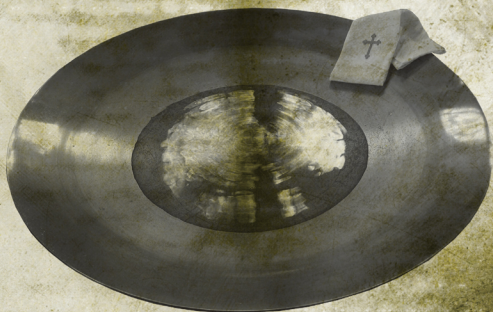


DEUS
VULT

SHADOW SOCIETIES



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Credits

Author

Carl Walmsley

Editor

Matthew Sprange

Layout and Graphic Design

Will Chapman

Interior Illustrations

Carlos Silva, Eric Lofgren, Patricio Soler,
Martin Hanford, Chad Sergesketter

Playtesters

Rob Allen, Paul Crowther, Aneirin Howard, S.
Bounton-Preece, Chris Roberts, Mark Street,
Denice Tracey, Steve Wintle

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Verse 8.0

INTRODUCTION

The Order must adapt and counter new challenges, in order to see His Will done and Christendom protected.



Most creatures that come to the attention of the Order are lone predators or members of a small pack or cult. They may be dangerous adversaries – red in tooth and claw, or wielding foul sorceries – but they tend to be isolated threats. They lack the co-ordination and resources guardian priests can bring to bear. Such enemies are dealt with swiftly and without mercy.

In recent years, however, it has become apparent to the Masters of the Order that other forces are at work in the world. These are not just mindless monsters or heretical rabbles but organised and purposeful groups whose powers are not to be underestimated and whose goals are dark and fathomless.

But can the truth be uncovered in time? And even then, can mortal man hope to stand against such ageless adversaries when, for so long, they have gone about their work undetected?

Presented within this book are details of some of the mysterious groups whose activities threaten not just Christendom but the world itself. Many of these organisations are centuries old, with schemes and ambitions set to play out in the years ahead. They can provide even experienced guardian priests with new and diverse challenges – and move the events of a *Deus Vult* campaign far beyond the relative safety of northern Europe to the Holy Lands and beyond. For, just as the Order is increasingly aware of these shadowy groups, so they too are taking a greater interest in the warriors of the Mont St. Michel.

These include Malik Dhukan, the exiled King of the Djinn; strange were-races of the Scions of Zeus; and mysterious eastern sorcerers from far Cathay.

But fear not brothers and sisters, for ours is a divine calling and we shall not be alone. Strike out into the darkness.

Verse 8.1

THE ORTHODOX ORDER

In 1054, the Great Schism split the church between west and east, Latin and Greek. In Rome, the Pope claimed continuing dominion over the Christian world; in Constantinople the Holy Roman Emperor made the same proclamation, and appointed his own Pope. Christendom was divided.



The Order managed to paper over the cracks caused by the Schism, though many eastern guardian priests had sympathies with the beliefs of the Orthodox Church. For more than a century, there were disagreements between the eastern and western priories but nothing too serious. A succession of Cadrinal-Obscures maintained the Order should remain above the regional disagreements of the Church, and pursue God's higher purpose.

Causes of the Great Schism

The eventual breakdown of relations between the western 'Latin' Church and eastern 'Greek' Church was the *filioque* clause – an amendment to the Nicene Creed that stated the Holy Spirit came from both the Father *and* the Son, rather than just the Father. The word *filioque* is Latin and means 'and/from the Son'. The western Roman Church added the *filioque* clause to the creed; the eastern Orthodox Church did not.

In truth, however, this doctrinal disagreement was simply the tipping point for a relationship that had been teetering on the brink for centuries. In western Europe, the predations of the Dark Ages had led to widespread illiteracy. To compound matters, the gospels were only available in Latin – both the scriptures themselves and the words used in Church services. The common folk had no choice but to turn to priests and to Rome for spiritual guidance.

By contrast, Christians in the east were better educated and more knowledgeable. The scriptures had been translated into a number of native languages, allowing the populace to read the gospels for themselves. As a result, people outside the clergy were involved in theological study. In addition, many eastern Christians spoke (or at least understood) Greek – a far more expressive language than Latin. This allowed them to explore subtler and more sophisticated ideological ideas – ideas that remained alien to western Christians, due to their ignorance of Greek.

These fundamental cultural differences gave rise to the inevitable schism, with members of each branch of Christianity excommunicating members of the other.

In May 1182, however, things changed. In an event that is now referred to as the Massacre of the Latins, the citizenry of Constantinople – the centre of the Orthodox Church – murdered thousands of Roman Catholics who were resident in the city. The rest, numbering more than 50,000 men, women and children, were forced to flee their homes. Several thousand of these were captured before they could escape the city and sold to the Turks as slaves.

The reasons for the massacre were manifold. Religious intolerance played a part, but so did politics and money. For almost a century, merchants from Venice, Genoa, Pisa and Amalfi had dominated maritime trade in and out of the city. They and their servants were Catholics, loyal to Rome rather than Constantinople. Resentment grew as these 'foreigners' amassed great wealth and consolidated

their power in land and titles. What was worse, they flouted the laws of the city, warring among themselves in violation of Imperial edict. In an atmosphere of bitterness and jealousy, it was not difficult to spark the citizenry into riotous action, after which mob-mentality took over and the streets ran red with blood.

Inevitably, this incident further damaged relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church. More significantly, it created an unbridgeable gap between the hieromonks resident in the city and those spread across western Europe.

Following the massacre – which saw the murder of five members of the Inquisition (a new organisation based out of Rome) – the Cardinal-Obscure ordered a number of retaliatory assassinations. Despite the independence of the Order, it is not entirely beyond the reach of the Pope, and it is accepted his Holiness placed a great deal of pressure on the Cardinal-Obscure to seek retribution. The guardian priests of Constantinople, lead by Prior Demetrius, refused this command. They were unconvinced by claims that the massacre had a supernatural element to it and felt the Pope was motivated solely for Earthly, political concerns; and they were quite right.

The Cardinal-Obscure himself travelled in secret to Constantinople to hold crisis talks with Prior (now General-Superior) Demetrius. Exactly what the two men discussed has never been revealed to the wider Order but, for a time, some sort of agreement between the fracturing eastern and western factions was reached. Just two citizens of the city, each with proven links to the occult, were taken back to Rome for interrogation but there were no other reprisals carried out by the Order.

At least, that is the official story.

Secrets and Lies

While the Cardinal-Obscure was in Constantinople negotiating with Demetrius, a small group of his most trusted guardian priests carried out a range of covert missions within the city. The precise details of these operations remain a closely guarded secret to this day. What is known is that John Beaumont led the team, and they dealt with a master alchemist who fashioned a brew that incited hatred in any who drink it. It is believed this potion had been distributed throughout the city's water-supply prior to the massacre. It also came to light that the Order knew of the presence of this powerful alchemist for some time, and yet had failed to act against him.

The unstable truce which followed (for it cannot be denied that in the aftermath of the massacre the forces of the Order in Constantinople became increasingly independent) survived for several years. By the beginning of 1189, however, contact with Constantinople and the priories in Crete and Duklja had been lost. Several hieromonks were sent to investigate, but never returned. It was decreed that members of the Orthodox Order, as they now call themselves, are anathema and should be captured or slain on sight.

A New Path

Since breaking away from the Order and the doctrines of Rome, the Orthodox Order has established a number of new rules to govern the conduct of its members. The most significant of these – a loosening of the controls regarding the use of magic, is a direct response to the group's proximity to the Holy Land, the epicentre of arcane activity in the world.

The strict doctrines of the Order have always maintained that to dabble in the occult is to damn one's soul. This was based on the belief that magical power does not come from the one true God, but from some other source. It is certainly the case that many occult powers spring from the infernal realm, and that others are fuelled by powerful spirits that would trick humanity into worshipping them rather than the Christian God.

Perhaps out of necessity (the guardian priests in the east are sorely beset by enemies), or perhaps out of a greater familiarity with occult events, members of the Orthodox Order have come to reconsider this position. The Bible and other ancient texts talk of Christians and Jews who were able call upon powerful divine arcana – a force quite separate from the miracles the Lord has enacted through the ages. This benevolent magic – referred to as *divinum veneficio* - is something the Orthodox Order feels it must harness if it is to withstand its enemies.

The greatest exponent of *divinum veneficio*, they claim, was Solomon the Wise. While enacting God's Will, he accrued a knowledge of holy magic still unparalleled thousands of years after his death. He was able to bestow blessings upon crops and livestock. He could smite his enemies with fire from the sky. He tamed and mastered the djinn. To members of the Orthodox Order, Solomon has become a paragon – both someone whom they aspire to emulate and a justification for the methods they have chosen to adopt.

Strongholds

Since claiming independence from the Mont St. Michel, it has been necessary for the Orthodox Order to establish new priories. Their former sites – considered irrevocably compromised – have been thoroughly plundered and destroyed.

The group's headquarters remain within Constantinople, a city deemed too important to abandon. It is now better hidden and more secure than ever in catacombs beneath the city. General-Superior Demetrius has a well-established network of spies and allies throughout the Byzantine Empire and beyond, all of whom have either been convinced to shift allegiance to the new organisation or, as before, remain ignorant of whom they truly serve.

A second priory has been established in Jerusalem. This provides Prior David with an invaluable site from which to monitor the activities of Saladin and his allies. In truth, the Orthodox Order has limited direct interest or involvement in the mundane wars between Christian and Moslem; they do, however, concern themselves with the activities of Saladin's sometime allies – Sulayman, *The Burned One* and *The Anointed*.

The Orthodox Order's final priory is located in the city of Tyre. As a major port city that has remained in Christian hands – thanks in no small part to the activities of the Orthodox Order – this site is invaluable to hieromonks coming in and out of the Levant.

Members of the Orthodox Order

In many ways, Orthodox guardian priests fulfil the same role as their Latin brothers; they root out and destroy supernatural threats to Christendom. They receive similar training and undergo similar rituals and trials – though in Constantinople rather than the Mont St. Michel. Where the two differ, however, is in their methods. Many Orthodox guardian priests now have some practical knowledge of sorcery.

As a result of this – and of their proximity to the mystical events that permeate the history and culture of the Holy Lands – they sometimes react differently to the discovery of unearthly forces. Put simply, many no longer believe that all supernatural creatures are evil.

