythe from one of the cultists and use that. Against the tentacles, the scythe can use the Sever Combat Manoeuvre on a success, not just on a critical. Remember, there is one tentacle per victim sacrificed during the harvest.

Run Away! Run Away Now!

Taking on a whole village of cultists is one thing; a giant walking hill-monster is a whole other level of horrible doom. The Hieromonks may decide that running away and coming back with, say, a dozen barrels of blasting powder and a large army is the better part of valour. The Shambler's Shifting Ground power makes fleeing a risky proposition but if the players are really not prepared to fight the woken god, you can let a few of them flee to safety.

The maw can only be attacked by a character who is either held suspended by one of the creature's tentacles, or who climbs the Shambler. Climbing the monster requires three successful Athletics rolls in a row.

The Cultists: The cultists may continue fighting with the Hieromonks and/or harvesting victims when the Shambler awakens. Alternatively, if the characters are in trouble, then you can just have the cult break down in terror when their terrible god arises.

The Shifting Ground: The Shambler can spend a full round to alter the landscape around it. It could, for example, drag a fleeing character back towards it, or topple a building, or cause a pit to open under the characters. This can be used as an attack but is more suited for recapturing fleeing characters. Escaping shifting ground requires an Athletics test opposed by the Shambler's Manipulate Terrain ability.

The Dead God

If the characters manage to bring down the Shambler, the cultists flee in terror or collapse to the ground, weeping. The braver ones impale themselves on their scythes, just before the scythes lose their magic and melt away. The monks have just killed their god.

Any survivors from Heudreny dig themselves out of the earth; if the characters permit them to live, they burn down Yves-Sur-Fleuve and kill any remaining cultists by throwing them into the fires.



Philippe the Spy

This young cultist is the spy sent to watch Heudreny and who will follow the characters into the woods to find those who fled the destroyed village.

Philippe		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	11	1-3	Right Leg	1/4
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	1/4
SIZ	7	7-9	Abdomen	1/5
INT	10	10-12	Chest	1/6
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	1/3
DEX	9	16-18	Left Arm	1/3
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Leather
Damage Modifier	-1D2	Equipment: Short Bow, Dagger
Magic Points	13	
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+10(+8 in armour)	Notable Skills: Evade 30%, Lore (Regional) 40%, Perception 40%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 35%, Stealth 50%, Survival 20%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	55%	1D4+1	6/8
Short Bow			50%	1D6	4/4

Cultists

These are the strongest members of the cult of the Shambler - less dangerous members should have one less Hit Point in each location, no Damage Bonus, no armour and use clubs or daggers instead of the magic scythes.

Cultists of the Shambler		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	1/6
CON	13	4-6	Left Leg	1/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	1/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	1/8
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	1/5
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	1/5
CHA	11	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Leather
Damage Modifier	+1D2	Equipment: Scythe or Dagger
Magic Points	10	
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+10 (+8 in armour)	Notable Skills: Athletics 40%, Brawn 30%, Perception 40%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 50%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scythe	L	L	65%	1D10+1	4/10
Dagger	S	S	55%	1D4+1	6/8



The Shambler

When fighting the Shambler, a character does not need to roll on the Hit Location table – he hits the nearest location on the monster. Use the random location only for spells or other effects that affect random locations.

The Shambler's tentacle attacks can use the Grab Combat Manoeuvre; a character struck by this manoeuvre is seized by the tentacle and lifted into the air. The character may still attack normally but cannot move. Escaping the grab requires an Unarmed Combat or Acrobatics test opposed by the Shambler's Unarmed Combat skill. If the character remains grabbed for three rounds, he will be dropped into the creature's maw.

The Shambler

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	40	1	Rear Left Leg	6/15
CON	50	2	Rear Middle Leg	6/15
SIZ	100	3	Rear Right Leg	6/15
INT	5	4-5	Belly	6/30
POW	30	6-12	Flank	6/30
DEX	5	13-16	Tentacles	3/10
CHA	20	17	Maw	4/12
		18	Front Left Leg	6/15
		19	Front Middle Leg	6/15
		20	Front Right Leg	6/15

Combat Actions 1+1 per tentacle

Damage Modifier Special

Magic Points 30

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +5

Armour: Rugose Hide

Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons

Notable Skills: Manipulate Terrain 60%, Perception 40%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 130%, Unarmed 100%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Tentacle	H	VL	90%	1D10	As per Tentacle
Maw	H	S	75%	2D12	As per maw



The Feast of Fools

The sea! The Hieromonks can smell it in the air now and taste salt on the wind. They have followed the Loire and the trail of the Joyous One to Saint-Nazaire on the coast. Their quarry has its back to the ocean and nowhere else to go.

Except, of course, the sea.

The Joyous One intends to sail away and to cover its retreat it has expended much of its power to bring about the Feast of Fools. It has plunged half of Saint-Nazaire into madness, turning the social order upside down.

The Mummers

Ahead, the characters see a familiar caravan stopped by the roadside. Two exhausted horses stand near a brightly coloured wagon, laden with costumes, puppets and stacked scenery. A quartet of masked actors await the Hieromonks.

One steps forward and speaks senatorially, addressing the characters. *'Friends! I bid you welcome to this, our last act. We poor players hope you have enjoyed our past performances and pray that you have learned – as others have – about the Word of God from our mystery plays.'*

'Our Lord Jesus Christ came to wash away the sins of mankind and for this the Romans crucified him on Calvary. Now he is come again to wash away the world's sorrows and once again he has been persecuted and tormented by the servants of Rome. Behold the King of Joy!'

The other three actors pull on ropes, hauling a cross upright. Nailed to this cross is another mummer, dressed in the black robes of the narrator of the other players. Could this be Jacques Taillebois, the possessed host of the Joyous One?

In truth, Jacques Taillebois is already in Saint-Nazaire. The figure on the cross is another mummer, inspired by the spirit's powers of insanity.

The mummer continues *'dying, he shall destroy sorrow. Rising again, he will bring about Heaven on Earth. All suffering and hardship will end, all rules shall be cast away. The prisoner will be freed from his chains, the mother from the yoke of her child, the soul from the burdens of mortality. Behold the Third Testament!'*

'Join us, ye sons of Rome! Accept joy into your hearts and ye shall be exalted above all others. What say you?'

The mummers are offering the Hieromonks an alliance. If they join with the Joyous One, then he will reward them with great power in the kingdom that is to come.

If the characters accept (or pretend to accept) this offer, then the mummer continues. *'Our Lord has gone ahead but he awaits you in Saint-Nazaire. With the morning tide, he sails for Paradise and the secret kingdom of Solomon where death has no dominion – and you shall join him there. Drink of his blood, brothers!'* The mummer produces a wooden cup that contains a heady mixture of blood and wine. Any character foolish enough to drink this potion must make a Hard (-40%) Resilience test. Failure means that the character goes insane as if blessed by the Joyous One. A critical failure means the character is poisoned, suffering 2D6 damage to the abdomen. A success means the character is sane but temporarily disorientated, suffering a -20% penalty to all Skill Tests for 2d6 minutes. A critical success leaves the character unaffected.

The mummers then accompany the characters into Saint-Nazaire. They lead the characters to the church of St. Andrew in the middle of the town, where they meet the Abbot of Unreason. The abbot invites the characters to join the pile of sacrifices on the altar, promising that those who sacrifice their lives here will be reborn in a perfected form in the world that is to come.

If, as is more likely, the characters refuse to serve the Joyous One, then it is time for a fight scene.

Kung Fu Stilt Jesus Kicks You In The Face

The four mummers draw swords from beneath their robes. In the same instant, there are alarming cracking sounds from the cross. The lower bar cracks and splits in two and the crucified mummer steps forward on the split cross as if it was a pair of stilts nailed to his feet. The smaller horizontal bar also breaks and a sword swings out of each arm of the cross. The Hieromonks face four crazed actors with swords and one crazed actor nailed to a bizarre 10 foot wooden armature with hidden sword-blades. Roll for Initiative.



Once the characters defeat the mummers, they spot a thin plume of smoke rising from the west, from the general vicinity of Saint-Nazaire... then another and another. The town is burning.

Saint-Nazaire

The town of Saint-Nazaire is located at the mouth of the Loire river. There has been a town here for many hundreds of years; the dolmen in the heart of Saint-Nazaire bears an unsettling resemblance to the standing stones in Yves-Sur-Fleuve. The harbour is crowded with fishing boats and even a few merchant ships, although this is not one of the major trading ports of France.

The characters can see the town from a sizable distance away – the road crosses a low hill two miles away from the town's old walls. There are several fires burning near the harbour and a strange haze hangs over Saint-Nazaire. It is not a heat haze, nor is it smoke. It has a weird colourless hue, like oil on water. It makes the characters ill just looking at it.

A Town in Turmoil

When the characters arrive in Saint-Nazaire, they find a town in chaos. There is panic on the streets, terrified citizens praying for deliverance from the end of the world and a mob of armed peasants in the main square arguing about what to do. The characters can easily collar a passer-by and learn what is going on.

According to the rather confused accounts, the section of the city around the Church of Saint Andrew has gone mad. Everyone in that place is now a raving lunatic – and if you go too close, the Devils take you too! Knights and priests have tried to dispel this evil but they too are lost to the madness. Surely, the end of the world is at hand!

The madness apparently started during the night; people heard shouts and screams and then the fires began. One ship, the *Angel of Biscay*, even left harbour during the night, using the burning buildings as torches to light its way out to sea! No-one is sure what to do; some people advocate burning down the afflicted region, others want to call the bishop or the Count or anyone else who can take charge.

Brother Corentin

While the characters are pushing through the panicked crowds in the main square of Saint-Nazaire, a black-robed monk emerges from the press of people and whispers to one of the characters. *'Brother, we must speak. Follow me.'*

Corentin is a fellow Hieromonk from the Priory of Guérande, a short distance up the coast. He leads the characters into a safe-house overlooking the square. There are healing draughts and other alchemical devices and weapons here, if

the characters need to refresh their Assets. He explains that he and several other monks were dispatched from Corentin when word reached them of the events in Troyes, to search for the Heresiarch.

Last night, he detected a powerful source of chaotic magic with a Hoffman Device. It must have been the Joyous One. Before Corentin could intervene, the Joyous One swept through the town and loosed... well, something on the harbour quarter. It is something like the Feast of Fools that is celebrated in the winter, when children are allowed to behave like adults and a young boy or deacon is mockingly crowned 'Abbot of Unreason' in the church – but that is nothing more than raucous merriment. What Corentin saw near the harbour was utter insanity.

He has mapped the edge of the afflicted zone. It appears to be centred on the Church of St. Andrew – either the Joyous One is there or else the spirit's magic is centred there. Either way, it must be ended. He suspects that the spirit has already fled Saint-Nazaire – the ship that left harbour last night, the *Angel of Biscay*, was within the afflicted area, so the crew should have been affected by the madness.

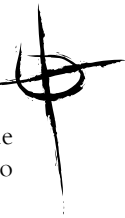
Corentin will give the characters whatever help they need. He can either accompany them into the realm of madness, or serve as a messenger if they think the best approach is to contact the Priory for help. He can also arrange for a ship so they can pursue the Joyous One.

Playing Corentin: Corentin is a veteran Hieromonk of the Third Degree; his thinning grey beard and haggard features bear testament to many years' service in the Order. For several years, he has patrolled the coasts of Brittany and Normandy and has even gone deep into the Moorish territory.

He will not volunteer this information but there is a reason that an experienced Hieromonk like Corentin was given such a simple task as watching for signs of the Joyous One. Two years ago, Corentin and four other monks attempted to bring down a demon-worshipping cult; four of the monks died and Corentin has spent the last two years recovering in the monastery at Guérande. He is still weak and uncertain, and is unwilling to risk failure once more, not after what he saw last time...

Preparing for the Abyss

The characters may wish to plunge straight in, or they can try to prepare some defences against the Joyous One's curse of madness. Spells like Enhance (POW) can improve a character's mental fortitude. If the characters pray before entering the afflicted zone, they may augment their Persistence rolls with Divine Fervour. Characters with Lore (Alchemy) or Lore (Herbalism) could try brewing a potion to stabilise their emotions.



The Abyss of Madness

The streets surrounding the church of St. Andrew are under the effect of the Joyous One's blessing. The harbour district near the church is a warren of alleyways, narrow streets, warehouses and dockside inns. Under normal circumstances, it would take the characters only a few minutes to walk to the church.

These are not normal circumstances. The air is like broken glass, diffracting the light in bizarre ways and turning the cityscape into a disjointed patchwork of twisted wood and stone. The streets are warped and the buildings loom as though they are about to topple down or fall into the sea.

The characters must make Persistence tests as they travel through the abyss of madness. Call for a test after each encounter; if a test is failed, the character slips into madness.

Roll on the Hallucination table to determine what the character believes or come up with something suitable to the character's personality.

The duration of these bout of madness increases with each failure; the first bout lasts for 1d6 minutes, the second 1d6 hours, the third 1d6 days and so on.

Truly Random Encounters

The journey through the streets should feel like something out of a Hieronymous Bosch painting. Everywhere, the characters see the fruits of the spirit's madness. There, a couple rut on the street like animals; there, a child tears strips of flesh from the carcass of a dead cat and gobbles them down; above, six corpses hang from a window, all hung from the same rope like beads on a string. There is a cacophony of screams, shouts and discordant singing.

Roll (1d6)	Madness
1	Paranoia: The character believes everyone around them is plotting against them. Get them before they get you!
2	Phobia: The character develops an overwhelming terror of something or someone nearby. Kill it! Kill it with fire!
3	Liberation: The character is freed from all emotional and social restrictions. Do as you will! Take please as you will!
4	Religious Terror: The character believes that God has abandoned him and that everything is hopeless.
5	Flashbacks: The character has a flashback to some past event and believes he is reliving that incident.
6	Intense Emotion: the character's emotions become wildly intensified.