Since breaking away from the Latin west, Orthodox guardian priests have sometimes elected to leave supernatural beings unmolested. In rare instances, they have even formed alliances with these creatures, sharing knowledge and even fighting side-by-side. Orthodox guardian priests have come to see benevolent supernatural beings as a legitimate part of God's creation. As such, they see no need to challenge them and choose to focus their efforts on more numerous and tangible threats.

The continuing hard-line stance of the Order is regarded with a mixture of disdain and sympathy. Many Orthodox guardian priests would like to see the greater Order re-united in its struggle against His enemies. They regard their brothers as misinformed and misled, and see their beliefs as overly simplistic. If they could just be shown *the truth* then they would understand.

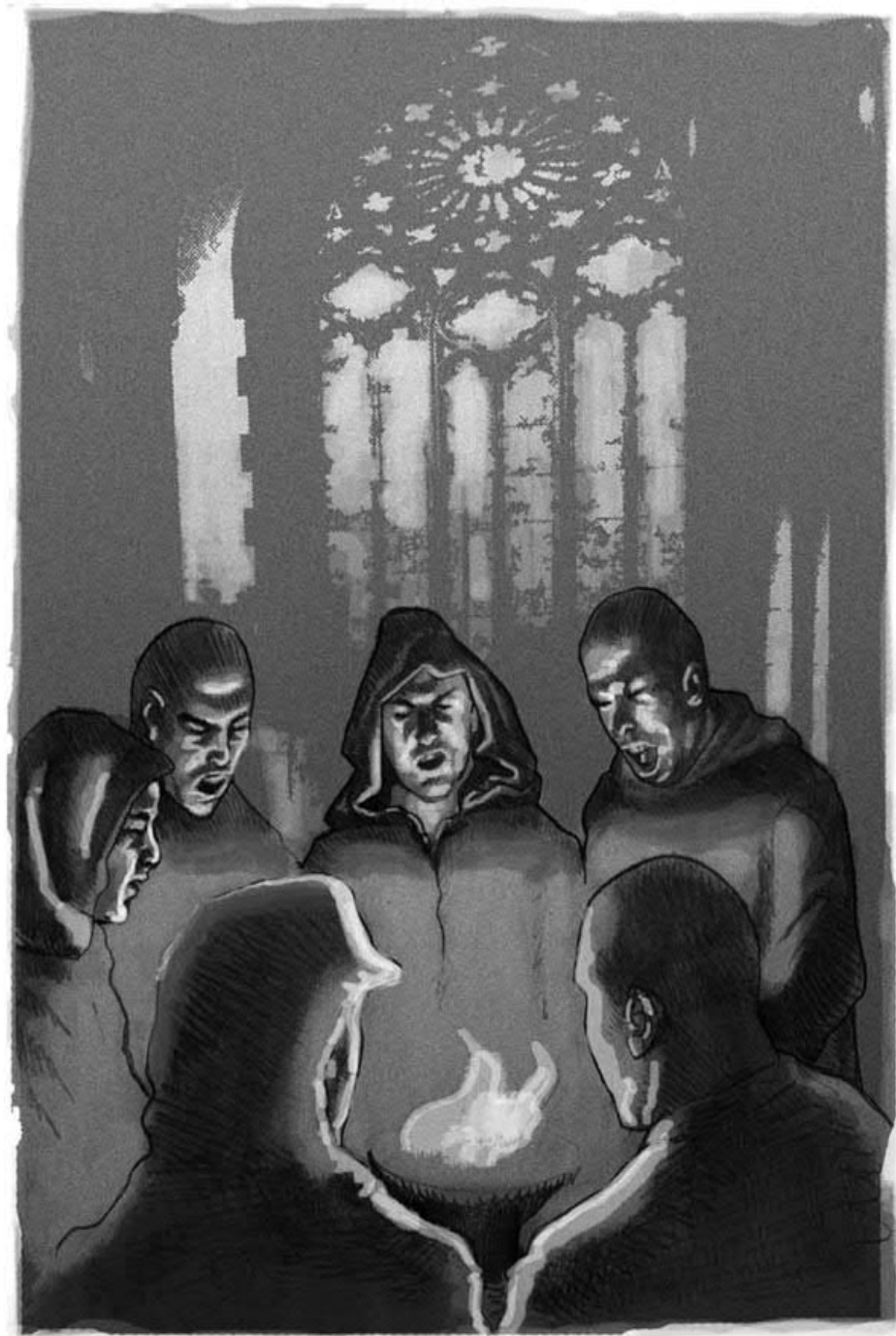
Players who encounter Orthodox guardian priests for the first time may respond with hostility. Given time, though – and the opportunity to converse with an open mind – they may come to question some of their own convictions, and the strict policies enforced by the Order. Alternatively, such encounters might reinforce their belief that any dabbling with the occult represents the beginning of a slippery slope to Hell.

Divinum Veneficio – Divine Sorcery

Great wisdom and prosperity were bequeathed to Solomon, for his heart was humble. He asked nothing for himself – merely that he might govern his people well.

But the dangers facing Israel were manifold, and the legions of the abyss clamoured ever at the gates of Hell. To ward against such foes, He gifted Solomon with great magic and lore. Thus, in His name, Solomon cast back the demons, routed the Djinn and smote the abominations of the Old World. Divinum Veneficio was his weapon.

Tennets of the Orthodox Order, 1167 AD



It is the profound belief of members of the Orthodox Order that not all sorcery is evil. They contend that a particular form of sorcery – *Divinum Veneficio* – is not only acceptable to God but is, in fact, divine in origin.

It is this fundamental belief that has set the Orthodox Order at loggerheads with their brothers in the Order. The result is a schism that has forever divided Christendom's mightiest warriors, and one that may yet have cataclysmic consequences. United, the Order may have been able to stem the flow of darkness; divided it seems almost impossible.

The principles behind *Divinum Veneficio* are, undeniably similar to sorcery. In game terms, they work in exactly the same way – it is simply that members of the Orthodox Order believe they wield this power in God's name and with His blessing.

Divinum Veneficio Spells

The names ascribed to those spells employed by the Orthodox Order represent the belief they are divine in nature. Whether this is true or not, they represent a powerful collection of enchantments that have spelled the end of many a foul beast.

Angelic Shield

Concentration

With the casting of this spell, an iridescent shield of shimmering light appears before the subject. Emblazoned upon its front is a symbol of Christendom – typically a cross, fish or crown of thorns. The shield will move to intercept incoming blows, thereby protecting the subject from harm.

An Angelic Shield will attempt to parry the first successful attack made against the recipient of the spell each combat round. The shield's Parry skill is equal to the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.

The subject of the spell may elect to parry himself, but must declare this intention – as normal – before the attack roll *and* before the Angelic Shield's parry roll. An Angelic Shield may not attempt to parry an attack that the recipient has tried but failed to parry himself.

The shield is considered a Large weapon, with infinite Hit Points. It may not be used to attack an enemy.

Breath of Heaven

Autonomous

This incantation summons a great gust of wind, potentially powerful enough to knock over armoured horses or even uproot trees.

The spell may be used to produce one of two effects – either a focused blast or a broad sweep.

The focused blast may affect up to 3 SIZ per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. This version of the spell produce a visible, cyclonic 'arm' that lashes out at the target.

The target object(s) are moved 1 metre directly away from the caster for every 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. Living targets may attempt to resist the effect of this spell with an Opposed Athletics Test. If the target is successful, he grabs hold of something or manages to shift his balance and 'roll with the blow.' Even if successful, the target must achieve a Critical Success to avoid being knocked prone.

An object or creature that is thrown, suffers 1 point of Damage for every metre it moves (or would have moved if brought to a stop by contact with a hard object). Damage should be divided equally between 1-3 locations. Armour provides no protection against this damage.

Objects or creatures that are unable to move – such as a wall – suffer twice the standard amount of damage, again divided between 1-3 locations (if hit locations exist).

For example, *General Superior Demetrius, head of the Orthodox Order, is trapped inside a diabolist temple. With no time to pick the lock of the door barring his way, he blasts it with a Breath of Heaven spell. The door is Size 20, which is no problem as Demetrius has the Sorcery (Saint Cipriano's Grimoire) skill at 120% allowing him to affect objects up to Size 36.*

If it were free to move, the door would be knocked back 12 metres by the spell and suffer 12 damage. However, as it is locked, it instead suffers 24 Damage. The Games Master determines this is more than enough to break the lock and rip open the door, allowing Demetrius to escape.

When used to generate a broad sweep or air, this spell may affect up to 10 Size per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.

All creatures caught within this gust must succeed with an Opposed Athletics Test or be knocked prone. The caster should roll once for his skill check, and all targeted creatures should Oppose this result.

Note that small objects which are not fastened down will be knocked over by the effects of this spell, and unguarded flames of lantern-size or smaller will be extinguished.

Clarion Call

Autonomous

With a voice that can move between gentle wisdom and righteous thunder, the recipient of this spell can inspire those who hear him.

By speaking with an individual or group for at least a minute, he may fill them with hope and determination. Inspiring those open to his words – for instance, a group of weary pilgrims – requires no more than a successful Influence Test. Swaying the more sceptical is an Opposed Test, using either a target's Insight or a skill that reflects their faith in something else, such as a rival religion.

All those who respond to the speaker's word immediately recover 1 level of Fatigue. In addition, they may be galvanised to the purpose of a single task, receiving a +10% bonus on all relevant Skill Tests for the duration of the spell.

The number of people affected by this spell is not limited by the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. Instead, the range at which the speaker's words carry weight is limited to 1 metre for every 10% of the caster's skill.

Djinni Bane

Autonomous

Cast upon a weapon, this spell enables it to assume the properties of one of the metals that are harmful to the Djinni races. The caster may choose from gold, Angelic Steel and Infernal Iron.

Exorcise

By invoking the true name of God, practitioners of *Divinum Veneficio* are able to cast out demons.

The effect of this spell is the same to the sorcery spell Banish (*Legend Core Rulebook*, page 196), apart from the following:

- Only demons may be affected by the spell
- The sorcerer may dismiss demonic entities up to 4 POW per 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill
- The spell *can* call forth a demon possessing a victim

Holy Weapon

Autonomous

This spell imbues any mundane weapon with a divine blessing, making it fit for the work of smiting God's enemies.

The weapon is considered Consecrated, allowing it to damage creatures such as demons.

Warrior of God

Autonomous

The recipient of this spell is filled with divine might. His form visibly swells with power, as the sorcerer's magic augments his physical abilities.