Roll (1d6)	Encounter
1	A madman rushes up to the characters screaming 'I'm God! I'm God!' As soon as he gets close enough, he draws a knife and maniacally stabs the characters.
2	The characters come upon a weeping woman dressed in a hooded robe, surrounded by the corpses of three children, all of whom have their necks broken. She is holding another child tightly. When the characters approach, she thrusts this fourth child into their arms and begs the characters to take him away. When she does this, the characters can see that her face and arms are covered in bite marks and scratches, as if the other children tried to eat her.
3	In one inn, a trio of sailors are drinking. They have dragged barrels of ale up from the cellar and hacked them open with an axe. One sailor's stomach has burst from the sheer amount of drink; a slurry of intestines, blood and ale covers the floor.
4	The characters pass a burning building. A crowd of people stand outside, fascinated by the beauty of the flames. They have stood there so long that their skin has blistered. If anyone tries to intervene, the crowd attempts to throw the character into the flames.
5	A wagon rattles down the street towards the characters. It is drawn by a team of naked men. On the wagon lies the corpse of a horse.
6	A trio of merchants, haggling over prices for insubstantial goods. One merchant wants to buy the sound of the sky; another claims he has got a special offer on the death of fish and the third is eager to trade in worthy thoughts of heroes.



If Corentin of Guérande is with the characters, then at one point he hallucinates that the PCs are the companions he left to die when he battled the demon cult. He screams 'No! You're dead! You're all dead! The demons took you! I'll kill you all!' The characters can talk him down if they remind him that all this is a hallucination.

The GM should also include encounters based on the characters' own fears and dreams. Bring back especially memorable NPCs from past adventures – for example, if the characters failed to rescue Rene from the Parisian ghouls, then you could bring him back in a hallucination.

The Feast of Fools

At the heart of the afflicted region is the Church of St. Andrew, patron saint of fishermen and sailors. This church is clearly the centre of the weird sorcery – eddies of magical energy and cascading sheets of static electricity swirl around the building.

The church is a sturdy gothic building made of grey stone, topped by an impressive spire. It was recently rebuilt and is the pride of the whole town.

Directly opposite the church is a large three-storey house, one of the biggest and newest in Saint-Nazaire. This was the home of a wealthy merchant, Pierre de Nazaire, who made his fortune trading with the Norman kings of England. Outside the church is a crowd of three dozen deranged madmen, who have just finished looting Pierre's house. Some are now dressed in Pierre's fine clothes; others wear gowns that once belonged to his wife. Still others wear tattered bloody fragments of Pierre's skin, which they tore off his still-living body. The remains of Pierre and his wife are now turning on a spit over a bonfire made of wooden statues torn from the outside of the church.

Anyone who enters the open area in front of the church who is not obviously one of the mad revellers will be attacked by this mob. To get to the church, the characters need to either distract the mob, disguise themselves as madmen, or find an alternative way into the church – say, by leaping from rooftop to rooftop or swimming along the docks.

If the characters are forced to fight the mob, then remember the rules for multiple opponents. There is such a press of madmen in the mob, clambering over each other to claw at the characters, that each Hieromonk will be attacked by eight or more foes at once. Unless the players are able to use Evade to stay clear of the mob, they will almost certainly be dragged down and killed.

Into The Church

Once the characters gain entry to the Church of St. Andrew, they find a truly horrific scene. The walls of the church run red with blood and the floor is ankle-deep in gore and littered

with discarded knives. The altar is hidden beneath a pile of sacrificed corpses, both human and animal. It appears as though madmen ran into the church and impaled themselves on their own knives atop this ghastly pyramid of offerings. Lurid green flames run over the pile of bodies but do not consume them.

Seated on a throne atop the pile of sacrifices is a young boy, dressed in priestly vestments that are clearly much too large for him. This is the boy kidnapped from Provins weeks ago; he is now the Abbot of Unreason, the lynchpin of the Joyous One's spell. Tendrils of magical energy wreath around his skull.

The Abbot of Unreason greets the characters. 'I am the Abbot of Unreason, the vicar of joy. My master has gone ahead but he left me to wait for you. Join our ending hymn of praise and find fulfilment. I beg you, good monks, to take up a knife and take your place in the congregation of the joyful people.' He indicates the pile of bodies behind him, suggesting that the characters should sacrifice themselves.

If a character approaches the Abbot, the boy raises his hand. 'Kill yourself where you stand, brother, and my servants will throw you on the pile.'

If they act threateningly towards the abbot, then call for Initiative rolls and jump to *Killing the Church*. A character who wins Initiative and can kill the Abbot before he reacts can avoid a lengthy and vicious battle with the hallucinations of *Killing the Church*.

Defeating the Abbot of Unreason: There are several ways that the characters can defeat the Abbot of Unreason:

- By slaying him in combat – see *Killing the Church*.
- By slaying him with a surprise attack, either by hitting him with a ranged weapon or sneaking up while pretending to accept self-sacrifice.
- Disrupting the Joyous One's magic with a spell or holy relic.
- Taking the throne of the Abbot and becoming the new lynchpin for the spell. This will drive the character incurably insane but does save the boy.

Killing the Church

If, as is likely, the characters end up attacking the Abbot of Unreason, then the church undergoes a bizarre transformation. This whole fight is a hallucination but the characters have no way of knowing this until afterwards. A character killed in the hallucination believes he has died – after the hallucination, a 'dead' character may make a Persistence test to cling to life at the cost of one CON. A character who fails this Persistence test dies of shock.

Read the following as the hallucination begins:

When you draw steel against the Abbot of Unreason, the whole church of St. Andrew quakes violently. The green fires leap up to



surround the young boy. You are all knocked off your feet and find yourself sliding down the slick bloody floor and right out the front doors of the church. The ground continues to shake as the church... unfolds. Flying buttresses become gigantic legs of stone. The doors slam shut, then buckle outwards, heaving like a pair of titanic lungs. The church spire seems to topple forward for a moment, then bends like the neck of a tremendous bird. The top of the spire splits in two, revealing a row of jagged stone teeth.

You watch in horror as the church becomes a stone monster, a crocodile-church that rears up to devour you. The belfry glows with raging green fire as the Abbot takes his place as the creature's brain.

Fighting The Stone Monster: The Church of St. Andrew can stomp on characters or bite at them with the spire.

Characters can scale the walls of the building with a Hard (-40%) Athletics test and then clamber across the roof with an Athletics test to oppose the church's attempts to shake them off. Alternatively, a character who is targeted by the church's spire bite attack can make a Difficult (-20%) Athletics test to leap into the belfry when the opportunity arises.

To kill the church, the characters need to either destroy its physical form (virtually impossible) or kill or disable the Abbot of Unreason in the belfry. The abbot can only be attacked by a character who climbs into the belfry, or with an extremely accurate ranged attack (-60% to ranged attacks to avoid the church's armour).

The Abbot of Unreason has 12 Hit Points - do not worry about Hit Locations for a such a fragile and immobile target.

If the characters are unable to defeat the animated church, a benevolent GM might permit the players to use Persistence tests to see through the illusion and to realise that they are still in the church and its transformation into a monster is just a hallucination.

Its stomp attacks are much too big to be parried; they can only be Evaded. The creature can make up to two Stomp attacks per round but each attack must be made against a different target.

After the Battle

Once the Abbot is defeated, the dream fades. The characters are back in the Church of St. Andrew, surrounded by blood and corpses - but the aura of madness has dissipated. The way to the harbour is clear.

Soon afterwards, more monks from Guérande arrive to take charge of the town; witnesses will be told to keep silent or else be given a quiet end. The whole incident will eventually be blamed on the sins of the greedy merchants and the lack of piety of the townsfolk.

Pursuing the Joyous One

Divination spells or a Hoffman Device reading shows that the Joyous One is at sea, to the south-west. The Order can provide a swift ship, the *Harrower*, to pursue the spirit who must be aboard the *Angel of Biscay*. The *Harrower* sails out of Saint-Nazaire and chases the slower ship along the French coast. Two days out of port, the characters spot the sails of their quarry. After another three hours, the *Harrower* is nearly alongside the rival ship.

A storm explodes out of nowhere. Both ships are tossed like matchsticks on a raging ocean. There is a sudden impact and then...

Paradise

The characters awaken on a stretch of golden sand. They are on the beach of a beautiful island. A lush forest... no, it is more like a garden... covers the island. Birds sing in the trees and animals gambol amongst them. The lion lies down with the lamb. This place is paradise.

The characters can walk inland to the centre of this garden. There, they find themselves in a clearing with two trees - the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life. No fruit grow from these trees; instead, jars grow from both. These jars are identical to the one the characters saw at the Chateau du Paynes, the one that contained the Joyous One.

Standing in front of the trees is the Joyous One. He casts back his hood, to reveal his features. The sight is horrific. The already-frail body of the leper is unable to contain the spirit's power. Taillebois's flesh is rotting from the inside. His face is covered in gaping wounds and more chunks of skin flake off when he speaks. The characters can even see parts of the skull through the withered skin.

'In Tyre and Babylon, they called me the Joyous One. I seek only to bring joy to all living souls. My powers are exhausted now. I can resist you no longer.

I offer you, instead, your heart's desire. King Solomon locked me away in a jar in the 53rd year of his reign and he intended to put me in the tomb with the rest of the imprisoned spirits. I know where that tomb is - and there are hundreds of spirits there, every one of them greater than I. They will serve you. With the power of Solomon's tomb, you can reconquer the Holy Land, drive away the Moslems, become kings of all the world - whatever you desire can be yours forever!

This body is dying. All I desire is another body, to continue living in this world. If you give me that body, I will bring you to Solomon's tomb. Will none of you give yourselves to me?'

If a character accepts this bargain, then the Joyous One leaps into that character's body. The possessing spirit is exhausted



and will take several weeks to recover its power, so the new host has a few weeks of grace before the Joyous One tries to take over the body entirely. The spirit may still lead the characters to Solomon's tomb but its ultimate goal is to free the other trapped spirits and bring about an age of anarchy and madness.

If the characters refuse this bargain, then the spirit begs that they put it out of its misery. This is a lie, as anyone who read the papers from the Chateau du Paynes or succeeds in a Difficult (-20%) Lore (Occult) or Hard (-40%) Insight test realises. If the spirit could leave the body voluntarily, it would. If it is lingering despite being in pain, then it must be trapped within the flesh until released by an outside agency. The spirit is trying to trick the characters.

If they refuse to aid it or to kill it, the illusion fades and the Joyous One attacks for the last time.

An End to Joy

The spirit desperately tries to get the PCs to kill it, so it can escape from the rotting corpse of Taillebois. The illusion of paradise vanishes, replaced by the reality - the characters' ship was driven into the side of the *Angel of Biscay* and both vessels are sinking. The bodies of drowned men float in the water around the sinking wreck. The footing is treacherous as the two mortally wounded ships break and grind against each other.

The Joyous One resembles a tattered skeleton at this point. Rags of blackened flesh hang from its bones and it leaps as though it weighs next to nothing. Its eyes burn with utter insanity and a fierce joy and its clawed hands are sharper and stronger than knives.

In the battle, emphasise the desperate, suicidal nature of the foe. The Joyous One wants to provoke the characters into killing it. It might, for example, concentrate its attacks on the weakest, most vulnerable PC, in the hopes that the others stab it in the back. It might subject characters to illusions, appearing as their most hated enemies or otherwise trying to trick them into murdering it. If all else fails, it begs and screams to be released from this prison of flesh.

The Joyous One's greatest fear is being left to rot in another prison with even less chance of escape than its jar. If, say, Taillebois' body was pushed overboard, then the spirit would be trapped for centuries until every scrap of bone dissolved. Without an outside force to suddenly sever its connection to the flesh, it is bound there as long as any part of the anchor body exists.

If the characters ally with the Joyous One: If one of the Hieromonks actually permits the spirit to possess him, then the spirit leaps into his body. It is not yet strong enough to take over but it will whisper in his ear, tempting him to flee the

The Mummers

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	15	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	18	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	18	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 3

Armour: None

Damage Modifier +1D2

Equipment: Warsword and dagger

Magic Points 13

Movement 10m

Strike Rank +16

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 75%, Athletics 60%, Dance 50%, Evade 65%, Persistence 90%, Resilience 50%, Unarmed 65%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Warsword	M	M	90%	1D8	6/10
Dagger	S	S	90%	1D4+1	6/8



Order and take the power of the Tomb of Solomon for himself. If the Order finds out that the monks are harbouring an evil spirit, the rest of the PCs will be disciplined and the host will be imprisoned in the care of *Ex Malo Bonum*.

If the characters free the Joyous One: Then the spirit flees back to the mainland on the wind. Unless the characters have *Mystic Vision* or check with a divination spell, they may not realise that the spirit has vanished. Either way, it is beyond their reach - the Order may recapture the Joyous One again in some future battle, or the spirit might make its way to the Holy Land and *The Tomb of Solomon*.

If the characters capture or imprison the Joyous One: Then the Order will take custody of the spirit. Their interrogation of the Joyous One can put the characters on the trail of the *Tomb of Solomon*. **If the Joyous One's body is trapped:** Then the spirit is once again imprisoned for centuries, just as it was before the Templars found it in the Holy Land.

The Mummers

These are the madmen who have followed the Joyous One all the way from Troyes; they are inspired lunatics, devoted to their master. They believe that anyone who dies in the service of Joy will be rewarded with an eternity of infinitely changing pleasure.

In combat, they leap and roll and dodge, relying on their physical prowess rather than armour to evade blows.

The Crucified Mummer

This particular madman had the strength and stamina to endure crucifixion... and the sense of balance to use the fake cross as a fighting platform!

Stilt/Arm Locations: If either stilt location is reduced to zero Hit Points, it is broken and the mummer's movement is halved. If either cross arm location is reduced to zero Hit Points, the mummer cannot use the sword in that arm.

The Crucified Mummer

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	16	1	Right Stilt	4/8
CON	18	2-3	Right Leg	-/7
SIZ	16	4	Left Stilt	4/8
INT	13	5-6	Left Leg	-/7
POW	13	7-9	Abdomen	-/8
DEX	18	10-12	Chest	-/9
CHA	18	13	Right Cross Arm	4/6
		14-15	Right Arm	-/6
		16	Left Cross Arm	4/6
		17-18	Left Arm	-/6
		19-20	Head	-/7

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 13

Movement 10m

Strike Rank +16 (+11 nailed to cross)

Armour: None

Equipment: Two Longswords

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 50%, Athletics 80%, Brawl 70%, Persistence 70%, Resilience 75%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	M	VL	85%	1D8	6/12
Longsword	M	VL	85%	1D8	6/12



Brother Corentin

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	2/7
INT	10	10-12	Chest	2/8
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	2/5
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	2/5
CHA	9	19-20	Head	-/6

Combat Actions 2

Armour: Leather (2)

Damage Modifier +1D2

Equipment: Crusader Blade x 2 (6), Dust of Revelation (4), Panacea x 2 (6)

Magic Points 14

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +10 (+7 in armour)

Notable Skills: Athletics 51%, Brawn 48%, Culture (Norman) 30%, Insight 50%, Language (French) 80%, Language (Latin) 40%, Lore (Christian Theology) 50%, Lore (Occult) 65%, Lore (Regional) 30%, Mechanisms 45%, Perception 80%, Persistence 88%, Resilience 92%, Stealth 80%, Survival 80%, Track 70%, Unarmed 50%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Crusader Blade	M	M	106%	1D6+1	6/8

Common Madmen

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	11	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	6	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	6	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2

Armour: None

Damage Modifier +0

Equipment: Improvised Weapons

Magic Points 10

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +8

Notable Skills: Athletics 30%, Perception 30%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 30%, Unarmed 30%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	45%	1D4+1	6/8
Club	M	S	45%	1D6	4/4



The Church of St Andrew		1D20	Hit Location		AP/HP
STR	60	1-2	Right	Rear	10/28
			Buttress		
CON	80	3-4	Left	Rear	10/28
			Buttress		
SIZ	60	5-9	Nave		10/40
INT	0	10-13	Transcept		10/60
POW	0	14-15	Right	Front	10/28
			Buttress		
DEX	3	16-17	Left	Front	10/28
			Buttress		
CHA	10	18-19	Belfry		10/28
		20	The Abbot of Unreason		-/12

Combat Actions 3
Damage Modifier Special
Magic Points 0
Movement 12m
Strike Rank +2

Armour: Made of stone
Traits: Formidable Natural Weapons

Notable Skills: Dance 1%, Perception 25%, Persistence 100%, Resilience 200%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Stomp	H	VL	70%	3D12	As per leg

Stomp Attacks can only be Evaded, not parried.

Shake Special 50% 2D6

If the church makes a Shake attack, all characters climbing on the church must make opposed Acrobatics rolls. Failure means the character falls off the roof and takes 2d6 damage.

Bite H VL 70% 3D6 As per belfry



Jacques Taillebois, the Joyous One

The Hit Points, Magic Points and attack damage of the Joyous One depend on the actions of the characters. If they failed to complete any of the previous adventures successfully (*The Cursed Tower of Provins*, *Death of a Hermit*, *The Harvest*, *Feast of Fools*) by eliminating the Joyous One's worshippers, then modify the Joyous One's statistics as per the Table of Joyful Doom.

Table of Joyful Doom

Adventures Failed	0	1	2	3	4
Magic Points Remaining	5	10	15	20	25
Hit Points	+0	+1 per location	+2 per location	+3 per location	+4 per location
Claw Damage	1D6	1D8	1D10	2D6	2D10

Jacques Taillebois

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	20	1-3	Right Leg	2/6*
CON	19	4-6	Left Leg	2/6*
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	2/7*
INT	15	10-12	Chest	2/8*
POW	25	13-15	Right Arm	2/5*
DEX	23	16-18	Left Arm	2/5*
CHA	20	19-20	Head	2/6*

Combat Actions 3

Armour: Leather

Damage Modifier +1D4

Equipment: Scythe or Dagger

Magic Points *

Traits: Spirit, Worshippers, Blessing of the Joyous One, Inspiration of the Joyous One, Formidable Natural Weapons

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +19 (+16 in armor)

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 100%, Athletics 90%, Evade 100%, Influence 120%, Insight 90%, Lore (History) 90%, Persistence 70%, Possession 80%, Resilience 70%, Spectral Combat 90%, Stealth 90%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	M	M	130%	1D6*	As per arm



The Tomb of Solomon

Legend holds that Solomon, son of David and king of the Jews, had in his possession a magical ring that gave him power over demons and spirits. He imprisoned these spirits and sealed them away forever, so they would trouble humanity no more – and every word of this legend is true.

King Solomon was indeed a mighty sorcerer and he mastered a spell of binding that could contain even the most powerful spirit. He travelled the length and breadth of Judea, ridding the land of spirits and demons. Some he forced to serve him, others he demanded knowledge from but the greater part of these he imprisoned for all eternity in a trap-filled dungeon, the Tomb of Solomon.

Today, the tomb is lost beneath the deserts of Syria – and this is a blessing for mankind, for if the tomb were to be found, the greed of men would surely lead to them loosing the demons of Solomon on the world. As the wise king learned at great cost, power corrupts.

Using The Tomb In Your Game

The Tomb of Solomon is not a direct sequel to *The Heresiarch of Troyes* and *The Lord of Misrule*. Those two scenarios dealt with the pursuit of a single spirit, the Joyous One. The spirit was never sealed in the tomb; the servants who should have brought the spirit's bottle to the tomb instead abandoned it in a cave, where it was found many centuries later by the Templars. After playing through those two scenarios, the players should be aware that there is a treasure to be found in Syria.

That does not necessarily mean that the characters should go straight from *The Lord of Misrule* to seeking the Tomb of Solomon. Months or even years of game time can pass in between the defeat of the Joyous One and the beginning of the search. The journey to the Middle East alone is worth several sessions of play.

Hard- Won Clues

There are two major sources of information available in the earlier scenario – Jerome's encrypted notes from the Templar castle and the Joyous One itself. According to Jerome's notes, the tomb is located somewhere near the city of Tadmor (in Greek, Palmyra) in Syria. Cryptically, it says that 'six is the number of the faithful and seven are hidden in the seal' and to seek 'the sons of the seven hundred'. Most of these clues can only be interpreted when the characters are actually in Syria.

The Joyous One knows that the tomb is in the deserts east of Palmyra and believes that it can sense the location of the tomb as soon as it comes within a few miles of the sacred place.

If the characters have access to neither of these sources of information, then they must start their investigations from almost nothing. In this case, the Order discovers through a spy that the Templars are searching for *something* in the deserts of Syria near Palmyra; the characters are sent to investigate this rumour and to ascertain whether or not the Templar plan is a threat to Christendom and the Divine Path.

Other Treasure Hunters

There are four other groups who are also looking for the tomb – or are looking for those who are looking for the tomb! These are the Templars, the Joyful People (assuming the PCs did not wipe them out in *The Heresiarch of Troyes* and *The Lord of Misrule*), the Followers of Ibn Sina and the Sons of the Seven Hundred. See *Rival Treasure Hunters* (Page 96) for more details.

The Tomb of Solomon as a Stand- Alone Adventure

If the characters are to play through *The Tomb of Solomon* without first playing the other two adventures, then the best hook is to have them find the cryptic note about the Tomb from *The Chateau du Pcyne* (page 38) in some Templar fortress in the Holy Land, along with clues pointing to the existence of something important and ancient in the deserts near Palmyra. The Order can then command the characters to investigate.



Rival Treasure Hunters

There are four other groups who know that the tomb exists; these can be allies or rivals for the characters.

The Poor Knights of the Temple of Solomon

The Templars made a grievous error by sending the Joyous One and the associated scrolls from the cave back to Europe. Not only did they accidentally free the Joyous One on Troyes, they also lost precious months between the discovery of the scrolls and actually realising that there was a greater treasure to be found. Syria is well beyond the Templar's sphere of military influence but they are capable of sending a handful of treasure hunters into the desert to search for the Tomb.

The Templar plan is to find the tomb, enter it and search it for the fabled Ring of Aandaleeb, the talisman used by Solomon to command the spirits. If they can find the ring, they will use it to take control of the imprisoned spirits and reconquer Jerusalem with an army of djinni. Even if the ring is missing, they can still use the jars of spirits as weapons. If Troyes was nearly destroyed by a single spirit, the Templars can bring every city in the east to its knees with the resources of the vault.

The Templars travelled from Antioch to Syria, disguised as a band of Christian merchants looking to purchase silks and spices from the east. They carried with them a fortune in gold and precious jewels, most of which they spent on bribes in Aleppo to get this far. A dozen knights set out from Antioch; two have died in the desert, another two were executed as Christian spies by particularly devout warriors in the service of the Emir of Damascus and another fled into the wilderness. Seven knights have come to Palmyra.

The Templars' chief advantage is that they are all battle-hardened warriors, devoted to their cause. The passage of the desert tested them to their utmost limits, burning away weakness and hesitancy and leaving only an iron determination to win the prize for Christ and the Temple.

Audan of Aquitaine

The chief of the Templars' treasure-hunters is Audan of Aquitaine, brother to Jerome. The two brothers were among

the Templars who found the cache of scrolls and jars in the cave near Jerusalem. While Jerome returned to Troyes to work on the translation, Audan continued to poke around the caves, looking for more clues. He discovered that the urn was destined for distant Palmyra and that it was but one of hundreds of similar jars. He also found a set of instructions for entering the tomb but has no idea where the tomb is.

Audan lacks his brother's intellect but he has twice as much courage. He is a man of action and determination and he believes that by finding the tomb and defeating the Saracens with sorcery, he will be accounted as one of the Worthies and win his place in Heaven. The search for the tomb consumes him; without the power of Solomon, he believes that the followers of Islam will wash over Christendom like a great wave and that the true faith will be extinguished forever.

What The Templars Know

Audan knows that the quest begins in Palmyra and that to enter the tomb, you must be 'as one dead' or you arouse the wrath of the guardians. Beyond that, he knows nothing - but he will stop at nothing to find out more.

Followers of Ibn Sina, Those Who Bear The Burden Of God

These are an order of Islamic sorcerers, who believe that the world is a collection of chaotic dust motes that move at random but are held in a form of ordered stasis by the will of God. If God were to withdraw his attention, even for a moment, then the world would fly apart into its constituent atoms.

The sorcerers believe that they have the power to momentarily take the burden of God, to hold the world together by *their* will instead of that of God. As part of this burden, they gain the power to reshape reality for an instant. Spells are acts of devotion for the Followers of Ibn Sina.

In the time of their founder, Ibn Sina (known as Avicenna in the west), the sorcerers consulted with Jewish scholars and from them learned of the existence of the tomb of Solomon. This was treated as nothing more than a historical curiosity by the sorcerers. The *djinni* and demons imprisoned by Solomon



are, in their eyes, aberrations in the divine plan. The *djinni* can work miracles on the stuff of matter in a manner akin to the attention of God but they lack the infinite wisdom and compassion of Allah. Therefore, they are troublesome spirits and it is a good thing they are imprisoned where they cannot torment God or man.

The Followers have no desire to free the spirits from the tomb but they very much wish to keep the Franks – their term for all invaders from Europe – from gaining the power of the spirits of Solomon.

Master Fadhel

This sorcerer and three of his apprentices have arrived in Palmyra on the strength of a letter from a fellow sorcerer in Aleppo, who described a Christian who was taken captive in the desert. This Christian claimed to be a Templar knight who set out in search of a great treasure. Fearing that some unwise fools were planning to open the fabled Tomb of Solomon, Fadhel gathered what allies he could find quickly and set out for the town.

What The Followers of Ibn Sina Know

From those long-dead Jewish mystics, Fadhel knows that the tomb is located near Palmyra and that it is guarded by both mortal and supernatural defenders. He knows that the tomb is a series of tests for those who would dare enter it, designed to ensure that only those who are morally and spiritually strong enough to resist temptation can reach the final chamber. He also suspects that the Seal of Solomon has something to do with the location of the tomb.

The Sons of the Seven Hundred

The Sons of the Seven Hundred, also known as the Artabani, are the descendants of those who built the tomb. They claim to be the children of Solomon and his 700 wives and concubines. For centuries, the Sons lived in six villages in the desert, east of Palmyra. Three of the six villages converted to Islam many years ago and two more were abandoned. The last village is the final refuge of the Sons, a small few of whom still hold true to the ways of their forefathers and observe their own strange Jewish traditions.

The Muslim sons despise the Jewish ones and vice versa; the two rival clans have skirmished for centuries. They are united

only by their common oath to protect the tomb of Solomon from outsiders.

Shams al- Malu

The leader of the converted sons, Shams al-Malu has left his home village and now lives in Palmyra, where he is a merchant of some repute. While many of his clan believe he has turned from their traditions, Shams sees no contradiction between his commercial activities and his oath to protect the tomb of Solomon. He uses the ancient watchtowers as waystations for his trade caravans, navigating the desert using the lights of three towers his kin control.

David al- Shem

The leader of the traditionalist sons, David is a fanatic who is considered a dangerous bandit by both the Vizier of Palmyra and his distant cousin. David is committed to defending the tomb against anyone who would despoil it but his followers are few in number and are being hunted by both their estranged kin and the soldiers of the Vizier. He desperately needs allies to reinforce his village but who can he trust, when every stranger is a potential enemy.

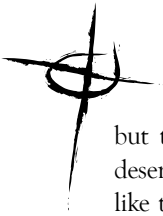
What the Sons of the Seven Hundred Know

The Sons know that the only way to find the tomb is to light the six beacons between the six villages and to then travel into the desert and find the exact point where all six fires are visible. No-one has visited the actual tomb in centuries and not even the Sons know exactly where it is, although David has a rough idea of its location and Shams' trade caravans pass within a mile of the spot.

The Joyful People

If the characters failed to destroy or imprison the Joyous One in previous scenarios, then the spirit and its followers are still at large. After escaping the Order in the Bay of Biscay, the Joyous One inhabited the body of a priest in Aragon and began its long journey east. By the time it reached Antioch, the spirit's cult numbered in the hundreds.

At Antioch, though, the Templars ambushed the Joyful People. Word had reached Antioch from Troyes ahead of the spirit's ship, describing the Joyful People and the danger of the Joyous One. The Templars and their allies wiped out most of the cult



but the spirit and a few followers escaped and fled into the desert. At the start of the scenario, they are wandering the desert like the Israelites, although they believe – thanks to the Joyous One’s blessings – that they walk in the gardens of paradise amid scintillating fountains and shimmering ponds. The Joyful People arrive in Palmyra a few days after the Player Characters.