The target's STR, DEX and CON are increased by 1 point per 10% of the caster's Sorcery (Grimoire) skill. A creature must have the Characteristic in question to be affected and the Characteristic cannot be boosted beyond twice its original value.

This spell is incompatible with any other Characteristic boosting spell. In addition, it only affects creatures that possess the Divine Fervour skill.

Once the spell expires, the recipient acquires two levels of Fatigue.

Divinity or Delusion?

With each Games Master rests the decision as to the true nature of *Divinum Veneficio*. It may indeed be a divine weapon entrusted to mankind's most sacred guardians. Certainly, there is lore pertaining to Solomon that confirms his use of magic, the enslaving of demons and Djinn to do his bidding. Why not use such power to defend Christendom?

However, it may be that the magic was only ever intended for Solomon's use – that he was a special case, in the eyes of God. Equally, it may be that the magic and lore used by the Orthodox Order is not that used by Solomon at all. Perhaps they have made a mistake. Perhaps they have been tricked...

A Conflict of Interests

Players that operate in or around the Holy Land will eventually run into members of the Orthodox Order – most likely during an investigation.

If Orthodox guardian priests become aware of their Latin cousins first, they will attempt to monitor them from afar. This will allow them to better judge whether to openly approach or not. Certainly, they will offer assistance to members of the Order that are imperilled.

In all instances, members of the Orthodox Order have instructions to avoid conflict with their estranged brothers.

Conversion

General-Superior Demetrius is aware of the fact he has far too few men and women to hold back the tide of evil that threatens the world. It takes too long to train young guardian priests, and his people die too regularly for that to be the only means by which his ranks are replenished. Accordingly, he has issued an edict that members of the Order should be offered the chance to accept the tenets of eastern Orthodoxy. Effectively, they may defect.

This was not an entirely popular decision; many Orthodox guardian priests were wary of welcoming all-comers from the west for fear they would be infiltrated by spies. This was a concern Demetrius shared – and the steps he took to reduce the chances of double-agents entering their ranks have gone a long way towards alleviating his brothers' fears.

Ideally, any potential new recruit is scrutinised ahead of any offer of recruitment. In this way, both competency and – more importantly – outlook and attitude can be ascertained. Members of the Order who seem disaffected or who ignore some of the more hard-line edicts coming out of the Mont St. Michel make for the best candidates.

Of course, this is not always possible. Sometimes, an offer of defection is made in the field. Typically, either an unhappy guardian priest reaches out to the Orthodox Order or representatives of the two groups meet by chance and a connection is made.

Potential new recruits are initially denied access to the Orthodox Orders' three Priors. Instead, they are housed in one of the smaller preceptories – the loss of which would not represent such a significant blow to the group. They are questioned extensively about their motives for wishing to change allegiance by an experienced Orthodox guardian priest. These *scrutator* monks are experts in the detection of lies or deceit.

If the suppliant seems genuine, his initiation is taken to the next level. If it does not, he will either be turned away or unwittingly used as a false mole, feeding incorrect information back to the Order.

Defectors to the Orthodox Order are quickly asked to participate in a magical ritual, employing *divinum veneficio*. The effects of this spell are minor but highly symbolic; a small mark, not unlike a tattoo, appears on the suppliant's body. This is referred to as the *stigma*. The location chosen is always discreet; within an armpit, at the back of the knee, even within the mouth. This marks him – at least for the time being – as a defector.

Any guardian priest who is feigning dissatisfaction with the Order struggles to complete this initiation rite. Beyond the fact they are marking themselves as a traitor, they must participate in an

arcane ritual. The tenets of the Order are very clear on this; the practise of magic is an act that will damn one's soul.

Any supplicant who passes this test is posed a final challenge. He is entrusted with the care of a small creature known to the Orthodox Order as a lore sprite. Unquestionably this is a supernatural being, albeit one the would-be defector is assured is entirely harmless. In appearance it resembles a small, pale monkey but there is a keen intelligence behind its tiny, amber eyes.

For three weeks, the guardian priest will be sealed inside a chamber with the creature. He must feed it and care for it, and watch it go about its business. This business will be reading; lore sprites have astonishing memories and seem able to retain everything that they read. They cannot speak, but they have agile fingers and can write beautifully¹.

Beyond a seemingly endless thirst for knowledge, lore sprites are very affectionate creatures. They enjoy interaction with other sentient beings, employing a form of sign language, and are highly tactile. Most will seek to nestle up to their companion at night. When they sleep, their dreams manifest as flashes of colour and fragments of melody. Some even produce wondrous scents or tactile sensations.

It is not uncommon for those who take this second test to develop an attachment to their sprite. Some Orthodox guardian priests have been known to retain them as companions whilst carrying out investigations.

¹In the absence of brazen heads – almost all of which are held in the Mont St Michel – the Orthodox Order has taken to using lore sprites. The fact they also prove useful when testing an initiate's acceptance of the idea that not all magic is evil is something of a bonus.

Acceptance

Assuming the supplicant completes these challenges, and convinces the *scrutator* monk overseeing his initiation he is telling the truth, he is welcomed into the Orthodox Order. In a ceremony that marks his acceptance, a *Divinum Veneficio* spell is cast that removes the *stigma*.

Wondrous Items

Since splintering away from the Latin west, members of the Orthodox Order have begun devising their own Wonder weapons and ingenious devices. At the heart of this pioneering work have been the efforts of a guardian priest affectionately dubbed the young Hoffman.

Brother Rudgar Urison is descended from a northern people that fought for many years with the Saxon clans of England. He was encountered by Sister Margaritte de Rouen during a rare expedition to that frozen land. The boy – then no more than eight – had already learned to work his father's forge, crafting items with rare skill. What was more, he had a birthmark on each of his hands. One resembled an anvil, the other a hammer; God had marked him out as an artificer.

When Margaritte talked with the boy's parents they seemed to already know he would be leaving, stating God had always marked him out for great things. Since then, Brother Rudgar has devised new tools for members of the Orthodox Order, and modified some of those they had retained from before the Schism.

Crusader Greatsword

A development of the existing Crusader sword, this weapon is designed to deliver even more damage. It requires considerable strength to wield and is unsuitable for use in confined areas. Given room, however, a warrior can cleave through foes at a prodigious rate. Use of the Crusader greatsword requires 5 Asset Points.

Damage	STR/DEX	Size	Reach	Combat Manoeuvres	Enc	AP/HP
2D6+1*	15/11	H	L	Bleed, Sunder	4	8/10

*Against unarmoured targets, the Crusader greatsword inflicts an extra 1D6 damage.

Cat's Paw Glove (2)

When strength of arms is not the answer, this device provides an assassin-monk with a far more subtle approach – discretely administered poison.

Tipping the end of each finger of these gloves is a tiny needle. For safety, each may be covered with a small leather flap making them almost impossible to detect. When exposed, each needle – prepared ahead of time – may be used to deliver a dose of poison. Clever guardian priests often seek to distract their target, ensuring they do not even realise they have been poisoned, until it is too late. Use of the cat's paw glove requires 2 Asset Points.

FATHER DEMETRIUS

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3 (4)
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/6	Damage Modifier	+1d2
CON	15	4-6	Left Leg	2/6	Magic Points	17
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/7	Movement	8m
INT	20	10-12	Chest	2/8	Strike Rank	+17
POW	17	13-15	Right Arm	2/5		
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	2/5		
CHA	18*	19-20	Head	2/6		

Equipment: Sword of David*, golden dagger, crossbow, 10 bolts, 10 incendiary bolts, blasting powder, 3 vials of holy water, 3 healing draughts, Disguise Kit

Heroic Abilities: Advanced Evasion, Loremaster, Spirit Sight

Spells: Angelic Shield, Breath of Heaven, Clarion Call, Djinni Bane, Exorcise, Holy Weapon, Warrior of God

Notable Skills: Athletics 75%, Culture (Constantinople) 100%, Culture (Papal States) 68%, Culture (Holy Land) 80%, Divine Fervour 55%, Influence 110%, Insight 98%, Lore (Christian Theology) 97%, Lore (Occult) 120%, Language (Greek) 87%, Language (French) 74%, Language (Italian) 45%, Language (Latin) 79%, Language (Arabic) 56%, Persistence 135%, Resilience 71%, Sorcery (Saint Cipriano's Grimoire) 120%, Stealth 99%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sword and dagger	M/M	115%	1D8+2	10/16
Dagger	S/S	115%	1D4+1	6/8
Crossbow		89%	1D8	4/8

*The Sword of David is a relic from ancient times - a gift from Jehovah to the king of Israel. The wielder adds a +20% bonus to Divine Fervour Tests. The Sword of David otherwise has the same characteristics as a Damascene falchion and is considered a consecrated weapon.

Verse 8.2

THREATS FROM THE EAST

*There are times when the work of the Order takes guardian priests beyond the borders of Europe.
In such regions, they often face their greatest perils as they come face to face with the unknown, in
places where they cannot call for aid.*



In centuries past, the Holy Land was an area where the Order could muster considerable strength. Since the Schism, however, this is no longer so. Perhaps it is because of this fragmentation that rival groups have managed to increase both their power and influence in the region.

Chief amongst the threats guardian priests face when visiting the Levant are the servants of two powerful Saracen Sorcerers – *Sulayman*, the *Burned One* and the *Anointed*.

Sulayman, the Burned One

Origins

There are many rumours concerning the origins of Sulayman, most of which concern the manner in which he was transformed from mortal man into something else, and in so doing came to be known as the *Burned One*. Sifting through these tales, certain events can be confirmed as factual; others remain as elusive as smoke.

In January 1180, at a time when hostilities between Moslem and Christian forces were at a relative ebb, a group of crusader knights attacked a mosque situated in a small town just a few miles outside Acre. Among their number were several members of the Knights Templar and a grizzled veteran of the Crusades called Sir Guy de Bretagne.

The attack was swift, merciless and, as it turned out, entirely unprovoked. The leader of the band, a man called Simon Morvaine, had told his companions that the Imam of the mosque was sheltering warriors who had been attacking Christian pilgrims making the journey eastwards towards Jerusalem. However, following the attack – during which some fifty men, women and children were slaughtered – no evidence of these hidden fighters could be found. Morvaine insisted they must have fled and maintained the actions he and his men had taken were just, and that they were doing God's work. No one spoke up to challenge him, though several of those present doubted his words – in particular, Sir Guy de Bretagne.