What The Joyous One Knows

The Joyous One has only a vague idea where the tomb is but it can dimly sense the presence of the other spirits. Therefore, the Joyous One can find the tomb just by wandering the deserts. The spirit is certain to find the tomb, given enough time.

Audan of Aquitaine

The younger brother of Jerome of Aquitaine, Audan is half the magician his brother is – but he is a superior swordsman and a more determined foe.

Audan of Aquitaine

STR	16
CON	16
SIZ	15
INT	13
POW	12
DEX	13
CHA	14

1D20

Hit Location

AP/HP

1-3	Right Leg	5/7
4-6	Left Leg	5/7
7-9	Abdomen	5/8
10-12	Chest	5/9
13-15	Right Arm	5/6
16-18	Left Arm	5/6
19-20	Head	5/7

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+1D4
Magic Points	12

Armour: Chain

Equipment: Longsword, Heater Shield

Spells: Banish, Enhance (POW), Intuition, Magic Resistance, Mystic Vision, Spirit Resistance

Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+13 (+6 in armour)

Notable Skills: Athletics 65%, Courtesy 50%, Influence 50%, Insight 60%, Lore (Occult) 40%, Manipulation 20%, Perception 50%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 80%, Ride 80%, Sorcery (Key of Solomon) 45%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Longsword	M	L	120%	1D8	6/12
& Heater Shield	L	S	120%	1D4	6/12

Templars: See *The Chateau of Paynes*, page 41 for Templar Knight statistics.

Master Fadhel

Fadhel is an accomplished sorcerer and scholar. Despite his considerable magical power, he refuses to use his spells for personal gain or violence; he believes that he is a servant of Allah the Merciful and that to abuse his gifts would be an unjust and sinful act.

Fadhel’s Apprentices

These three apprentices lack their master’s moral strength and are much more willing to abuse their magical talents. Perhaps wisdom will come with age.

Artabani Raiders

These statistics can also be used for Shams al Malu or David al Shem. For Shams, add Commerce 75% and Courtesy 50%. For David, add Lore (Military Tactics) 50%.



Fadhel		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	9	1-3	Right Leg	-/4
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	-/4
SIZ	8	7-9	Abdomen	-/5
INT	14	10-12	Chest	-/6
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	-/3
DEX	9	16-18	Left Arm	-/3
CHA	16	19-20	Head	-/4

Combat Actions 2 *Armour:* None
Damage Modifier -1D2 *Equipment:* Protective Amulet
Magic Points 14 *Spells:* Animate (Sand), Banish, Damage Enhancement, Intuition, Neutralise Magic, Passage Through Fire, Sand Warrior, Spirit Resistance, Telepathy, Wrack

Movement 8m
Strike Rank +12 *Notable Skills:* Courtesy 80%, Influence 60%, Insight 80%, Lore (Occult) 120%, Manipulation 90%, Perception 60%, Persistence 90%, Resilience 40%, Sorcery (Book of Ibn Sina) 90%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Dagger	S	S	60%	1D4	6/8

Apprentice Sorcerer		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	-/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	-/7
POW	15	13-15	Right Arm	-/4
DEX	10	16-18	Left Arm	-/4
CHA	13	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions 2 *Armour:* None
Damage Modifier +0 *Equipment:* Scimitar
Magic Points 15 *Spells:* Banish, Damage Enhancement, Intuition, Neutralise Magic, Passage Through Fire,

Movement 8m
Strike Rank +12 *Notable Skills:* Athletics 55%, Grimoire (Book of Ibn Sina) 45%, Manipulation 40%, Perception 60%, Persistence 50%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 50%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	M	M	75%	1D8	6/10



Artabani Raider		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	-/5
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	-/5
SIZ	10	7-9	Abdomen	2/6
INT	13	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	-/5

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Leather
Damage Modifier	+0	Equipment: Scimitar, Short Bow, Dagger
Magic Points	10	
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+12 (+10 in armour)	Notable Skills: Athletics 65%, Lore (Regional) 60%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 60%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	M	M	65%	1D8	6/10
Dagger	S	S	65%	1D4	6/8
Short Bow			60%	1D8	4/8



New Spells

The *Book of Ibn Sina* contains a pair of spells unknown in Christendom.

Passage Through Fire

Concentration

This spell links any two flames into a magical portal. Creatures on either side of the portal can look into the flame and see the other side; objects or even creatures can pass through but suffer normal damage from the flames. The spell affects a flame of up to 3 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. One flame must be within normal range of the spell (i.e. within a number of metres equal to the caster's POW), the other flame must be within 10 x normal range.

Sand Warrior

Concentration

This spell calls up a warrior from the sand. The warrior's STR, DEX, SIZ and CON are calculated by rolling 1d6 per 20% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. The warrior's weapon skill is equal to the caster's Manipulation. The caster can give the sand warrior whatever melee weapons he wishes; Sand Warriors have no armour but take only half damage from attacks.





Trail of the Tomb

The hunt for the Tomb of Solomon begins in Palmyra - or, more accurately, Tadmur, for few in Syria know the city by its Greek name. Tadmur is the Bride of the Desert, for travellers crossing the desert of Syria must pass through the gates of the city or they will surely perish in the sands. Men have dwelt here since the Creation of the World; the name of the city is recorded in tablets from Babylon. It is said that Tadmur was founded by worshippers of Ba'al and a great temple dedicated to him still stands in the city. Other tales claim that the city was built by Solomon the Wise, or that he conquered it during the brief flowering of his great kingdom. In Roman times, Queen Zenobia waged her futile war against the Empire from here.

Today, Tadmur is a city in decline; the caravans still visit but the population is shrinking and some buildings are falling into ruin and will one day be reclaimed by the sands. The city is ruled by the Emirs of Damascus, who appoint a vizier to oversee the government of Tadmur. The current vizier is Bassam al Mukhtar, a native of Tadmur who prides himself on being cosmopolitan. He speaks Latin, Greek, Italian and even a little English and French, collects Roman antiquities and visited Byzantium in his youth. Despite his fascination with the Occident, he is a devout Muslim and a strong supporter of Salah ad-Din ibn Ayyub, known in the west as Saladin.

Arrival in Palmyra

The most direct route to Palmyra is via Damascus but Christians are unpopular in that city - depending on when this adventure takes place, there are either rumours of a third Crusader army en route under the command of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, or (after 1191) the Crusaders have already arrived. A more likely route for the characters is to travel from the Crusader state of Antioch and then skirt the edge of the desert on a long southerly journey before taking the desert road from Homs to Tadmur.

In Disguise

The characters can disguise themselves as either Western traders (as the Templars have done) or as natives. Disguising oneself as a European merchant requires an unmodified Disguise test; pretending to be a Syrian requires a Hard (-40%) Disguise test (rising to Very Hard (-60%) if a character has a SIZ of 16 or more).



Notoriety

The actions of the Player Characters may draw the attention of al Mukhtar's agents in Palmyra and the surrounding lands; the chances of this happening are determined by the character's Notoriety score. Notoriety is a percentile score that starts at 0%.

Roll d% against the character's current Notoriety each day when they are in Palmyra (or more often if they are causing a disturbance).

If you roll under their Notoriety, then a patrol of guards comes to investigate. If you roll a critical success, then the followers of Ibn Sina start to watch the characters. See *The Sorcerers*, page 104.

If you roll a critical failure, then some other unfortunate is misidentified as one of the character's allies; reduce Notoriety by 50% for one day.

At 50% Notoriety, the characters are 'invited' to speak with the Vizier. See *Visiting The Vizier*, page 103.

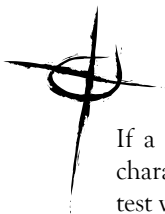
At 100% Notoriety, the characters are treated as criminals in Palmyra and will be hunted down and arrested if they remain within the city.

Notoriety Increases

- Being identified as Christians: +10%
- Trying and failing to disguise oneself: +20%
- Being identified as dangerous allies of the Crusaders: +30%
- Behaving strangely (per incident): +10%
- Fighting on the streets: +20%
- Injuring a guard: +40%
- Killing a guard: +100%
- Associating with Shams al-Malu: +30%
- Associating with David al-Shem: +60%

Optionally, the characters may be able to use bribery or Influence to reduce their Notoriety.





If a Disguise test is failed, then the locals see through the characters' disguise, increasing Notoriety. At least one Disguise test will be needed when the characters arrive in Palmyra; call for more if the characters are closely watched or draw attention to themselves.

Acting Openly

If the characters do not attempt to disguise their origins, then they are treated as suspicious intruders and curiosities. It is not unheard-of for Franks to visit Syria but to go past Homs and Damascus and come into the desert is extremely unusual. The characters will be questioned by everyone they meet as to their destination and purpose. Children flee when they see them, for it is well known that the Franks are brutish cannibals and beggars scorn them, for it is equally well known that the Crusaders have no money save what they loot. They may even be attacked by gangs of hot-blooded youths.

Staying in Palmyra

There is a caravanserai where the characters can find beds for the night. Alternatively, they can easily find a place to stay on the edge of the city, in one of the many ruined buildings.

Searching for Clues

There are several routes that the characters can take when searching for clues. If the players get stuck, then one of the other factions seeking the tomb can be used to push them back onto the right track.

Rumours

Gathering rumours requires a Difficult (-20%) Influence or Streetwise test.

- If you're looking for something old, then the vizier's advisor Zuabi knows nearly everything. He has a library of old scrolls and relics.
- The desert? It's a dangerous place. Full of al-Shem's raiders. Who's al-Shem? Why, he's the headman of a village out in the wilderness. They say he's an insane Jew.
- There used to be more of those Artabani villages but now there's only one left. That merchant Shams al-Malu knows about such people; he's related to them. I wouldn't trust a word he says, if I were you.
- My cousin Ali says that he saw a band of Frankish barbarians in the desert! Why, what if the Crusaders are coming here?

Traces in the Ruins

The Temple of Ba'al strongly resembles the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, as any character who makes a successful Lore (History) or a Difficult Lore (Christian Theology) roll will realise. Poking around the semi-derelict temple turns up one useful clue: a stone tablet in the wall of the temple that depicts the battle between Elijah and the Priest of Ba'al. In this image, the Priests of Ba'al are shown to be connected – or perhaps

possessed, as a Lore (Occult) roll confirms – by spirits. If the characters remove the tablet, they find a cache of ancient scrolls behind it. This scroll reads:

SIX IS THE NUMBER OF THE FAITHFUL AND SEVEN ARE HIDDEN IN THE SEAL. THE GREATEST OF THESE IS THE TOMB OF SOLOMON. FIND THE SONS OF THE SEVEN HUNDRED WHO ARE YET FAITHFUL AND BE GUIDED BY THE LIGHT OF THE SUN IN A HIGH PLACE.

Consulting the Archives

The archives are housed in a tower attached to the Vizier's palace. Characters can try sneaking in here but the tower is located right next to the seraglio. Any intruders are dealt with harshly by the guards. Alternatively, the characters can just approach the scholar Zuabi during the day.

Visiting Zuabi raises the characters' Notoriety by 20% if it is below 50%.

Zuabi is a eunuch astrologer and historian. After day 1, he is also a spy for the Followers of Ibn Sina; as soon as he can do so once the characters arrive, Zuabi lights a scented candle. A character who succeeds at a Very Hard (-60%) Perception test notices strange images flickering in the candle-flame – the flame is a two-way viewing portal to Fadhel's rooms in the vizier's palace and the characters are being watched by the sorcerer! Even if the characters do not spot the candle, a successful Insight test suggests Zuabi is nervous as if he is being watched.

If asked about the Tomb of Solomon, he admits that legends of the place have circulated around Tadmur for centuries but he has never found any clear evidence of the tomb's existence. Many who sought the tomb never returned, though that is more likely due to the Artabani raiders of the desert. The Artabani, he says, know a great deal about the desert.

If the characters offer Zuabi something, such as a look at the scrolls from the Temple of Ba'al or, better yet, the scrolls from the Chateau du Paynes, then the scholar can be of more use to the characters. According to records dating back to the time of the Prophet, blessings be upon him, when some of the local tribes converted to Islam, they destroyed their altars. These strange altars were described as 'tall towers' and were shared by the six villages of the desert. Some of these towers may still be partially intact; indeed, travellers claim that the towers closest to the hidden village of David al-Shem are just as they were in the days of old.

Supernatural Traces

A Hoffman Device can be used to search for the tomb but Solomon put magical wards in place to ensure his vaults would not be found by meddling sorcerers. The Hoffman Device can find the general location of the tomb but not the precise entrance. Still, it can give the character a clue that the six villages are something to do with the tomb.

Events in Palmyra

If the characters are in Palmyra at the right time, they may observe these events.

The Followers of Ibn Sina Arrive (Day 1)

Master Fadhel and his apprentices arrive from Damascus in the evening of Day 1, accompanied by a dozen bodyguards. After they arrive, these bodyguards dissolve into sand; they were created by Fadhel's magic a few minutes before the sorcerer entered the city. Fadhel immediately goes to the vizier's palace and speaks with al-Mukhtar. The sorcerers do not explain why they are in Tadmur, only that their mission is an urgent one. They fear that if the vizier knew that a source of ultimate power was located a short distance from his palace, he would seek it out. Al-Mukhtar can never know of the Tomb of Solomon.

They also recruit the vizier's servant Zuabi, winning his loyalty by promising him membership in their order if he aids them.

Fadhel remains in the palace for the next few days, sending his three apprentices out into the city to search for signs of the tomb.

The Templars Arrive (Day 2)

Audan and his surviving followers stagger out of the desert at noon on Day 2. The warriors are exhausted and suffering from heat-stroke and dehydration. They collapse in the caravanserai, begging for water and food. Rumours quickly circulate about the foolish Frankish merchants who tried to cross the desert the wrong way; later rumours whisper that they might be the advance guard of a Crusader army.

The Sorrows of Shams Al-Malu (Any Day)

Any character visiting the marketplace of Palmyra will hear the sorrows of Shams Al-Malu. The merchant complains bitterly that his trade caravans are attacked again and again by the Artabani; worse, he can get no help from local mercenaries or the vizier's soldiers because of his own suspect ancestry. Al-Malu offers to hire anyone – even Christian warriors – who can protect his caravans against the Artabani.

If the characters take him up on his offer, see *An Audience with Shams Al-Malu*, page 104.

The Joyous One Arrives (Day 4)

On Day 4, the followers of the Joyous One arrive in the town. Madmen are considered holy in Islam, so the obviously crazed followers who survived the crossing of the desert are cared for by the vizier. They are given food and water and permitted to remain in tents at the edge of the city.

The next day, the vizier's men round up the madmen and imprison them all in the palace seraglio, which is hastily converted to serve as a comfortable jail. The Followers of Ibn Sina realised during the night that the 'madmen' are under an enchantment and spend the next few hours casting *Neutralise Magic* spells to free the followers of the Joyous One from the spirit's wiles. In the confusion, the Joyous One itself escapes and flees into the desert.

The Joyous One Finds The Tomb (Day 7)

If none of the factions have found the tomb by this point, the Joyous One sniffs out the entrance to the tomb on Day 7. The spirit digs up the entrance but is slain by the Guardians just inside the door. Undeterred by this, the Joyous One flies off, possesses some other unfortunate and marches *his* body to the tomb. The Guardians cannot endure forever...

The Other factions

The characters may wish to ally themselves with one of the other groups in Palmyra or just throw their competitors off the trail.

Secret of the Seal: The faction knows that the only way to find the tomb is to line up the lights from the beacons. See *The Seal of Solomon*, page 105.

Secret of the Gate: The faction knows how to avoid the Guardians. See *The Tomb*, Page 108.

Visiting the Vizier

The characters may request an audience with Vizier Bassam al Mukhtar, or they may be encouraged to visit him by his guards. In either situation, the vizier treats the characters with the utmost respect, inviting them to dine at his palace as honoured guests. (Courtesy rolls are appropriate to avoid offending the vizier.) The vizier is bombastic, boastful and eager to show off his erudition. He insists on speaking English or French and even offers to have his cooks prepare 'more familiar' food for the characters.

During the conversation, al Mukhtar will try to ferret out *why* the characters are in Tadmur and if they are a threat to him or his masters. While al Mukhtar has no knowledge of the occult, he realises that it cannot be a co-incidence that the sorcerers of Ibn Sina arrived at just the same time as all these strange westerners and the madmen. What are they all doing here? Where are they going?

If al Mukhtar suspects that the characters are searching for some treasure, then he has his guards watch the characters and may even pursue them into the desert if he is convinced the risk is worth the potential reward.





Faction	Goal	Starting Knowledge	Assets	Potential Allies	Potential Enemies
The Hieromonks	Find the Tomb	Whatever the PCs discovered in previous scenarios	Whatever the PCs brought with them	Any	All
Vizier al Mukhtar	Find the Tomb, gain the power of Solomon	None	Lots of soldiers, civic authority	None	All
The Followers of Ibn Sina	Bury the tomb forever	None	Sorcery	Shams al-Malu, Vizier al Mukhtar (as long as he knows nothing of the tomb)	The PCs, the Templars, The Joyous One, Vizier al Mukhtar
Shams al-Malu	Protect the tomb	Secret of the Seal	Loyalty of some Artabani	The PCs, Followers of Ibn Sina	All
David al-Shem	Protect the tomb (or, if convinced, use the power of Solomon)	Secret of the Seal	Fanatic Artabani raiders	The PCs	All
The Templars	Find the Tomb, gain the power of Solomon	Secret of the Gate	Hardened Templar warriors	The PCs	All
The Joyous One	Find the tomb, free the spirits	None	Insane followers, spirit powers	None	All

The Sorcerers

Master Fadhel remains in the vizier's palace, meditating and (after Day 4) freeing the Joyful People from the spirit's curse. He acts through his three apprentices, who he sends out into the city as spies. Each apprentice has six magical candles which Fadhel can use as scrying devices, identical to the ones in Zuabi's tower.

As soon as he realises that the characters are looking for the tomb, then Fadhel has his apprentices spy on them whenever possible. If the characters catch one of these apprentices, then the apprentice is under orders to say the following: *'I come on behalf of Master Fadhel, who begs to speak with you on a matter of great importance. Please, I have in my pouch a magic candle. Simply light it, and my master will be able to converse with you as though he were here now.'*

Fadhel's argument is simple: the Tomb of Solomon was sealed for a reason. Opening the tomb would be exceedingly unwise, as there is no guarantee that those who unlocked the power of the djinni would be able to control the spirits. He wants all traces of the tomb erased. If the characters can find the tomb, he can use his magic to bury it for all time beyond the reach of mortal men.

If the characters reveal that there are other factions hunting the tomb, the Followers of Ibn Sina agree to aid the characters in stopping them.

An Audience with Shams al- Malu

The harried merchant is willing to talk to anyone who can help protect his caravans from attack. If questioned, he explains that he comes from the people of Artaban, who have dwelt since time immemorial in six villages in the desert. For many generations, the Artabani were enemies of the true faith and it is only in the last few generations that the Artabani have embraced Islam. Nonetheless, they are still mistrusted by the people of Tadmur.

Al-Malu is obviously wealthy; he explains that his chief advantage over the other merchants is that his followers can cross part of the desert by night without getting lost. His kin still dwell in three villages in the desert and near each village is a tall tower. They light beacons atop these towers when caravans are near, to guide the travellers home.



If the characters ask about the Sons of the Seven Hundred, then al-Malu looks curiously at the characters; that is indeed an ancient name for the Artabani. Where did they hear it?

If the characters ask about the tomb, then al-Malu instantly becomes defensive and evasive; he refuses to discuss the tomb and if possible, he hires the characters and sends them right into the heart of Artabani territory, in the hopes that David al-Shem's fanatics kill them.

The Sons of the Seven Hundred

To make contact with the Artabani, the characters must travel into the desert to David al-Shem's village. The last of the six villages is located in mountainous territory that is extremely hazardous, full of hidden ravines and steep cliffs. The Artabani raiders know this territory very well indeed; anyone travelling in or near this region will likely be attacked by the Sons.

To make peaceful contact with the Sons, the characters need to convince the Artabani that they are no threat to the village. Allies of Tadmur or the Emir of Damascus are not welcome here. If the characters promise to aid the village against attack, then David al-Shem agrees to meet with them.

Al-Shem is paranoid, convinced that the vizier and half the world are plotting to wipe out his village and take the secret of the tomb. The characters will have to tread carefully or else al-Shem will leap to the conclusion that they are planning to steal the location of the tomb. The best approach is to slowly feed al-Shem's paranoia until he is convinced that his village is about to be destroyed, then suggest that the only way to save the faithful Sons of the Seven Hundred is to use the power of the tomb.

The Templars

Audan and his knights stay in Palmyra for a single night before heading into the desert. They wander around the desert for a few days before Audan realises that there must be more to the mystery than simply digging in the sands. By Day 7, the Templars have discovered the ruins of the abandoned villages and the mysterious towers and are trying to work out the connection between the towers and the hidden tomb.

If the characters reveal themselves to the Templars, then Audan immediately suggests they work together. The Order and the Temple may have their differences but they are both Christians and enemies of the Saracens. The Hieromonks have the occult knowledge and secret weapons to enter the tomb and recover the power of Solomon but the Templars have the military force and knowledge of the enemy needed to successfully use the weapons in the tomb. Only by allying together can they be certain of ultimate victory!

Even as he promises to help the characters, Audan is considering the possibility of betraying them. He would prefer not to do so – they are fellow Christians, after all, and Audan

is not cruel by nature – but this treasure belongs to the Temple of Solomon, not Mont St-Michel or Rome.

The Seal of Solomon

The Tomb of Solomon is hidden in the shifting, featureless desert of Syria. There is no marker to show its location, no grand entrance or towering pillar or statue. The only sign of the tomb on the surface is a few shallow graves that somehow endure the constant movement of the sands. Finding the tomb just by wandering the desert is impossible.

The clue is in the great seal of Solomon. The King established six villages, scattered seemingly at random in a rough circle around the tomb. The location of the villages is irrelevant – but near each village stands a pillar. These pillars are all of different heights, ranging from six to twelve metres. In Solomon's day, a polished shield of copper was mounted atop each pillar.

When travelling in the desert, it is possible to see these beacons shining in the sun. As the traveller gets closer to the location of the tomb, the beacons seem to line up along the horizon. At the exact position of the tomb, the six lights are spaced evenly along the horizon. The towers themselves are not evenly spaced but from the perspective of one standing atop the tomb, the lights appear to form six equidistant points, a great six-pointed Seal of Solomon. It is not enough to simply know the locations of the towers – you also have to trek across the desert until you find that one place where they line up (alternatively, a Very Hard (~60%) Engineering test can be used to calculate the point).

To ensure these towers could be correctly rebuilt if they were damaged, the builders of the tomb also constructed a synagogue in each village and above the door of each synagogue they wrote the correct height of the tower in cubits. Whenever these synagogues were repaired, the number was copied onto a new stone.

At least, so it was in the days of Solomon the Wise. Only one of the six towers is still intact. Two of the towers have fallen into ruin. The other three towers were partially destroyed when the Artabani of those villages converted to Islam but in recent years Shams al-Malu has rebuilt these towers.

He claims this is to help guild his caravans and at night his servants place flaming torches atop the towers, so the caravan drivers can navigate the desert in the dark by following the lights but it is also because Shams al-Malu honours his ancestors and holds true to the commandments of the Artabani people.

To find the tomb using this method, the characters need to rebuild the damaged towers, light beacons atop each of them and then travel into the desert to line up the lights.



Region East of Palmyra



The Three Villages of the Faithful

The three small villages nearest to Palmyra all converted to Islam centuries ago. The villages are small settlements, with no more than a few dozen inhabitants in each. Life here in the desert is hard indeed. Only the old and the very young live here now, scratching out a subsistence living from the soil. Those young enough to travel to Palmyra to find work, usually with Shams al-Malu, who is the richest of the Artabani and often the only one who will employ this despised minority.

The villages are unremarkable, save for the ancient, weathered little temple – now a mosque – in the heart of each of them. There are clues that observant characters can pick up on:

- The towers outside these three villages have been rebuilt by Shams al-Malu. He employs a watchman to stand by each tower; at night, the watchman must climb up the tower and light the beacon.
- In one mosque, they still keep the shield of polished copper that once stood atop the beacon tower. The iman believes it to be a Jewish idol but the characters can recognise it as a heliograph.
- In all three mosques, there is still a number in Hebrew script over the door.
- If the characters listen to the games the children play in the street, they notice the children are playing a curious version of hide and seek. The seeker must find a place

where he can see two other children at once. Usually, he finds one child very quickly, then traipses all over the village looking for a spot where he can see another one at the same time.

The Ruined Villages

Two of the six villages are abandoned and ruined. The tower near one village still stands; in the other village, the tower collapsed centuries ago but if the characters dig around, they can find the remains of the village temple and learn the correct height of the tower, as well as a semi-intact polished shield.

The Village of David al- Shem

The last of the villages is located far to the east of Palmyra, atop a rocky plateau. Here, some 200 Artabani still practice the traditions of their ancestors, protecting the Tomb of Solomon and waging war on the followers of the Prophet.

The tower outside the village, high atop the plateau, is the first thing most visitors see. It is also the last – the slopes up to the village are heavily defended by Artabani warriors.

If the characters make it to the village and can prove they are not servants of the vizier, then they can speak with David al-Shem.



Bandit Attack!

If the characters visit the ruined villages, David al-Shem's village, accompany Shams al-Malu's caravans or just wander the desert, they may be attacked by raiders. These Artabani bandits are sworn to defend the Tomb of Solomon from anyone who might despoil it - but all too often, they attack because their besieged village can survive only by raiding.

The bandits are adept at hiding in the stony desert. They stalk their prey, waiting until their targets are tired or distracted. They might choose to attack when the characters are making camp, or when one wanders away from the main group, or when the characters are occupied with navigating a steep cliff or treacherous wadi. (see page 100 for stats)

When the bandits attack, they begin with a hail of arrows. In a raiding party, there are two bandits per Player Character, plus two. If there is any possibility that their prey might escape by fleeing, then the bandits divide into two groups before attacking; one group circles around and waits for the first group to attack with arrows, then they close the jaws of their trap when the prey runs away from the archers.

If the characters surrender to the bandits, or (more likely) defeat them and spare a few of the attackers, they may be brought back to David al-Shem.

The Tomb of Solomon

The spot in the middle of the desert where the beacons meet is an unprepossessing one; this stony hollow looks like any of a thousand nigh-identical spots in the desert. Still, a few minutes' toil exposes several old graves and a stone slab... a slab marked with the Seal of Solomon! The tomb has been found!

Bemused and Confused?

If the players are having trouble solving the puzzle of the tomb, there are several ways to help them.

- **Reward correct deductions:** If a player makes a suggestion that puts the characters on the right track ('Hey, maybe it's something to do with the seal of Solomon' or 'if those towers line up somehow...'), give that character a Hero Point as a reward.
- **Let them spy on other factions:** The Templars are actively searching for the tomb; the Joyous One is trying to sniff it out. The failed investigations of other groups can help the characters put the pieces together themselves.
- **Offer alliances:** Any of the other factions could offer to help the characters, in exchange for help winning the power of Solomon.

Vizier's Guards

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	1/5
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	1/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	1/6
INT	11	10-12	Chest	1/7
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	1/4
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	1/4
CHA	10	19-20	Head	4/5

Combat Actions 2

Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 12

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +9(+11 in armour)

Armour: Padded with steel cap

Equipment: Scimitar, Hoplite Shield

Notable Skills: Athletics 50%, Perception 50%, Persistence 40%, Resilience 60%, Streetwise 40%, Stealth 30%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar	M	M	75%	1D8	6/10
& Hoplite Shield	H	S	75%	1D4	6/18



The Tomb

The Tomb of Solomon was constructed not to hold the corpse of Solomon but to hold the spirits and demons that he bound with the magic of the Ring of Aandaleeb. The tomb is more than a series of traps; it is a test of worthiness. By passing through all 10 chambers of the tomb successfully, the supplicant proves himself to possess wisdom, courage and determination, the three key factors needed to work magic.

Structure of the Tomb

The tomb's layout is based on the Cabalistic concept of the Sephirot, the Emanations of God. The Tree of the Sephirot describes the 10 aspects (or emanations) of God that allow the unknowable divine light to manifest in our world. Of the 10 chambers in the tomb, each one corresponds to one of the 10 Sephirot.