The body of the Imam was crucified before the walls of his ravaged mosque. A pyre was stoked and lit beneath him and he was left to die an agonising death.

For reasons that remain unclear, Simon Morvaine, Sir Guy and a few others who had participated in the raid, returned to the mosque the following day. Those who judge their actions most kindly suggest it was to bury the dead. Other, less forgiving, souls claim Morvaine was searching for something he believed was still inside the mosque.

Simon Morvaine's true reason for attacking the mosque was that he was searching for one of the five *Scrolls of Horus*. These legendary parchments contain ancient occult lore. More than this, they form the pieces of a mystical puzzle and, when combined, reveal the location of hidden arcane repositories and a number of prophecies about the future of the world. One such prophecy will reveal when and where the Anti-Christ will be born.

Either way, they did not find what they had expected. There was no body on the cross, nor were there bones among the ashes. There were, however, ashen footprints leading from the pyre across the sands, and into the defiled temple. What was more, as the mystified crusaders searched about them, they spied a figure gazing down on them from the highest minaret of the mosque. His skin was scorched and as black as pitch.

Only Simon Morvaine and Sir Guy were brave enough to enter the mosque, and follow the trail of charred footprints that led through the temple and up the winding stairs to the summit of the tower. The prints stopped in precisely the spot where the figure had been standing – but of him there was no longer any sign.

Some maintain Sulayman was the Imam crucified and burned by those crusaders and that instead of dying upon his cross, he became something inhuman – a vengeful spirit of ash and bone, with a smouldering hatred for the warriors of Christendom.

Whether this tale is true or not, Sulayman has certainly become a major power in the last decade, using his sorcery to support Saladin's efforts to build an Islamic Empire. His schemes have brought him into conflict with both the Order and the Orthodox Order, and a notable enmity has now developed between him and both groups.

Since his crusader days, Sir Guy has gone to great lengths to make amends for the sins he committed as a younger man. Among these repentant deeds he travelled to the Priory of Saint Mortimer in order deliver the Hand of the Penitent Thief; the repentant man who was crucified beside Jesus.

Characters who played through the adventure Penitence in the *Deus Vult Games Master's Story Guide* will have encountered Sir Guy doing just this.

Truth Within the Truth

Even those present on the day of the attack know only a part of the story. The man that Morvaine and his men crucified was, indeed, an Imam – though also a practitioner of ancient magic. When he died, as he did on the cross, and his soul hovered between the mortal realm and the world beyond, *something* came to him and offered a bargain. If he would surrender his body, the spirit promised to exact vengeance on those who had tortured and crucified him. Enraged and embittered, the Imam agreed, and in so doing offered a way back into the world for a creature that had languished in near-death for more than a millennium.

The creature that ripped itself free of the cross and hauled its charred flesh across the sands and into the defiled mosque was no longer human. It was the Burned One, the resurrected shade of an ancient sorcerer – indeed, Solomon the Wise's chief apprentice.

To this trusted student, the King of Israel had confided his lore and magic, at a time when he had felt his own strength beginning to ebb. Charged with following in his master's footsteps, the apprentice swore an oath to protect the line of David. He even took his master's name – albeit the Arabic version, Sulayman – as a display of devotion to his new role.

Sulayman proved himself an oath-breaker of the worst kind, however. As soon as Solomon perished, his former apprentice used his magic to begin building an empire for himself. An army of demons and Djinn – monsters enslaved by his master – were his to command and threatened to sweep all human resistance before them.

Before this could happen however, there came a moment of Divine Intervention, in which the wrath of God itself was unleashed. The angel, Kushiel – one of the nine warrior angels charged with guarding Hell – manifested upon the Earth and sought out the corrupt sorcerer. It seemed that God would not stand by while the wisdom entrusted to Solomon was so flagrantly abused.

Sulayman and Kushiel clashed in a region of desert a few miles west of the Dead Sea. For fifty years, vast scorched craters stood testimony to the power they unleashed in battle. More than a hundred Djinn and dozens of demons bent the knee to Sulayman, and fought for him that day. Kushiel destroyed them all; yet doing so taxed him sorely and left him vulnerable to the sorcerer's magic. In a great stone prison beneath the ancient city of Tyre – prepared in advance of the battle by Sulayman – Kushiel was imprisoned, thereby robbing the Wardens of Hell of one of their most powerful champions.

This act quickly proved Sulayman's undoing, however. So much of his power was required to fashion the angel's prison that he had little left to withstand the might of a human army that moved against him. Led by the champions of Israel, many wielding weapons and artefacts of divine power, Sulayman was vanquished.

And yet, he did not die in the truest sense. His body was destroyed, his magical energies dispersed. His soul, however, remained free, wandering for centuries through some indistinct nether-plane, for it was Kushiel that had been charged with taking his spirit to Hell, and his imprisonment prevented him from doing so. Thus it was that Sulayman was eventually able to return to the world of the living.



Verse 8.3

THE PALACE OF THE DJINN

Since returning from his exile in the ether, Sulayman has once more begun to construct the foundations of an empire. This time, however, he is far more cautious.



Sulayman realises there are forces in the world that can and will move against him if he is not circumspect in his actions. Accordingly, he has elected not to reveal his power directly. Instead, he moves through agents and through an increasing influence over the armies of Saladin – a man whose will is too forceful to be enslaved, but whose ambitions to vanquish Christians from the Holy Land coincide with his own. For now, they are allies of convenience.

In order to remain hidden while mustering his strength and refining his plans, Sulayman needed somewhere where he would be safe from his enemies. He did not want to appear as though he were hiding, however. In the supernatural world, just as in the mortal realm, a would-be conqueror must appear strong. He chose the Palace of the Djinn – a fabled fortress city he had heard his master speak of but that even Solomon had never managed to find.

Fashioned from ever-shifting sand and living smoke, it is a palace of slender towers and minarets that glisten like the desert sun. What is more, it is the ancestral home of the Djinni King – the ruler of all Djinn on Earth.

The Palace resides within the deserts of Persia, but cannot be found by any mortal. Even one who enslaves a Djinn – all of whom instinctively know its location, wherever they are – cannot locate it. Many times, Solomon forced his most powerful Marid servants to reveal the palace to him, marching them out into the desert for weeks at a time. Each time he was thwarted by the ancient spell that protects it; magic that pre-dates humanity.

Sulayman, though – or rather the Burned One that he had become – was no longer human. Through guile and ancient lore, he located the Palace and found a way beyond its ever-guarded portals. Inside, he confronted *Malik Dhukan*, the King of the Djinn. The two were well-matched in power, but Sulayman had the advantage of surprise. What was more, he had spells specifically designed to protect him from Djinni magic. After a fierce but brief struggle, *Malik Dhukan* fled the Palace, surrendering his home, servants and treasures to Sulayman.

Locating the Palace

Though no Djinni can be forced to reveal the location of the Palace, one can elect to do so voluntarily. The chances of any Djinni doing so, however, are slim. There is a strict hierarchy that most adhere to, and their king is revered as a being of God-like status.

There is one significant exception, however. A Shaytan – particularly one who has been censured or exiled by the king – might willingly guide outsiders to the Palace. He would need to be well-paid for his efforts – or motivated in some other way that did not impinge upon his free-will – but it is possible that an arrangement could be reached.

The Djinni Tent

A character lucky enough to come into possession of this item need have nothing to fear while traversing even the most remote and desolate desert region.

The tent bears a number of powerful enchantments. It is able to erect or collapse itself in moments (1D3 Combat Rounds). Once constructed, its ingenious overlapping flaps ensure no wind or sand can penetrate its innards. What is more, upon entry the owner will always find it well-stocked with both water-skins and supplies of food.

Finally, the tent always contains enough compartments to comfortably house the owner's travelling companions and their animals.

No outsider has ever entered the palace, let alone managed to map out its labyrinthine corridors and vaulted halls. Those who traverse the Persian deserts tell tales – always third or fourth hand – of lost travellers who stumbled upon it, however. In most of these stories, the Palace quickly vanishes in a sudden sandstorm and the bewildered wanderers – after seeking shelter or being buffeted by the wind – find themselves returned somehow to familiar territory.

There is one obscure legend, though, of a nomadic tribesman who found his way to the gates of the palace, after spending three days wandering helpless inside a monstrous sandstorm. According to one version of the legend, he is rewarded for his fortune and bravery, and granted wishes by the Djinni King. In another, his eyes are put out and he is cast back into the storm.

The truth is that a few mortals, while lost in the desert, have received succour from the Djinn who reside in the Palace, not all of whom bear enmity towards mankind. These wayward souls have never entered the structure itself, but have instead been fed, rested and healed within enormous tents erected in a moment before the outer walls. So impressed were the Djinn with the courtesy of one particular traveller they made him a gift of the tent where he had been restored.

Sulayman's Rule

Since Sulayman seized control of the Palace it has become a very different place. No lost travellers are aided now. Indeed, those few who chance upon the Palace are mercilessly hunted and killed, their bodies hidden in the desert wastes.

Where the royal court was once a vibrant place, accommodating predominantly Marid but also Jann, Ifrit and the lesser Djinni races, it is now dominated by the Shaytan. Those Marid who have remained within the Palace – and many have fled or gone in search of their king – have been robbed of their position. They serve as little more than guards now, patrolling the outer walls.

Areas of Influence

Sulayman's influence can be felt all across the Holy Land, but particularly in the city of Acre and the region surrounding the Sea of Galilee. No visitors of note may pass through either of these locales without it coming to the Burned One's attention.

In recent years, Acre has been the focus of conflict between Christian and Moslem forces. Sulayman has taken advantage of these conflicts to deploy some of the supernatural creatures he has recruited for the Sultan's army. He has several dozen followers, including a number of Shaytan, within the city walls. Their actions – many of which have been magical in nature – have ensured (for the time being at least) the city has remained in Moslem hands.

In Persia, Sulayman has nurtured a cult of followers who call themselves the *Khalid*. These mortal worshippers venerate Sulayman as a divine being, the essence of a fiery god given form. They alone, among mortal beings, are allowed to enter the Palace of the Djinn in order to act as servants to their lord.

The *Khalid* live inside a cave complex in a remote area of the Persian desert. From here, Sulayman's Shaytan servants ferry them about to wherever their master needs them.

Schemes and Ambitions

Despite the best efforts of both the Order and Orthodox Order, Sulayman is pressing ahead with a number of plans designed to increase his influence and weaken the Christian forces that challenge him.