If any of the players mention the Cabalistic tree of life, or the Sephirot, or suggest that there may be a mystical pattern underlying the tomb's structure, give them the handout 'A Brief Introduction to the tree of the Sephirot' on page 115. Only by navigating the 10 Sephirot can the characters find the ultimate secret of the tomb.

Physical Attributes

The passageways in the tomb are made of brick. There are no doors in the complex, save for the freestanding door in Hod and the impassable doors between Tiferet and Binah, Chokmah and Kether. There is no lighting in the passageways or in the entrance chamber but the 10 chambers of the Sephirot are illuminated by a magical glow.

In some places, passageways cross over or under another. There are short narrow staircases leading up and down in such cases.

The Pillars and The Keys

The 10 spheres are arranged into three columns, referred to as the Pillars. The central pillar (Malkuth->Jesod->Tifereth->Kether) is the Pillar of Mildness, symbolising the breath and the balance of forces. The left pillar (Hod->Geburah->Binah) is the Pillar of Severity and the right pillar (Nezach, Chesed and Chokmah) is the Pillar of Mercy. If the characters complete the tests in all of the Sephirot of a particular pillar, then they will be rewarded with the key corresponding to that pillar. All three keys are needed to open the chamber beyond Kether.

Enemies and Uncertain Allies

Depending on events in *Trail of the Tomb*, then the characters may not be the only ones who find the tomb. If the characters' enemies find the tomb, the reaction varies by faction:

The Followers of Ibn Sina: If the followers find the tomb, then Master Fadhel makes camp a short distance away from the entrance and begins a lengthy magical ritual to whip up a great *simoon*, a desert wind that will dump hundreds of thousands of tons of sand on top of the tomb, burying it for all time. If the characters are already in the tomb, then this gives them a time limit; if they do not escape the tomb before Fadhel completes his ritual, they will be buried in the sands for eternity.

The Templars: If the Templars find the tomb, then Audan and his followers charge into the unknown just as their fellows did at the siege of Ascalon. The Templars know the secret of entering the tomb but in their excitement they forget and just run straight in. Half of Audan's followers are killed by the Guardians; the rest fall victim to other traps until only Audan is left. Audan makes it to the final chamber and may confront the characters there.



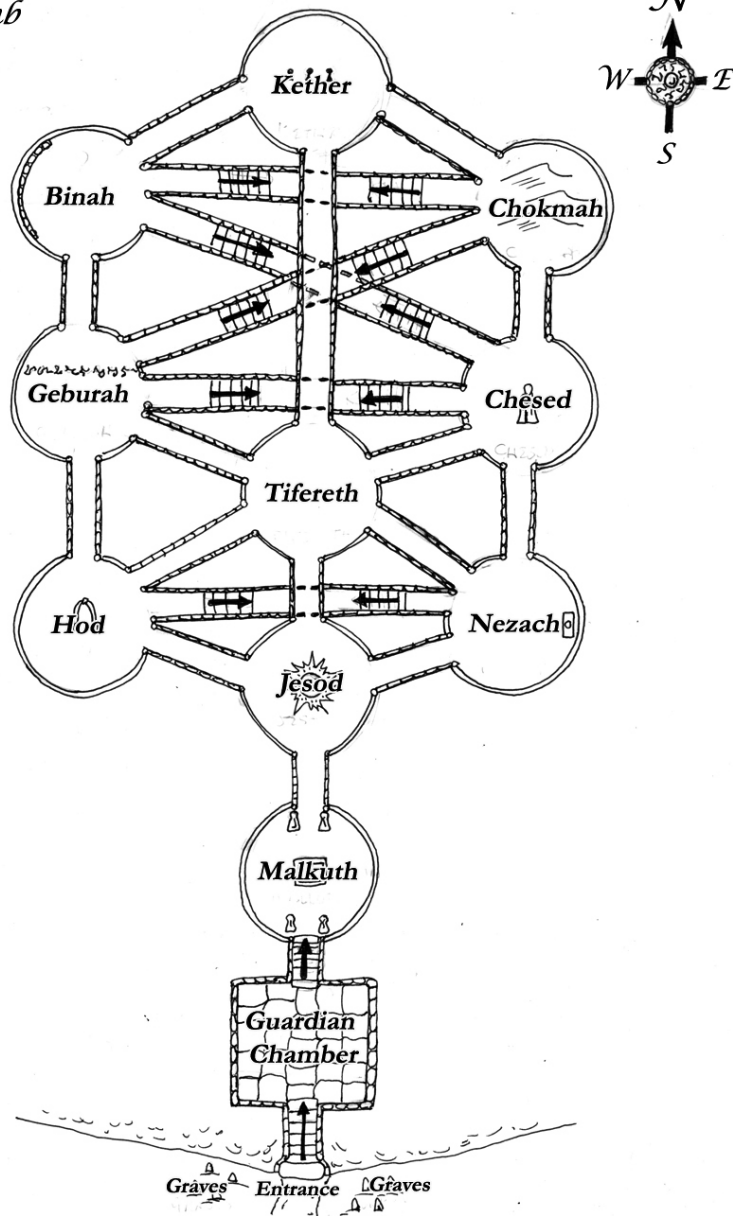
Other Factions in the Tomb

It can be tricky to keep track of even one or two Non-Player Characters in a complex environment like the Tomb of Solomon and it is possible - depending on the actions of the characters - that there could be a dozen or more NPCs running around if multiple factions are involved. If this happens, keep as many characters 'off-screen' as possible. Have NPCs lurk outside the tomb, or take different routes through the labyrinth, or kill them off with traps as quickly as you can.

If the players fail to win all three of the keys needed to open Kether, then you can have an NPC show up with the missing key at the end of the dungeon, forcing the characters to fight or negotiate to access the final chamber.



The Tomb



The Artibani: The Artibani (either the followers of Shams al-Malu, or David al-Shem if the characters have not convinced him to aid them) know the rough location of the tomb and will stalk anyone who gets too close. They will lie in wait at the tomb entrance, ambushing those who try to enter or leave.

The Joyous One: If the Joyous One finds the tomb, then it never makes it past the Guardians... over-and-over again. When the characters arrive, they find a dozen corpses of possessed victims in the entrance chamber. The Joyous One may offer to ally itself with the characters at this point, promising to guide them through the dungeon in exchange for their help getting past the Guardians. The spirit has no idea of the layout of the dungeon; it is lying through its borrowed teeth when it claims it can help.

The Artabani (al-Shem's Faction): If the characters convince al-Shem to take the power of Solomon, then the bandit leader and two of his followers accompanies them into the tomb. They will only betray the characters if they believe the characters will not use the power of Solomon on the vizier's forces.

The Templars: The Templars want the power of the tomb for themselves but they also know how dangerous the Order's Hieromonks can be. Therefore, Audan's plan is to wait for the characters to trip up and then stab them in the back. If the characters never seem to be in danger, then he will hang back and wait, while advising them to turn the power of Solomon on the Saracens.

The Vizier: If the characters were foolish enough to let al Mukhtar know about the existence of the tomb, then the vizier responds in a typically understated way. He shows up at the tomb with an army, including several dozen Christian slaves. The slaves are fed, one-by-one, into the dungeon's maw. His plan is to keep triggering traps until the path to the treasure is clear.

The vizier will never find the secrets of Solomon this way but it does mean that there is a small army waiting outside the tomb when the characters emerge.

If the characters ally with a faction, then their erstwhile allies are likely to betray them at some point.

The Artabani (al-Malu's Faction): If the characters ally with al-Malu and manage to survive his attempts to kill them by sending them into ambushes, then al-Malu may pretend to relent and help guide the PCs to the tomb. Once they reach the tomb, his ulterior motive is revealed; al-Malu seals the tomb behind the characters by collapsing the entrance chamber. The characters will be trapped in the tomb forever unless they can use the magic of the *djinni* to escape.



The Entrance

The entrance to the Tomb of Solomon consists of a heavy block of sandstone marked with the Seal of Solomon. Dragging the block away reveals a staircase going down into a brickwork tunnel. Halfway down this staircase, the characters find a human skull embedded in the wall; it whispers a message in ancient Hebrew – ‘*this place is death! Turn back or perish!*’ A character who continues to descend this staircase arrives in the chamber of the Guardians.

There is a second way into the tomb, mentioned obliquely in the Templar scrolls from the Chateau du Paynes and also known to Audan of Aquitaine. There are several strange shallow graves just outside the tomb’s entrance, graves that have survived for more than 1,000 years despite the constant wind and the shifting of the sands. A character who buries himself in one of these graves is sucked through the ground and falls through the ceiling of the Malkuth chamber, avoiding the Guardians.

The Guardian Chamber

At the end of the staircase, you enter a large square chamber with a paved floor and a vaulted ceiling. At the far side of the chamber is another staircase. Four statues of ancient kings – you recognise Solomon himself, David his father and two others you cannot immediately identify – flank the two exits.

If the Joyous One got here ahead of the characters, add:
The floor of the chamber is littered with battered and broken corpses. More alarmingly, the fists of the four statues are caked in blood.

The statues are, obviously, animated golems. Any character who crosses the floor of the chamber is challenged by the golems who should ‘HALT’ as one. If a character continues beyond the mid-point of the room, all four golems activate and attack. The guardians are wise enough to use tactics – one statue guards each exit, while the other two methodically eliminate any intruders trapped in the room.

The stairs on the far side of the room lead to Malkuth.

Battling the Guardians

The Guardians are sturdy but unimaginative foes. Their tactic is simply to pound their enemies into paste. Direct conflict with the Guardians is futile; the creatures are made of stone and virtually invulnerable. Their chief weakness is the scroll marked with the word *emet* (truth) contained in the golem’s mouth. Destroying or altering this scroll deactivates the golem. Counter-magic spells against Magnitude 8 can also destroy the golems.

An agile character can try to get the golems to strike each other – the chamber is so cramped that a wild swing from a golem’s stony fist can hit another golem. To accomplish this, the character must use Evade to set up the golems and then make another Evade test to dodge at just the right time.

The Tree of Life

To complete the tests set by Solomon, the characters must pass the challenges of all nine of the lesser Sephirot. The tests are in three groups of three – the Pillar of Mildness, the Pillar of Severity and the Pillar of Mercy. Whenever the characters complete a Sephirah, a momentary feeling of peace floods over them. If they complete all three Sephirot from a pillar, they will find the key a few moments later. The key might be lying in the middle of the corridor, hidden behind a loose brick, or suddenly be found hanging from a character’s belt, placed there by unseen hands.

Malkuth

If the characters arrived here from the entrance chamber, they enter via the staircase at the south end of the room. If they buried themselves alive on the surface, then they fall through the ceiling of the Malkuth chamber.

You enter a round room with walls of polished brown stone. A passageway leads north. In the centre of the room is an altar and sitting on this altar is a veiled figure wearing blue robes. She raises her head as you enter.

‘I am the least of the brides and this is the kingdom of the world. From my throne, you may rule all the world for eternity. Will any of you take my place?’

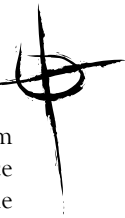
Beneath her veils, the bride is made of stone, like the golems in the upper entrance chamber. Her lower body is fused with the stone altar on which she sits; she may be the secret ruler of the world but she cannot take a single step. She was one of Solomon’s wives, millennia ago; she tried to steal the Ring of Aandaleeb and he punished her by turning her to stone.

If a character agrees to take her place, then she invites him to sit beside her on the altar. When he does so, the character turns to stone and the bride becomes flesh. She immediately begins to age as the centuries catch up with her. A moment later, she crumbles into dust.

If the characters refuse to take her place, she sighs and indicates the passageway behind her. *‘There are three pillars of wisdom and each pillar has a key. Seek wisdom and you will find the key.’* She says nothing more but by refusing her offer, the characters have one-third of the key of Mildness.

Jesod

As you enter this chamber, a pale white glow begins to emanate from a crystal sphere in the centre of the room. The pale light illuminates a circular room of bluish-white stone. There are three exits, leading north-west, north and north-east. The crystal sphere seems to pulse with barely contained power... and an instant later, a shaft of white light shoots straight up out of the sphere. Pinioned in the beam of light is a beautiful nude female figure, perhaps a spirit, who floats languidly in the air above the sphere. Her naked body writhes with pleasure as the beam of light plays over her and she seems to become



more solid and physical where the light touches her. Then the beam of light fades and so does the beautiful woman.

The sphere responds to the character's touch; if a character touches the sphere, it shoots out a beam of light in the direction he desires. If the character illuminates the seductive spirit, the spirit becomes more and more real the longer the beam is trained on her. She whispers licentious promises into the character's ears as she comes closer to manifesting.

The spirit is a temptation – the light of the sphere is finite and if the character wastes it all on lust, then he fails the test of this sphere. The correct response is to reflect the light of the Sephirot into Malkuth by sending a beam of light down the south passageway.

If the characters shine the light on the spirit for five rounds, she manifests fully – the light goes out and the creature attacks. She is a Vengeful Spirit.

Hod

Entering this chamber, you see there are multiple exits, leading south-east, east, north-east and due north. There is also a door in the very centre of the room – a free-standing door, with nothing around it save a doorframe. You can walk around the door or step through it.

The door symbolises the divide between the world as sorcerers see it and as those who do not practice the arcane arts perceive it. Stepping through the door casts *Mystic Vision* on anyone who passes through the portal, at a cost of 1d4 damage to the head in the form of a blinding headache of revelation. A character under the effects of *Mystic Vision* in this room can see an altar and a sheaf of scrolls against the western wall of Hod. Written on this scroll is a spell, which can be cast with a Lore (Occult) test or a Grimoire skill. Casting the spell permanently enhances the caster's POW by one and also passes the test of this Sephirah – the character has found wisdom through prayer.

However, a character who steps through the door is also vulnerable to attack. Lurking in this chamber is another Vengeful Spirit. A character who has gone through the door can see and attack the spirit; other characters are unable to see or interact with it.

Nezach

This chamber shimmers with amber light. There are four exits – south-west, west, north-west and due north. Standing against the eastern wall of the chamber is a small plinth, on which stands a cup of water.