Since Saladin's forces defeated the Christian army at Hattin (in 1187) and then claimed Jerusalem, the Sultan has been expecting retaliation from his enemies in the West. To complicate matters, and unknown to many westerners, he has also been busy battling rivals in the Islamic kingdoms to the east. The truth is, he simply will not have the man-power to hold his burgeoning empire together if a concerted attack is launched against him.

The Sieges of Tyre

When Saladin first attempted to take the city of Tyre in 1187 his efforts were unsuccessful. Soldiers under the command of the Marquis of Montferrat, inspired by the heroic knight Sir Sancho Martin, rebuffed all attempts to take the walls. This marked a great victory for those Christians who had not been driven from the Holy Land.

Bolstered by *Ekimmu* Warriors provided by Sulayman, Saladin gathered his forces for a second assault in the following year. This time, he seemed certain to succeed. The *Ekimmu* slaughtered the defenders on the walls and several gained access to the city. However, Saladin had reckoned without the efforts of the Orthodox Order. Led by Demetrius, they defeated the *Ekimmu* and saved the city.

ADVENTURE SEED

It is quite possible that one or more of the *Ekimmu* Warriors might have survived the second siege of Tyre. They might roam wild in the desert or have learned to survive within the city, murdering victims only when the opportunity presents itself.

Involving hieromonks in the search for just such a brutal killer is a good way to introduce them to some of the foul creatures that serve Sulayman.

Saladin has also become aware of the supernatural forces at play in the world. He knows most are ambivalent, if not openly hostile, toward humans but he still wishes to recruit those he can to his cause. Sulayman has been helping him with this.

In Egypt, Saladin has established contact with a cabal of nomadic sorcerers called the *Rih Sayar*. In exchange for land, they have provided him with magical armour and a bodyguard that watches over him night and day.

Beyond these efforts, Saladin challenged Sulayman to provide him with the supernatural means to defeat his enemies. In response, the Burned One has provided both magic and monsters to bolster the Sultan's armies. The first example of this was the inclusion of *Ekimmu* in the forces Saladin used to besiege the great city of Tyre.

Ekimmu are vengeful spirits – the souls of those who have perished in the desert, unmourned and unremembered. Sulayman has acquired magic that allows him to imprison these spirits in living flesh. In so doing, he creates wild and fearless warriors, far stronger and more dangerous than normal men.

The magic that creates *Ekimmu* warriors calls for willing subjects. Typically, Saladin chooses volunteers from among his most loyal and devout servants who rarely have any idea what they are letting themselves in for.

Ekimmu Warriors

Sulyman. In appearance, they are frequently scarred, with flesh marred by fresh wounds as the spirit within abuses its temporary – loathsome – flesh. Wrathful spirits, ensnared within living hosts, *Ekimmu* are fearsome warriors bound to serve

Shaytan

Of all the races of the Djinn, none are more malevolent or cruel than the Shaytan. Monstrously tall, with black skin and yellow eyes, they are often mistaken for demons. Indeed, among the Arabic peoples they are regarded with the same level of fear and mistrust as a European would view a denizen of Hell.

This comparison is more apt than many know. After God created the angels, he made the Djinn – and just as some angels fell and were cast out of Heaven, so some Djinn angered their creator and were banished. These exiled Djinn were the Shaytan. Shaytan may be bound by powerful sorcerers and forced to serve them. However, they are notoriously vengeful and few occultists choose to take such a risk. Instead, Shaytan may be bargained with and, in exchange for magic or riches, may agree to perform a service.

Udarr

An Udarr is a four-armed, scimitar wielding monstrosity; a half-breed elemental sired by a demon upon a Djinni mother. Its lower body takes the form of a whirlwind of sand that carries it along like a tail. Its head is humanoid, but its features crumble and reform every time its expression changes.

Ostracised by all other creatures, Udarr are ferociously territorial and independent. Most live in the deep places of the desert, requiring neither shelter nor sustenance to survive.

As Sulayman has swelled the ranks of his army, he has recruited a number of these creatures who serve him out of respect for his power and because he provides them with opportunities for slaughter.

EKIMMU WARRIOR

	Dice	Avg	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3 (4)
STR	3D6+9	19	1-3	Right Leg	2/7	Damage Modifier	+1d4
CON	2D6+12	22	4-6	Left Leg	2/7	Magic Points	13
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/8	Movement	8m
INT	2D6+3	10	10-12	Chest	2/9	Strike Rank	+13
POW	2D6+6	13	13-15	Right Arm	2/6		
DEX	3D6+6	16	16-18	Left Arm	2/6		
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	2/7		

Armour: Unfeeling Flesh (2)

Traits: Possessed, Unfeeling, Wild

Notable Skills: Athletics 90%, Brawn 75%, Resilience 70%,

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Twin scimitars	M/M	80%	1D8	—

NOTES

Possessed: An *Ekimmu* warrior bears the Mark of Sulayman somewhere on his body. If this is doused with Holy Water, the bound spirit is immediately forced out of the body and may not return.

Unfeeling: *Ekimmu* care nothing for the body they inhabit and ignore many of the injuries that would concern living creatures. In addition, some process of their inhabiting a victim deadens the host's nerve-endings rendering them less sensible to pain. Accordingly, *Ekimmu* are considered to possess 2 points of armour, though frequently garbed in little more than rags.

Wild: *Ekimmu* warriors are utterly fearless; they think nothing of their own safety, merely of killing others. They never elect to Parry or to Evade, and always choose to wield two weapons in combat.

In addition, *Ekimmu* are possessed of such anger towards the living that they will attack anyone or anything nearby if there is not a viable enemy to assault. They must therefore be carefully controlled between battles, lest they run amok.

SHAYTAN

	Dice	Avg	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	4 (5)
STR	5D6+18	35	1-3	Right Leg	5/11	Damage Modifier	+2d6
CON	5D6+12	29	4-6	Left Leg	5/11	Magic Points	20
SIZ	4D6+12	26	7-9	Abdomen	5/12	Movement	10m
INT	2D6+9	16	10-12	Chest	5/13	Strike Rank	+12/+15
POW	4D6+6	20	13-15	Right Arm	5/10		
DEX	3D6+12	22	16-18	Left Arm	5/10		
CHA	2D6+6	13	19-20	Head	5/11		

Armour: Tough Skin (5)
Traits: Blind Foe, Dark Sight, Blindness, Smokeform, Vulnerabilities, Whirlwind
Notable Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 71%, Evade 85%, Lore (Occult) 60%, Perception 70%, Persistence 95%, Stealth 68%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Talwar(x2)	L/L	100%	2D6	8/12

NOTES

Blind Foe: Shaytan may blind their enemies with a form of dark magic. To do so, the Shaytan must have line of sight to his victim and win an Opposed Persistence Test.

This blindness lasts for 2D4 rounds. However, a character who washes out his eyes with holy water recovers his sight immediately, and cannot be affected by a Shaytan's blinding ability for a further 1D6 hours.

Smokeform: Shaytan may assume an incorporeal smoke-like form. In this state, it cannot be harmed by physical weapons and may pass freely through small spaces such as key holes. A Shaytan even has the ability to transform just a portion of its body to smoke, allowing attacks from enemies to pass harmlessly through it. This allows a Shaytan to use Evade against any physical attack without needing to give ground or spend its following action performing a non-combat action.

Vulnerabilities: A Shaytan is vulnerable to Consecrated weapons and those forged from Angelic Steel. It is also susceptible to the effects of Holy Water. Strikes from Consecrated weapons ignore its natural armour. Strikes from Angelic Steel weapons ignore armour and cause maximum damage. A vial of Holy Water cast over a Shaytan inflicts 1D6 Damage, against which its armour is ineffective.

Whirlwind: A Shaytan armed with its twin talwars may assume a semi-incorporeal form – rendering its legs no more than a smoky haze – and rotate rapidly on the spot with weapons outstretched. This attack targets all adjacent creatures, scything them with the Djinn's outstretched blades. Each character within range of the attack must elect individually whether to Parry or Evade the attack – or to leave it unopposed.

UDARR

	Dice	Avg	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3 (6)
STR	3D6+9	19	1-3	Right Leg	2/10	Damage Modifier	+1d4
CON	2D6+12	22	4-6	Left Leg	2/10	Magic Points	13
SIZ	2D6+6	13	7-9	Abdomen	2/11	Movement	10m
INT	2D6+3	10	10-12	Chest	2/12	Strike Rank	+13
POW	2D6+6	13	13-15	Right Arm	2/9		
DEX	3D6+6	16	16-18	Left Arm	2/9		
CHA	2D6	7	19-20	Head	2/10		

Armour: Sand skin (2)

Traits: Bladestrike, Sandform, Scythe

Notable Skills: None

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon	Skill Damage	AP/HP
Scimitars	M/M	80%	1D8	10/10

NOTES

Bladestrike: An Udarr may strike simultaneously with all the scimitars it is holding. A separate roll is made for *each* strike – though all occur simultaneously. Accordingly, the target may only parry a single successful strike with each weapon he is holding.

The Bladestrike ability uses only a single combat action, but leaves the Udarr unable to Parry with its next action.

Sandform: An Udarr's physical form consists entirely of sand, held together by the creature's malevolent will. They do not possess a normal physiology; they do not bleed or grow tired, and they have no internal organs or respiratory system. Accordingly, they are extremely difficult to destroy.

Any blow that inflicts sufficient damage to cause a Serious Wound destroys the body part being struck. Any wound that causes less damage than this has no effect; the Udarr's body reforms, instantly healing the damage.

Scythe: With two opposing weapons (one in a left hand, one in a right), an Udarr may attempt to slice an opponent in half with a crushing pincer-sweep.

Two separate attack rolls should be made when using this ability. If either attack misses, then both attacks are considered to miss. If both hit, however, then this attack automatically acquires the properties of the Sundering combat manoeuvre. In addition, the damage caused by each weapon is totalled and considered a single strike to the same location. This must be determined at random if the Choose Location Combat Manoeuvre is not selected.

If the target manages to parry either of the Udarr's blades, the Scythe attack misses.

Verse 8.4

THE ANOINTED

*When Sulayman annexed the Palace of the Djinn, he forced its former ruler to flee in shame.
In an instant, Malik Dhukan went from being the most powerful and respected member of the
Djinni races, to a homeless exile.*



Malik Dhukan has worked tirelessly toward the day when he will reclaim his palace and exact terrible revenge upon his bitter enemy.