A character who tries to cross the chamber suddenly perceives the room as being unimaginably vast, perhaps hundreds of miles across. The floor is a trackless desert and it seems to take a lifetime to get anywhere. Call for Resilience rolls – a character trying to make it from one entrance to another

must make five Resilience rolls, while getting to or from the cup from any of the entrances requires three Resilience rolls. Failing a Resilience roll inflicts 1d8 damage to the character's chest.

Drinking from the cup not only cures any damage suffered by the character but also gives him a +50% bonus to Resilience while in the sphere of Nezach. When the character drinks from the cup, he suddenly remembers his mother incredibly vividly.

Merely crossing this room successfully in any direction completes the test of this Sephirah.

Tifereth

The next chamber you enter is mirrored on every surface and you are not sure if it is a circular room or a spherical one. Light cascades in unimaginably complex patterns in every direction, as if this place was reflecting infinite other, higher spheres. Standing in this chamber as if waiting for you is a young woman, even more beautiful than any you have seen before. Her clothing and appearance seems to change depending on the angle you view her from – now she is dressed in a samite gown, now in rags, now in a nun's habit, now in armour, now in stranger costumes – but her features remain constant.

'I am Tifereth' she announces, 'the mirror of the soul. What do you bring to me?'

Tifereth wants the characters to offer the essence of their personalities to her. Who are they? What defines the characters? What is the core of their being? She will prompt them with questions, trying to pare them down to the core of their being and asking them to define themselves.

With each answer, Tifereth defines herself as the opposite. For example:

PC: 'I am a warrior of God.'

Tifereth: 'Then I am faithless; I believe in nothing.'

PC: 'I am a defender of the weak.'

Tifereth: 'Then I prey on them; I use my strength to despoil and destroy.'

PC: 'I seek wisdom.'

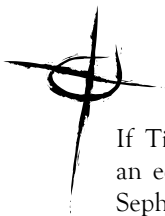
Tifereth: 'Then I am heedless, ignorant, wilful and witless.'

PC: 'I am a killer of men.'

Tifereth: 'Then I am a saviour and a healer.'

With each answer, her appearance and demeanour changes to reflect her declaration.

If Tifereth ends up with more negative traits than positive traits, she transforms into a demonic Vengeful Spirit and attacks; the characters are obviously overwhelmingly self-deluded and can therefore not be permitted to reach Kether. Optionally, you should give her unique abilities based on the traits the characters assigned to her; a faithless Tifereth might be immune to Divine Magic, for example.



If Tifereth has more positive traits than negative ones or an equal balance of the two, she vanishes, completing this Sephirah's test.

There are six exits from Tifereth – south to Jesod, north-west to Geburah and Binah, north-east to Chesed and Chokmah and north to Kether. The passageways north from Tifereth to the upper three Sephirot end in impassable iron doors. These doors open only if all the other spheres save these three have been visited (not necessarily completed).

Geburah

As you approach this chamber, you feel an intense pressure in your skull, as if a storm was building up around you. Your throat becomes dry. Your heart pounds wildly. You feel an overwhelming desire to flee, to cower, to prostrate yourself before the awful power that dwells in the room beyond.

Steeling yourself, you manage to enter the room. There are five entrances: south, south-east, east, north-east and north. A line of characters is drawn in the floor, bisecting the room. The north and north-east exits are on the far side of this line.

Also on the far side is the Wrath of God. You know it when you look upon it; a roiling cloud of fury, fire, thunder and utter destruction. The Wrath appears constrained by the symbols on the floor, but you know that if it were set loose, even for an instant, it would consume everything. The only thing between you and seething nuclear chaos is a few Hebrew letters drawn on the floor.

If a character reads the letters, he recognises them as the text of the Torah. Bizarrely, although there are only 22 letters on the floor, their order changes every time the characters reads the markings, suggesting that all possible combinations are contained here.

There are three ways to complete this Sephirah.

- They can temper judgement with mercy by visiting Chesed before crossing the line (see Chesed).
- They can try to rewrite the law and contain the Wrath of God – redrawing the symbols on the floor to contain the Wrath and give access to Binah and Chokmah. Doing so requires a Very Hard (–60%) Lore (Occult) test; failure means the Wrath explodes outwards, consuming everyone in the room.
- They can close their eyes and walk into the Wrath of God. The Wrath inflicts 2d6 damage to all locations, ignoring armour.

Chesed

A gentle light bathes this white-walled chamber. There are five exits – south, south-west, west, north-west and north.

In the centre of the room stands the statue of a beautiful woman, dressed in marble robes. She carries a bloody scimitar in one hand that is very real and sharp indeed. In the other, she holds a cup of

water. The white marble floor is awash in blood. A familiar figure lies crumpled on the floor, bleeding.

The figure on the floor is an enemy of the characters. Ideally, it is someone who is already in the tomb, like the Joyous One or Audan or David al-Shem but if there are no suitable candidates, it can be the illusion of some past foe or long-running rival. Obviously, the purpose of this Sephirah is to test the characters' capacity for mercy.

There are two ways to heal the wounded foe. They can make a First Aid test, or they can take the cup of water from the statue and pour the healing liquid on the foe's wounds. Either approach saves their wounded enemy from dying and completes this Sephirah.

The cup of mercy can also be used to avoid the Wrath of God in Geburah.

If a character tries to step past the statue to reach the north or north-west exit without first dealing with the dying victim on the floor, the statue turns to glare at him. If he continues, the statue attacks – use the Guardian statistics but add the following attack:

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword of Mercy	H	L	80%	2D10	6/18

Binah

Light reflects off a wall of complicated brass cogs. This chamber contains an extremely complex device, a huge lock of some sort, that is mounted on one wall. The lock consists of dozens of cogs and bars of varying sizes. Turning one cog also moves some of those around it. Written above the mechanism are the words 'AS ABOVE, SO BELOW'.

To pass through Binah successfully, the characters must solve this lock. A diagram of the cogs is provided here.

If the players have been paying attention, they will recognise the Tree of the Sephirot in the middle of the lock mechanism. Ten of the cogs correspond to the ten Sephirot. Turning the wheels in order from Kether to Malkuth unlocks Binah.

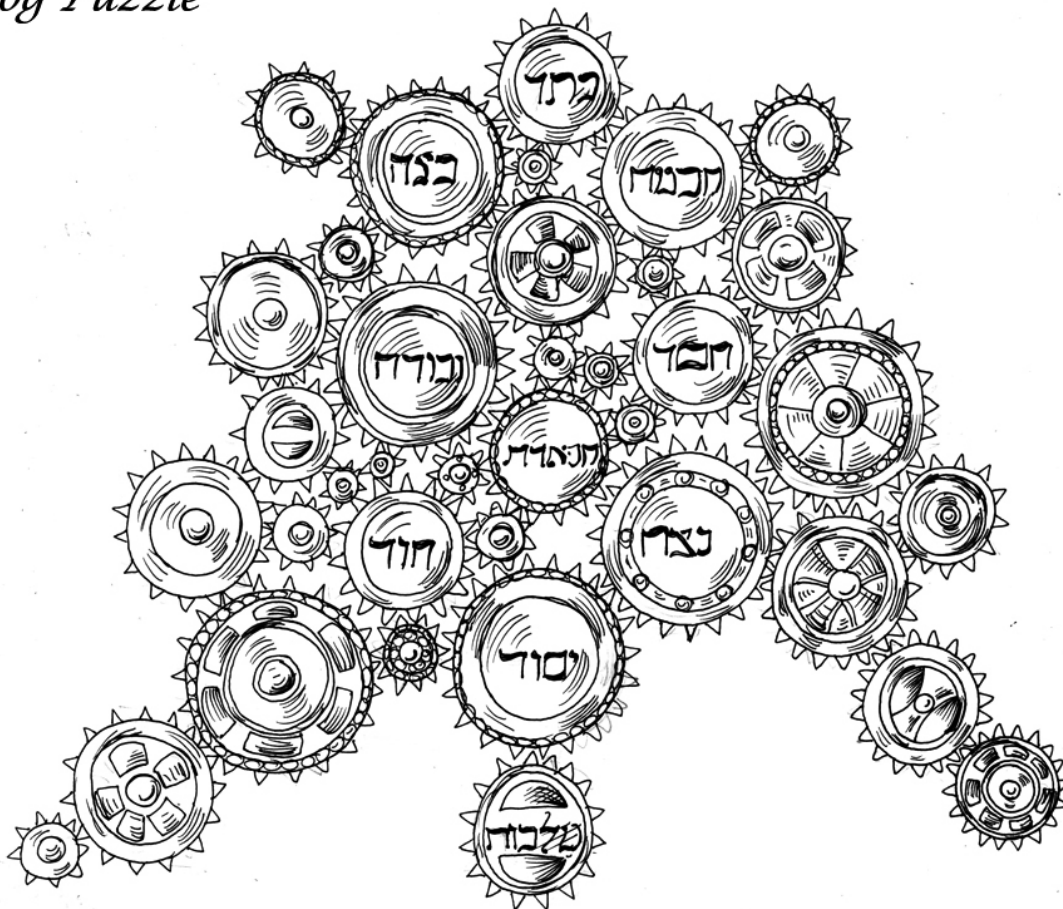
If the players are unable to decode this puzzle, a Very Hard (–40%) Mechanisms test lets the characters figure out the workings of the lock and disable it.

Chokmah

You enter this chamber to find yourselves in the open air. You stand in the desert and it is just before dawn. The eastern sky is touched with a breath of pink and gold. The whole world seems still and peaceful, yet filled with potential. Your every step seems to carry you many leagues



Cog Puzzle



forward; your every gesture seems symbolic of greater things, as though you were players on a stage or magicians enacting a rite.

Chokmah is the Sefirah of intuition and emotion. The characters cannot fail this test, as long as they do not second-guess themselves. Any action, carried out boldly, is the correct one here.

Kether

The final chamber is the Sefirah of Kether, the ultimate hidden source of all things, the light of God. It is locked away from the characters when they first enter this room - there are three keyholes on the floor. The only way to open the vault below this chamber is to possess all three keys (yes, characters can try picking the lock; it is a Formidable (~80%) Mechanisms test and failing means the character is struck down by the Wrath of God from Geburah).

If the characters have all three keys, they can open the vault. If they have only two keys, then bring in one of the rivals with the last key and force the characters to negotiate.

If the characters open the trapdoor in the floor, a bright light envelops them. They have entered the Vault of Solomon.

The Vault of Solomon

Your eyes adjust to the glorious light... and see wonderful things. The walls are decorated with carvings testifying to the wisdom of Solomon and the glories of the Kingdom of Israel. Gold and jewels lie scattered around the floor, a king's ransom in treasure of all sorts. The chief part of the treasure, though, is the many clay jars similar to the one that held the Joyous One.

Atop a pedestal is another such jar but this one is made of blue crystal and it glows from within. Written on the lid of the jar are the words 'OPEN ME'.

The treasure here is almost incidental, as the Hieromonks have taken vows of poverty. Still, if anyone wants to break their vows and fill their pockets, there are tens of thousands of silver pieces' worth of treasure.

The jars contain more trapped spirits. If a PC approaches the jars, he hears voices from within; some voices boom and threaten the character with dire consequences and demonic wrath if he does not open the jars, while others plead for freedom as they have been unjustly imprisoned or offer wondrous rewards if freed. If a character is foolish enough



to open a jar, then the spirit escapes and flees into the wider world to cause mischief or destruction.

The characters can try carrying jars out of the tomb; each jar has an ENC of 6. Each jar contains a demon, ghost or other spirit of some sort, the exact nature of which is up to the GM.

The spirits can only be commanded with the Ring of Aandaleeb, which is in the blue jar.

The blue jar is obviously special. If the characters open that... *A cloud of smoke billows forth from the jar and takes on the shape of an old man of kingly aspect. His eyes shine with wisdom; his face is stern and regal. On his phantasmal hand he wears a solid ring of iron. His voice speaks in your minds.*

'I am Solomon, Son of David. Why do you come here? What do you seek?'

The characters stand in the presence of the shade of one of the mightiest sorcerers in history. When Solomon felt his life beginning to slip away, he turned the Ring of Aandaleeb on himself and bound his own soul into a jar, so he could be the final guardian of the tomb. He may be dead but he has lost none of his wisdom and none of his power.

Attacking Solomon is futile. He is an awesomely powerful sorcerer in the heart of a sanctum that he himself created. Do not even bother rolling the dice – Solomon can do whatever he wants to the PCs. If they try to hurt him, he annihilates them. If you are feeling merciful and the players spend a lot of Hero Points, then maybe he will just have a djinni drop them into the middle of the ocean or send them hurtling forward or back in time instead of turning them to stone or blasting them with fire from heaven.

Immortality has not taught him patience or mercy, either. The wisest of kings does not suffer fools gladly. The characters' fate depends on their response to his question.

We're Here For Power/We're here for the jars of spirits: This is the wrong answer.

'Power, you seek? Then power you shall see!' The shade raises his ring and all the jars in the room rattle and quake with anticipation. 'Destroy them!' orders Solomon. The lids of all the jars explode and a host of terrible spirits stream towards you.

Any character who does not immediately turn and run is killed on the spot. Any player who does flee must make an Athletics roll to stay ahead of the host of spirits; anyone who fails is killed. If no-one fails, then the straggler with the lowest movement score or the lowest margin of success is taken by the spirits and destroyed. The spirits pour through the tomb complex, killing any other intruders. The survivors flee out of the tomb and – if they look back over their shoulders while

they keep running – see the spirits lift up what seems to be the whole desert and dump it on top of the tomb entrance, burying it for all time. The spirits flood back into their jars after completing the task laid upon them by the Ring of Aandaleeb.

God sent us/we want to defeat the Saracens!: Solomon frowns in response to such a declaration.

'And what aid do you expect from me?' The characters must restate their desires but Solomon is now on his guard and the chances of the characters being incinerated is a lot higher.

We're here to stop others from stealing your power!: A better response.

'Thieves! Very well! Let them see what they would claim!'

Again, Solomon looses the spirits upon the intruders. The PCs glimpse their foes being dragged through the tomb and torn apart by the host of angry spirits. Once the intruders have been dealt with, Solomon offers the characters a boon – see *Solomon's Boons*.