His first step was to assume a new identity, and even a new form. In the guise of a human prophet known as the Anointed, he began to recruit mortal followers. He also established a new fortress, carefully chosen for its isolated location and modest size; the last thing *Malik Dhukan* wished to do was attract attention to himself before he had had time to recover his strength.

Once secure, the former king of the Djinn took careful stock of all that had happened. He had believed himself secure in his palace. After all, he had ruled there for more than three centuries, and his predecessor for twice that. Yet, the spells protecting the palace had been circumvented; his guards had been defeated and he, himself, had been bested in combat. It was clear that he could not simply retake the palace by force. His enemy was his equal in power and possessed magics that were specifically designed to enslave or destroy Djinn.

After careful consideration, *Malik Dhukan* determined that he would need an entirely new source of power if he were to best Sulayman. Reluctant to venture forth in person for fear that his enemy would confront him before he was ready, he turned to his new acolytes – the *Darisi*. These loyal servants travelled to the edges of the known world and beyond, and those who returned provided him with a rich crop of occult lore. For years, he pored over ancient manuscripts and tattered scrolls seeking to unlock arcane secrets that would allow him to defeat Sulayman.

At first, his search proved fruitless. He began to despair of ever being able to re-take his throne. Then, the answer came from an unexpected source – a mad prophet-inventor who was part of a group known as the Order. His name was Hoffman.

Before losing his mind, this errant genius had begun devising a means of combining mechanical wonders with living tissue. His success had been limited, but then he had not possessed *Malik Dhukan's* knowledge of magic. Nor did he have easy access to supernatural creatures – beings whose strange physiologies and unnatural resilience made them better able to survive the procedures Hoffman was developing.

Within a year, *Malik Dhukan* had developed a unique blend of wondrous science and magic. He dubbed it *Techromancy*.

Areas of Influence

Once he began his Techromantic experiments, *Malik Dhukan* made the decision to move his base of operations to Jerusalem. He was aware of the bargain Sulayman had made with the Sultan and wanted a way to undermine his enemy's growing influence. Accordingly, he struck a deal of his own: he would provide Saladin with Techromantic creatures that would fight against his Christian enemies.

Saladin now had two powerful sorcerers, both of whom seemed eager to win his favour. Saladin was astute enough not to trust either Sulayman or *Malik Dhukan* – he knew that they had agendas of their own – but he was not about to look a gift horse in the mouth. In essence, an arms race began. Both *The Burned One* and *The Anointed* focused their energies on supplying the Sultan with supernatural aid. In exchange, he saw to it that they were left unmolested and his forces formed a bulwark against the hated Christians.

Malik Dhukan's laboratory in Jerusalem is vast. It fills several buildings close to the western wall, and includes two secret entrances in and out of the city. A number of the creatures *Malik Dhukan* has created using Techromancy protect these secret routes: others watch over the laboratory itself.

Techromancy

No game rules are provided for the use of this strange magical science as it is not something that players will ever use. Suffice to say, it draws on a variety of ancient occult lores and the most amoral medical procedures imaginable. The creatures that practitioners of this art can create are limited only by their – and the Games Master's – imagination.

It is quite likely that in his search for a way back home, *Malik Dhukan* has in fact made himself unsuitable to rule. The nobility he once possessed has been sacrificed in pursuit of the power he needs to defeat the Burned One. He has blinded himself to the horrors he has inflicted upon his subjects – but his actions have not gone unnoticed among his own people. Should he ever find a way to reclaim his palace and his thrown, it is uncertain whether the other Djinni will still accept him as their king.

Beyond Jerusalem, *Malik Dhukan* has established a number of secondary sites. He uses these for more dangerous experiments – he cannot risk a Techromantic beast escaping into Jerusalem; it would simply draw too much attention. Should he ever be forced to abandon Jerusalem, these sites would also serve as a repository for his knowledge, ensuring that not all was lost.

The largest secondary site is in the town of Jubala, a dozen miles inland from the great port of Jaffa. Here *The Anointed's* most trusted lieutenant, Belaquin, works on the development of especially wild and unpredictable Techromantic creatures.

Schemes and Ambitions

Ultimately, *Malik Dhukan* wants to retake The Palace of the Djinn and reclaim his throne. He despises the life of an exile, and is keenly aware of the dishonour inflicted upon him by Sulayman.

His Techromantic experiments are close to providing him with the army he will need to recapture his home and destroy *The Burned One*. Until such a time he continues to chip away at his rivals plans, drawing favour away from Saladin and thwarting him wherever else he may.

My Enemy's Enemy

The Anointed is not above contacting members of the Order – most likely through a go-between – and informing them of Sulayman's activities. If he can use others to do his fighting for him, then he will do so.

For example, he knows that Sulayman is searching for a lost repository of arcane lore in the ruins of Alexandria in Egypt. If he can set a group of hieromonks against The Burned One's forces, it will leave his own servants free to conduct a search of their own.

Marid

The most powerful of all Djinni-kind are the Marids. Immensely tall and muscular beings, these are the archetypal Djinn – the creatures that gave rise to the Genie legends known to western travellers.

	Dice	Avg	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	5 (6)
STR	6D6+18	39	1–3	Right Leg	5/13	Damage Modifier	+2d6
CON	5D6+18	35	4–6	Left Leg	5/13	Magic Points	33
SIZ	4D6+15	29	7–9	Abdomen	5/14	Movement	12m
INT	2D6+12	19	10–12	Chest	5/15	Strike Rank	+21
POW	6D6+12	33	13–15	Right Arm	5/12		
DEX	2D6+15	22	16–18	Left Arm	5/12		
CHA	4D6+6	20	19–20	Head	5/13		

Armour: Tough Skin (5)

Traits: Divination, First-Tongue, Vulnerabilities

Notable Skills: Art 65%, Athletics 100%, Brawn 125%, Courtesy 75%, Culture (Arabic) 50%, Evade 100%, Healing 61%, Influence 75%, Lore (History) 100%, Lore (Occult) 80%, Perception 86%, Persistence 96%, Resilience 90%, Unarmed 80%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Djinn Blades	L/L	120%	1D6+6	10/14
Djinn Bow	L	100%	2D6	7/8

NOTES

Divination: Djinn perceive the flow of time differently from mortal creatures. This can allow them to perceive glimpses of the future, or events that have taken place far away or even in the distant past.

In game terms, this allows them to anticipate the actions of an enemy. Each Combat Round, a Marid may force *each* enemy it faces to re-roll an action that is intended to target it in any way. This includes such things as attacks, baleful spells and attempts to influence the Djinn with trickery.

More broadly, it allows them to acquire great swaths of obscure knowledge. Often, Marids are aware of things that no other beings on Earth know.

First-Tongue: Created in an age before God destroyed the tower of Babel and sundered humanity, Marid are able to speak the First Tongue – the original language with which all sentient creatures once communicated. This effectively allows them to speak and understand all languages.

Vulnerabilities: Weapons forged from Infernal Iron ignore a Marid’s natural armour.

Verse 8.5

THE SCIONS OF ZEUS

The libraries of the Order contain many tales of shapeshifters and beings who can assume unnatural forms. Typically, these tomes focus on the threat these creatures present – as indeed many do – and the ways to detect and destroy them. A few, though, mention a legendary group; a race of were-beings whose origins stretch back into pre-history.



The Scions – *children* – of Zeus claim descent from the ruler of the Olympian gods. What is more, they are increasingly coming to the attention of the Order as their activities, once obscure and infrequent, become bolder and more daring.

The Beginning

Every culture has its creation story, and the same is true of the Scions of Zeus who regard themselves not simply as a society but a unique race and nation, albeit one dispersed across the four corners of the Earth.

According to their ancient tales, the first of their line was sired by Zeus, the Lord of Olympus. Transforming himself into a succession of wondrous creatures, he seduced the Cypriot enchantress, Esme and made her his own. In time, she gave birth to a son, whom she named Oenomaus. The day that Oenomaus was born, Zeus visited the child in order to bestow his blessing. He sprinkled dust from the Heavens upon him, ensuring no normal weapon could injure him, and no disease could lay him low. He also entrusted Oenomaus's mother with a pair of golden boots and an enchanted silver dagger that she was instructed to give to the boy upon his sixteenth birthday.

Unfortunately, as Zeus and Esme talked together, Oenomaus reached up out of his cot and grasped the dagger that rested nearby. As the last of the dust had not yet settled upon his skin, he was able to cut his finger – thus ensuring he (and his descendants) would always be vulnerable to silver.

As he grew, Oenomaus' shapeshifting abilities began to develop. He found he could assume the form of any animal he wished, from a fearsome lion to a magnificent swan. His mother marvelled at her son's power, proclaiming him a demi-God and prophesying he would one day rule over a great kingdom. Upon his sixteenth birthday, however, Oenomaus transformed himself into a dragon. In this wondrous but alien form he lost control of his mind. He slew his mother and consumed her flesh, and flew about the island ravishing women wherever he found them.

As the sun set, his fury spent, Oenomaus resumed his human form. He was overcome with grief with what he had done and, entwining himself in chains of silver, cast himself into the ocean where he would be doomed to live out the rest of his days in torment. His seed, however, lived on – in the progeny of those women taken against their will. It is said that many died giving birth, but seven offspring survived; the first Scions of Zeus.

Unlike their father, these children could each take the form of only a single animal – though often a creature of monstrous proportions. They could also assume a shape somewhere between beast and man, a hybrid state, known as the *melding*. Over the centuries, legends would spring up about these individuals, until eventually they would come to be referred to as *were-beasts*, *skin-changers* and by a variety of other names.

Instinctively, the seven were drawn to one another and for a time dwelt side by side in peace. Their natures were irreconcilably different however, and it was not long before they fell to bickering and conflict. The wisest among them – Helena, a woman able to take the shape of a swan – soothed her peoples' new wounds and set out the laws of the *Accord* that would allow them to live in harmony, and which govern the interactions of the Scions to this day.

Each Scion was bestowed a region they would call their own and where their descendents would rule. However, governance of the Scions as a whole was bestowed upon the big cats – the strongest and the noblest of the seven. With an agreement in place the Scions divided, but with the promise that each year they would come together upon Cyprus, the isle of their birth, to ensure the links between them were never entirely sundered. This annual gathering came to be known as the *Mustering*.

Over time, the descendents of the Scions became distinct tribes, each with their own beliefs and aspirations. The Swans remained wise and fair, building enclaves in remote places where they could teach magic to the races of man. The Apes roved deep into primordial forests, where they constructed great cities of gold and stone, and mastered the secrets of engineering and science. The Wolves became ever more wild and territorial, ignoring many of the boundaries to range across the world wherever they pleased.

As the 12th century draws towards a close, there are divisions within the Scions which threaten to tear this millennia-old society asunder. The Big-Cats have grown arrogant and cruel, and their leader, King Isaakios Comnenos of Cyprus, is increasingly unpopular. A pivotal time is at hand for the Scions, one that will see them return to a path of tolerance and co-operation, or lead them into war and ruin.

All of the *were*-races share an aversion to silver, the one substance against which they are vulnerable. All Scions of Zeus possess the following traits.

Damage Immunity: In human form, *were*-creatures take minimum damages from non-silver weapons. In animal or *Melding* form they take no damage from non-silver weapons.

Form Lock: A *were*-creature that is in physical contact with silver is unable to change its shape. This would include, for instance, an impaled silver weapon or pair of silver manacles.

The Big Cats

Preeminent amongst the seven, the Big Cats have made their home in Cyprus, the southern Mediterranean and Africa. Many of their number have risen to positions of power within human society and amassed considerable wealth.

King Comnenos – the current Lord of the Scions – is bold even for his kind, and has a strength of will matched only by his hubris. In 1184, he seized the throne of Cyprus and took official control of the Scions. His ambitions stretched far beyond this, however. Shortly after claiming the throne, he extended his grasp toward Constantinople and control of the Byzantine Empire. His attempt was spectacularly unsuccessful, and but for the assistance of Margaritone de Brindisi (the most powerful pirate prince in the Mediterranean), he would have lost everything in his attempt to become the new Emperor. The cost of the pirate's assistance was extremely high; in addition to a king's ransom in gold, he received the loyal service of a band of *were*-sharks to serve aboard his fleet. That Comnenos would do such a thing – pledging the service of other Scions to a mere mortal – earned him the ire of the other races, particularly the Apes and Crocodiles.

Different forms

The Characteristics listed for the Scions of Zeus present the three forms that these creatures can assume – a human form, Melding form and animal form.

The modifiers in parentheses indicate the modifiers applied to the base Characteristics when the creature assumes either its Melding or animal form. In its Melding form, the creature is still able to speak but its words are slurred and guttural. Typically, in Melding form, the creature's natural armour is half that of its animal form.

In its animal form, the creature's Movement changes to the figure after the parenthesis.

Amongst his own kind, Comnenos is feared but not loved. He is the mightiest Big-Cat to emerge for centuries, however, lending (a little) credence to his claims that he is a demi-god and deterring attempts to seize his crown.

Most Big-Cats take the form of *were-lions*, though *were-tigers* and *were-panthers* are not uncommon. Their ruling caste, which includes the king, is made up of *were-smilodons* – individuals who can assume the form of otherwise extinct giant cats with sabre-sized teeth.

Milo Ramasca de Roma, a character who appears in *The Hoffman Legacy*, is a member of the Scions of Zeus. Guardian priests who play through this adventure and thwart Ramasca's plans may well find themselves coming into conflict with his brethren – who do not take kindly to humans meddling in their affairs.

The Crocodiles

At the time when the Scions parted, the Crocodiles also travelled south to Africa, but their domain was the Great River Nile and her tributaries.

Of all the Scions, they are the most patient and long-lived. They are also the most inscrutable, rarely conversing with other *weres* and seldom taking an interest in human society.

There is one notable exception, however. The Cult of Sobek is an obscure religious order that flourished in ancient times but fell into decline in the face of the new religions. Those few who still adhere to the faith often serve the Crocodiles, venerating them as earthly manifestations of Sobek's divine power. The Cult has a hidden shrine in Cairo, and several others dotted along the length of the Nile. In such places, the Crocodiles and humans occasionally meet and converse, bolstering the faith of the Sobekites. The reason for these meetings is usually the same; the Crocodiles wish

to send word to another *were-tribe* but are reluctant to leave their home. The Cultists are the only humans they would trust to carry a message for them, and have proven reliable messengers over innumerable generations.

The Apes

Deep within the primeval forests of the great western continent, the Apes have constructed a kingdom of science and reason. They have mastered the manufacture of tools and, building upon the precepts of engineering established in the ancient world, erected enormous ziggurats and columns of stone as tall as trees. They have tamed the power of steam, constructing moving machines of iron and a system for heating or cooling their environment. In all the world, there is no other race that can rival the Apes' understanding of the gears and mechanisms that govern existence.

Though a peaceful people, inclined more toward study and careful reflection than conquest, the Apes are territorial by nature and will repulse those who threaten the borders of their domain. To this end, they have constructed a variety of siege-scale weapons that can pound enemies from afar or scald them with gouts of super-heated steam. Rarely have these been used, however, as the Apes' own physical prowess is more than enough to deal with most intruders.

To the human inhabitants of the great western continent, the Apes have assumed the status of legendary beings, giving rise to a variety of myths. Some cultures – the few that could be said to have any significant contact with the Apes – view them as otherworldly beings. Some even worship them. The Apes are happy to perpetuate this perception, as it ensures few humans venture deep enough into the forests to disturb them.

Many among the Apes are unhappy with the Big-Cats' governance of the Scions. Adopting an increasingly isolationist view, many *were-apes* believe their people should break away from the other tribes. In recent years, their only interaction with them has been at the *Mustering* – an arduous journey for so isolated a people, which must begin again almost as soon as the previous voyage has

Rogue Male

Within Ape society, the status of each male is clearly defined, and may only be altered during ritualised contests designed to demonstrate both intelligence and strength. A few males, however, reject this system and soon find themselves isolated and, in some instances, exiled.

These lone silver-back Apes are possessed of unusually high levels of aggression, and their seclusion serves only to exacerbate this tendency. Many exiles leave their homeland, assuming human form to seek a place elsewhere in the world. A few find contentment and learn to curb the excesses of their nature. Most, however, remain belligerent and destructive and find their way onto human battlefields. At least one of the most brutal knights involved in the Second Crusade was a rogue *were-ape*, and it is likely other outcasts have found employment in armies across the globe.

ended. There are even a few among the Apes who believe they – as the most rational tribe – should take control of the Scions and institute a new order, one that sees them dabble less in the politics of mortals.

The Sharks

Of all the *were-races*, none are so loyal to the ruling Big-Cats as the Sharks. For millennia they have patrolled the waters surrounding Cyprus, and other coastal regions where the Big-Cats have settled. They are the first line of defence against those who would challenge the *were-cats*' supremacy.

Were-sharks usually live in groups of between five and twenty individuals, with a bull-shark assuming dominance over the spear (the collective noun *were-sharks* use to describe a group of their own people). Though happiest in water – where their form ensures they are the pre-eminent predator in the region – they do come ashore. In human guise they are still powerfully built, often with unnaturally dark eyes and mouths that seem crammed with too many teeth. Their merciless nature makes them perfect warriors, and many *were-sharks* have earned a living as mercenaries or gladiators. Their spoils are spent on extravagant meals, engaging in orgiastic feasting and fornicating.

The most notorious band of *were-sharks* – though it is not common knowledge they are such – are the *Carcharodons*. These fearsome berserker-brigands are stationed aboard the *Marauder*, the second ship in the pirate fleet of Margaritone de Brindisi. Under the command of Captain Egeus, they open treasure chests and bellies with equal aplomb.

The leader of the *Carcharodons* is a terrifying individual referred to as Old White. His sun-wizened flesh is a criss-cross of aged scars, and his eyes are a contrasting black and white in hue. He is never far from Egeus' side and at his captain's behest has been known to rip out throat of an enemy with his teeth – while in human form.

Old White's lieutenants are known simply as Bull, Thresher and Maw. Each is a veteran, as adept at killing with a cutlass as they are at emerging from the murky depths to rend with fang-filled jaws.

The Swans

A serene and thoughtful people, the Swans have cultivated a society based on learning, reverence for life and an adherence to tradition. They have gone to great lengths to record their history and origins and to remember the lessons of the past. Their most sacred temple, located in a remote valley at the foot of the Alps, contains beautiful artwork which depicts the rape of Leda, the woman who gave birth to the first of the Swans.

The Swans are led not by a single ruler but by a council, the members of which are chosen through common consensus. There is no fixed number for this group; it has contained as few as three and as many as ten. Collectively, the Swans nominate their most gifted and thoughtful citizens to hold the rank of councillor – a position greatly honoured but which can only ever be held for a maximum of five years.

Despite their origins, the Swans do not see themselves as divine – or in any significant way separate from the natural world. They adhere to the belief that Zeus was a powerful being, but not a deity. The quest for a true God preoccupies much of Swan society and indeed, many individuals have taken an interest in holy texts such as the Bible, Quran and Talmud. Several have gone so far as to leave their isolated enclaves and immerse themselves in human society, assuming the role of pilgrims and even clerics. This is not an attempt at subterfuge, but a genuine desire to make contact with the divine.

A Holy Man

The Bishop of Lincoln – one of the wealthiest towns in England – is a Swan. He has lived among the human populace for many years, and is as devoted to God as any man could hope to be. However, from time to time, he is drawn to assume his avian form, to swim in the river or soar through the sky. There are a few within the town who have witnessed this transformation.

When the Lincoln Cathedral fell in 1185 following a strange earthquake, those same witnesses began to wonder whether the apparently holy man who watches over them is, in fact, a devil.

Guardian priests called in to investigate this matter may face a challenge to their beliefs. Should they slay the bishop, allow him to escape, or help him continue his subterfuge?

The Swans have always employed magic, a force they see as an extension of the natural world. They have also been happy to tutor humans in its use, so long as it will not be used to harm or control other creatures. Each of the Swans' largest enclaves – in the eastern Alps, on Zealand, the largest of the Danish islands, and on the Isle of Anglesey – have a number of human students.

Swan magic is a form of sorcery. However, it is not perceived as an inherently evil force simply because there are instances where magic has been used for malevolent ends. A Swan would no more condemn a sorcerer for the use of spells than she would a blacksmith for smelting metal; he might make a sword used in murder, but that does not reflect the nature of the art itself.

Swan Magic

The following spells may be cast by Swans, or taught to human students.

Empathy

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

The subject of this spell is able to emotionally perceive the feelings of those around him. This allows him to perceive the general mood of a crowd or an individual (angry, impatient, ecstatic, and so forth).