We're here to imprison the Joyous One!: If the spirit is still at large, the characters can tell Solomon that they are here to deal with that spirit.

Solomon laughs. 'So, that rogue is still dallying with the daughters of Eve? Come, spirit, take the place that was long prepared for you. By the Ring and the Seal I command you! Come to me!' A wind blows through the chamber and the characters glimpse a vaguely humanoid shape flying past them. One of the jars opens and for a moment something else tries to crawl out of the jar but Solomon forces both the Joyous One and the other entity back into the jar and the stopper leaps off the ground and seals it once more. The jar rocks and shakes, as if two cats were fighting inside it.

'They do not like sharing, I think' says Solomon, 'but thank you for returning this wayward charge of mine. For this, you shall be rewarded.'

We seek Wisdom: The best response. Solomon made the same request of God during his reign. The spirit smiles.

'Lord, Give Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people and to know good and evil.' So shall it be. The characters each receive a permanent +25% increase to Insight and another 75 skill points that can be allocated to any skills, as long as no one skill gains more than 25 points. Solomon continues *'I too asked for wisdom and God rewarded me with wealth and power. So too shall I reward you. To each of you I grant a boon.'*

Solomon's Boons

If the characters pleased Solomon, they may each receive a boon. Suitable boons:

- A permanent +1 increase to a Characteristic.
- The service of a *djinni* for three tasks.
- A complete copy of the *Key of Solomon*, including spells missing from the translated versions.
- A magical weapon from Solomon's treasury.
- A permanent increase to Divine Fervour.

Leaving the Tomb

Depending on events before the characters entered the tomb and within the tomb, there may be anything waiting outside, ranging from absolutely no-one to a whole army to a whole army running in terror from the host of *djinni* loosed by Solomon's shade.


The characters should not be able to return to the tomb. Even if they managed to find the tomb without alerting any of the other factions, have Shams al-Malu tear down his pillars after he discovers that someone visited the sacred place without his knowledge. If all else fails, Master Fadhel can bury the tomb in sand once he divines its location.

After Ex Cathedra

Escaping Solomon's tomb completes the tale of the Joyous One and the spirits. The Hieromonks have travelled from the heart of Christendom to beyond the furthest reach of the Crusades. They have faced down all manner of horrors and spoken with Solomon himself. Their faith, resolve and sanity have all been tested.

What next? What adventures lead from this point?

- If Audan managed to recover any of the demon jars from the tomb, he intends to use them to reconquer Jerusalem. Do the characters help him smuggle these magical weapons into an enemy-held city, or do they intend to thwart his plans?
- The characters are, by now, accomplished Hieromonks. The Order might direct them to set up a new Preceptry in the Holy Land or in Constantinople.
- The Followers of Ibn Sina may now be aware of the existence of the Order and vice versa. How do the two occult organisations interact? Do the philosophies of the followers hold any relevance to the Divine Path?



A Brief Introduction to the Tree of the Sephirot

The Sephirot are a Rabbinical concept that explains how God's will becomes manifest in reality, cascading from the unknowable ultimate divine light down through the Tree of the Sephirot until it becomes physical form. By studying the Sephirot, a mystic may align his thoughts to those of God.

There are 10 Sephirot, traditionally arranged in a tree formation.

1st: Kether – The Light of God; the ultimate, the unknowable.

2nd: Chokmah – The Emotion of God; raw action, intuition, potential.

3rd: Binah – The Intellect of God; rationality, logic.

4th: Chesed – The Loving Kindness of God; love, action, causality.

5th: Geburah – The Judgement of God; strength, power, the Law.

6th: Tifereth – The Union of all Spheres; balance, beauty, integration.

7th: Nezach – Endurance, Patience, Acceptance. Also associated with victory.

8th: Hod – Prayer, Consciousness, Ceremonial Magic. Associated with language and speech.

9th: Jesod – The Connection, the Reflected Light of God. Associated with the Moon and the generative organs. Said to reflect the light of the other Sephirot into the physical world.

10th: Malkuth – the Kingdom, the Physical World. The Creation of God, the Bride.





Guardians

These stony golems are virtually invulnerable to conventional weapons. Neutralise magic spells or attacking the golem's mouth to destroy the scroll are the best ways to defeat the monsters.

Stone Golem		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	30	1-3	Right Leg	10/9
CON	25	4-6	Left Leg	10/9
SIZ	20	7-9	Abdomen	10/10
INT	0	10-12	Chest	10/11
POW	0	13-15	Right Arm	10/8
DEX	3	16-18	Left Arm	10/8
CHA	7	19	Head	10/9
		20	Mouth	3/3

Combat Actions	1	Armour: Stone Skin
Damage Modifier	+1D10	Equipment: None
Magic Points	0	
Movement	4m	
Strike Rank	+2	Notable Skills: Brawn 120%, Persistence 100%, Resilience 100%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Fist	H	L	80%	1D10	As per arm

Vengeful Spirits

It is said that these are the ghosts of the wives of Solomon, who led him to the worship of false gods for a time. These spirits have manifested and can be attacked with normal weapons, but they take minimum damage from any attacks.

Vengeful Spirits

STR	-
CON	-
SIZ	-
INT	13
POW	12
DEX	-
CHA	18

Combat Actions	3	Armour: None, but the spirit takes minimum damage from any attacks.
Spirit Damage:	1D8	
Magic Points	12	Traits: Spirit, Worshippers, Blessing of the Joyous One, Inspiration of the Joyous One
Movement	12m	
Strike Rank	+16	Skills: Perception 80%, Persistence 60%, Resilience 60%, Spectral Combat 70%,

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	M	M	70%	1D8	As per spirit

Armour does not protect against the spirit's attacks.



Character Handouts

Claude

God has chosen us! We cannot fail!

When you were a child in the Order's care, you asked your instructors why God had taken your parents in the plague. They told you that it was part of the divine plan; that if your parents still lived, you would not have been taken into the Order's orphanage and hence would never have become a Warrior of God. All events and actions, you realised that day, are part of a single divine plan, a great tapestry of fate that leads unerringly to some ultimate goal. You have been chosen for great things and so your parents were sacrificed on the altar of necessity. God has chosen you; you cannot fail him.

The Order is the secret hope of the world. Your destiny is to preserve that hope. You were sent to find the Heresiarch of Troyes but by his black magic, he transported you to this other world of horrors. So be it - you will fight your way back to Earth! You cannot fail.

Of your companions, none share your fervour. **Renaud** is a romantic fool ill-suited to the Order, **Victor** is an ill-bred thug and **Andrew**, whilst loyal, has doubtless imperilled his soul by studying magic.

Claude		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/6
CON	9	4-6	Left Leg	2/6
SIZ	17	7-9	Abdomen	5/7
INT	15	10-12	Chest	5/8
POW	13	13-15	Right Arm	5/5
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	5/5
CHA	11	19-20	Head	5/6

Combat Actions 3

Damage Modifier +1D4

Magic Points 13

Movement 8m

Strike Rank +15 (+8 in armour)

Armour: Chain Coat (5), Leather Greaves (1)

Equipment: Crusader Blade x2 (6), Smoke Bomb x 3

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 76%, Athletics 106%, Brawn 101%, Culture (Norman) 40%, Evade 74%, Insight 64%, Language (French) 80%, Language (Latin) 30%, Lore (Christian Theology) 40%, Language (English) 30%, Lore (Occult) 75%, Lore (Regional) 40%, Perception 48%, Persistence 86%, Resilience 88%, Stealth 97%, Survival 34%, Track 26%, Unarmed 36%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Crusader Blade	M	M	96%	1D6+1	6/8



Renaud

It is a sorry world we live in, without love.

There are many things you regret, a great many things indeed.

First and foremost, you regret going into the alley behind the Inn of the White Hart for a piss, instead of doing it on the high street. If you had not gone into that alley, then perhaps you would not have stepped into the middle of a battle between a monk and a trio of disguised ghouls and then the monk would have had no reason to drag you back to Mont St-Michel and forcibly initiate you into the Order. You regret that particular choice a great deal.

There is also the fact that your hands spend more time holding a sword these days than a lute or, better yet, a woman's bosom. That pestilent oath of celibacy is also a matter for regret.

Right now, though, you really regret not stabbing the Heresiarch of Troyes to death. You and your fellow monks were sent to bring down the heretic leader but instead he used his magic to transport you into this other dimension. The chances of you escaping from this place, you fear, are slim to none despite **Andrew's** sorcery. **Claude** believes you can fight your way out but he is a fanatic. **Victor** may be your best ally in this. He is always struck you as a sensible sort.

Renaud		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	10	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	5/6
INT	15	10-12	Chest	5/7
POW	14	13-15	Right Arm	5/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	5/4
CHA	14	19-20	Head	5/5

Combat Actions 3
Damage Modifier +0

Magic Points 14
Movement 8m
Strike Rank +13 (+6 in
armour)

Armour: Chain Coat (5), Leather Greaves (1)
Equipment: War Sword (1), Scoped Automatic Light Crossbow (4) with
Explosive Bolts (3), Healing Draught (1)

Notable Skills: Athletics 34%, Courtesy 29%, Culture (French) 60%, Dance
98%, Influence 73%, Language (French) 80%, Language (Latin) 30%,
Lore (Christian Theology) 30%, Lore (Occult) 30%, Lore (Regional) 65%,
Perception 44%, Persistence 33%, Play Instrument 88%, Resilience 25%,
Seduction 29%, Sing 98%, Sleight 93%, Stealth 64%, Streetwise 53%,
Unarmed 34%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Light Crossbow			73%	1D8+1D4	4/5
Warsword	M	M	49%	1D8	4/8



Victor

The greatest treasure to be stolen is a secret.

The Order recruited you off the streets. You would be God's thief, they told you, stealing the secrets of heretics and putting a knife to the throat of false prophets. They trained you to meld with the shadows, to lie with fluency and to masquerade as anyone from a beggar to a king. They taught you the use of poison and made you dissect corpses so that you would know exactly where to plunge your dagger.

Then they sent you after the Heresiarch of Troyes and all your stealth and cunning was useless. By his black magic, he hurled you and your companions into this kingdom of nightmares. What good is hiding in shadows, when the shadows come alive and bite at you with teeth as black as the night?

Claude tries to tell you that you will prevail and **Andrew** mutters that he will find a way to transport you home via magic but you cannot find it in your heart to believe either of them. **Renaud** believes you are all doomed - if this is so, then you shall sell your lives dearly!

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	13	1-3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	14	4-6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	11	7-9	Abdomen	0/6
INT	14	10-12	Chest	2/7
POW	9	13-15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	8	19-20	Head	2/5

Combat Actions 3
 Damage Modifier +0

Armour: Silent leather greaves, vambraces, byrnie, cap (3)
Equipment: Bolt Sword (2) with Explosive Bolts (3), Healing Draught x2 (2), Climbing Claws (1), Choking Dust (4)

Magic Points 9
 Movement 8m
 Strike Rank +13(+10in armour)

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 68%, Athletics 36%, Culture (German) 58%, Disguise 22%, Evade 78%, Evaluate 32%, Mechanisms 78%, Language (French) 28%, Language (German) 78%, Language (Latin) 28%, Lore (Alchemy) 28%, Lore (Christian Theology) 28%, Lore (Occult) 28%, Lore (Regional) 58%, Perception 43%, Persistence 23%, Resilience 33%, Sleight 92%, Stealth 118%, Streetwise 42%, Unarmed 62%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bolt Sword	M	L	96%	1D8	6/10
and Dagger	S	S	96%	1D4	4/8
Bolt Sword (Ranged)			38%	1D6	6/10



Andrew

The path to righteousness is as narrow as a razor's edge.

It is as you feared – you have damned yourself and you have done it with the aid of priests and monks. The Order saw your natural intelligence and aptitude for magic and they permitted you to read the grimoires and to study the secret art of sorcery. You progressed quickly, learning the geometries of Solomon and the formulae of Abra-Melin the Mage and the hidden teachings of thrice-great Hermes. All the time, you prayed that your good intentions would shield your soul from the inevitable taint of sorcery.

Now, your fate has come upon you. The Order sent you out to hunt down the Heresiarch of Troyes and you did so – but he proved to be the greater sorcerer. Through some spell you still cannot comprehend, he transported you and your comrades to some otherworld filled with horrific creatures. The thought of a magic that could tear a hole in reality so casually staggers you and you can only surmise that your own sinful deeds somehow made it easier for his spell to take hold.

You suspect that there may be a way to use your magic to find a way home but doing so will involve opening yourself up to demonic powers. Should you doom your own soul to save your allies? Perhaps the decision would be easier if you trusted them but **Claude** is a fanatic, **Renaud** a fool and **Victor** a murderous wretch.

Andrew		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	8	1–3	Right Leg	2/5
CON	10	4–6	Left Leg	2/5
SIZ	12	7–9	Abdomen	–/6
INT	17	10–12	Chest	2/7
POW	13	13–15	Right Arm	2/4
DEX	10	16–18	Left Arm	2/4
CHA	13	19–20	Head	2/5
<i>Combat Actions</i>	3	<i>Armour:</i> Leather greaves, vambraces, byrnie, cap (2)		
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+0	<i>Equipment:</i> Copy of <i>St. Cyprian's Grimoire</i> (5), Consecrated Mace (4), Hoffman Device (2), Smoke Bomb (1), Heater Shield (1)		
<i>Magic Points</i>	13	<i>Spells:</i> Banish, Castback, Enhance (POW), Hinder, Magic Resistance, Mystic Vision, Protective Ward, Spell Resistance		
<i>Movement</i>	8m	<i>Notable Skills:</i> Athletics 58%, Culture (Norman) 44%, Evade 51%, First Aid 52%, Healing 55%, Insight 40%, Language (French) 84%, Language (Latin) 84%, Lore (Christian Theology) 44%, Lore (Occult) 94%, Lore (Regional) 44%, Manipulation 80%, Meditation 26%, Perception 55%, Persistence 66%, Resilience 30%, Sorcery (<i>St. Cyprian's Grimoire</i>) 74%, Stealth 47%, Unarmed 38%		
<i>Strike Rank</i>	+13(+10 in armour)			

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Mace	M	S	88%	1D8	6/6
and Shield	L	S	88%	1D4	6/12