This knowledge can be used to more effectively manipulate others by playing to – or countering – their emotional state. This translates as a +20% Bonus to all Opposed Tests based on interaction. This includes such things as the use of Oratory to incite a crowd, Influence to talk your way into a restricted area or Seduction to win favour with a lover.

Emotional Link

Autonomous, Resist (Persistence)

This spell creates a link between the caster and target(s) so they are forced to experience each others' emotions. This can have a profound effect, as each subject understands exactly how the other is feeling; in essence, the sensations become their own, so the two merge on an emotional level.

It is extremely difficult for a character who is the subject of this spell to wilfully harm – emotionally or physically – the caster. He will, in a sense, be harming himself. Overcoming these feelings requires the subject to win an Opposed Persistence Test with the caster. Even then, all he manages to do is ignore the emotions long enough to perform a single act. The Games Master may apply modifiers to this check if the target of the spell feels any special connection or antipathy towards the caster.

The prolonged use of this spell can have a lasting effect on the subject. Swan sorcerers often use it for just this reason – forcing an erstwhile enemy to empathise with the caster. It is very difficult to inflict pain when one truly understands the effects it is having.

Patience

Concentration, Resist (Persistence)

This spell forces the target(s) to consider their actions more carefully, and reflect upon decisions being made. In essence it slows things down, removing any sense of urgency or the need to make a hasty decision.

A character targeted by this spell must spend every other round (or combat action if engaged in a fight) considering the ramifications of, and reasoning behind, what he is doing. A character who is being attacked may use his next action to defend himself, but cannot attack again until he has spent an action pondering the consequences of his actions.

The character is still free to reach his own conclusions, but is forced to pause and consider what he is doing.

Swan sorcerers often use this spell to diffuse tense situations or slow down a fight so a truce can more easily be achieved.

Iridescence

Concentration, Resist (Evade)

The subject of this spell seems possessed of an otherworldly beauty – he shimmers as though the light touching him has fallen from Heaven itself.

Whilst the spell is in effect, the subject's CHA is increased by 1 for every 10% of the caster's Grimoire skill. In addition, he receives a +20% Bonus on his first interaction test, so long as it is made immediately after meeting someone for a first time.

A Link Between Man and Nature

There are a number of Swans who believe that, despite the brutal way in which their race was created, their existence is in accordance with the will of God. Specifically, they feel He wished to put in place a contingency that would safeguard the balance of nature.

To Wash-out the Wound

Though a minority view, there are a few Swans who already wish to act to save humanity from itself – and the natural world from the Adamites' increasing use of tools.

One group has drawn up plans to destroy Paris, by using magic to raise the levels of the Seine and flood the city. They see this as a cleansing act that will remind mankind of his place in nature, and the dangers of excessive building.

The players may discover this plot as human acolytes carry out the early stages of their master's plans, perhaps weakening the foundations of the city's buildings or performing rituals to summon the mystical might required to raise the Seine.

Just about all Swans accept that after creating the Earth, the Heavens and the Angels, God fashioned mortal life. They believe this was not a single act, however, but a process – one that continues to this day. Swan theologians posit that God created primitive life first, then several proto-races that displeased him. These included the Djinn and the Woodwose (see the *Deus Vult Games Master's Story Guide*, page 133). He created the Adamites some time after and, while happier with the conduct of this newer race, he had concerns about their relationship with the natural world. He saw mankind's hunger for growth and progress and its all-too-frequent disregard for his other creations.

The Scions of Zeus are, therefore, a bridge – a link between man and the rest of God's creation. The Swans see their ultimate destiny as teaching humanity to love all of God's creatures and to accept a kinship with everything that lives in the world. Unfortunately, it seems many humans already see themselves as masters of the Earth, rather than equal tenants with all other forms of life.

The Wolves

Where other Scions are cautious about revealing their presence, many *were-wolves* revel in the fear and panic they cause by slaughtering humans and livestock. Consequently, their activities have been acknowledged across a range of cultures so tales of shape-shifting wolves have become a part of common folklore.

More than any other tribe, the Wolves have fallen furthest. With no common sense of purpose or identity – just innumerable self-serving packs – they have become scattered and fragmented. It has been known for more than one pack-leader to arrive at the *Mustering* claiming sovereignty over his people. In these instances, the alpha-males will fight to the death to determine who truly is the strongest and can claim superiority – at least for that year. It is hardly surprising that other tribes increasingly regard the Wolves with suspicion and disdain.

The tribe has become dispersed to such an extent that most *were-wolves* have no knowledge of their ancestry or origins. They are simply feral monsters, the kind that give rise to chilling bed-side stories.

The Snakes

The lands south of the Himalayas – sometimes referred to as the Indies – became home to the Snakes. Over the centuries, tales of their existence mingled with local religion and folklore, giving

Messengers

The Snakes have increasingly been offering their services as couriers, delivering messages between the other six clans. One such message contains an agreement between the Swans and a Wolf clan whose European territories have crossed. When the players intercept the message, they learn about the existence of these groups. If they prevent the message getting through they may spark a conflict that will spiral out of control and threaten many innocents.

rise to tales of the nagas. These supernatural beings could assume snake or human form, and were seen as servants of various Hindu deities including Vishnu and Shiva.

The Snakes are a patient and knowledgeable people. They frequently share their knowledge with humans, believing ignorance is the source of most evil in the world. The Snakes are also great travellers, as at home on water as they are on land. Emissaries of their race have travelled across the globe and, while carefully avoiding those areas controlled by other Scions, they have established numerous small enclaves where their knowledge has been passed on to human followers.

As discontent has spread amongst the Scions of Zeus, the Snakes have been careful to maintain a neutral stance. They do not wish to see war amongst the seven clans; they believe that through diplomacy and a greater understanding of each other this can be averted. Some – notably the Big Cats and Sharks – have misinterpreted these efforts as an attempt to advance their own agenda and increase their power. The more the Snakes offer to act as mediators, the more it seems they are spies and manipulators.

In 1189, the venerable Adheesh is acknowledged as ruler of the Snakes. Able to assume the form of an enormous Cobra he is a magnificent being, venerated by a cult of hundreds who revere him as a divine being. Many of these followers dwell within a mountaintop settlement, free from the conflict and hunger that plagues the world around them.

The Curse of Lycanthropy

The most famous legend regarding shapeshifters concerns the belief that those who survive an attack by a *were*-creature will themselves be transformed into one once the moon is again full.

The lore on this topic is muddled and incomplete. Those details which are accurate tend only to refer to that particular brand of lycanthropy carried by the Wolves, the most degenerate of all the Scionic tribes.

Only *were-wolves* are influenced by the changing of the moon. It is a reflection of their bestial, hunting nature that they must seek prey during these silvery nights, and that their saliva can doom others to this same fate (see the *Deus Vult Games Master's Story Guide*, page 131). Other Scionic tribes pass on lycanthropy in quite different ways, if at all.

The Snakes' venom is the key to passing on their own form of lycanthropy. A creature which is injected with it and falls into a torpor will begin the transformation (resisted with a Hard (40%) Resilience Test). Their human skin will dry out and eventually shed, heralding the infected creature's first transformation into a *were-snake*. The Snakes are very careful as to whom they bite

for just this reason. Typically they will constrict their prey and only bite it if it proves strong enough to join their ranks.

Male Crocodiles may pass on their shape-shifting abilities by mating with a female human. The impregnated woman will give birth to multiple children – twins or triplets are typical – all of which will be *weres*. This action is taken only rarely, however, usually when the local population has fallen to dangerously low levels. Even then, the female must be a Sobek worshipper or member of another religion familiar with the father's true nature. The reason for this is that it is not uncommon for the children to transform during the birthing process. To a Sobekite woman, this will still come as a shock. To one completely unprepared for such an event it could be impossibly traumatic.

The other Scionic races may mate freely with humans whilst in their human form. There is a 10% chance their offspring will, upon reaching puberty, manifest shapeshifting abilities.

Were-creatures that mate with their own kind always produce offspring able to change shape from a few days to a few months after they are born.

Chimeras

Scions that mate with *were*-creatures from a tribe other than their own do so at great risk. Most often the babe will perish in the womb. However, if it survives it will either manifest the shapeshifting power of one parent or be born as a dreadful mutation – a chimera.

Chimeras are invariably insane monsters that, if not put to death, threaten to grow into powerful creatures that will terrorise the area for years to come. Unlike their parents, they cannot assume a human shape and are locked in their monstrous form.

Schemes and Ambitions

There are a number of ways in which members of the Order might encounter the Scions of Zeus, as their ambitions become bolder and their activities more blatant.

Anthropomorphic Gods

It is a long-held belief amongst the Scions of Zeus that the more humans who worship divine animals, the more power they can acquire for themselves. For most tribes, this refers to the acquisition of temporal power – it is easier to influence and subjugate nations who already revere animalistic masters. For the Swans and the Crocodiles, it reflects a deeply held metaphysical belief that faith empowers magic, and that human veneration of animal-gods fuels their occult abilities.

In order to propagate the worship of animal deities, the Scions will often support cults that venerate an animal or anthropomorphic being. In Egypt, the Crocodiles lend continuing support to Sobek worshippers; in Scandinavia, the Wolves perpetuate the legend of Fenris; and in the Chauhan Kingdom (northern India), the Snakes encourage the worship of snake gods such as the benevolent Nagaraja. The presence of a shapeshifter who can assume a god's divine form is enough to bolster the faith of most cultists for decades to come.

Hunting the Nereids

In early 1189, an envoy from the Poor Knights of the Temple of Solomon met on the island of Cyprus with several high ranking members of the Scions of Zeus. As the Templars had ranged across Europe and the Holy Land, they had come into conflict with several *were*-creatures and it was feared these two powerful societies might descend into open conflict. Given the Templars' pursuit of occult power and their wish to free Jerusalem from the grip of the infidel, they had no desire to

Pirate fleet

Players travelling the Mediterranean might encounter members of Margaritone de Brindisi's fleet as they search for the Nereids. The pirates could easily come to the notice of the Order as they try to unearth ancient lore or quest for such mystical site as Nereus's Hollow, the undersea cave where he is said to dream away the aeons as he waits for the world to turn.

Chief among the searchers are the crew of *The Marauder*, and their *were-shark* shock-troops the *Carcharodons* – a group perfectly suited to searching the murky ocean depths.

Tangling with Margaritone de Brindisi's pirates could unearth the pact with the Templars – taking the Order ever-closer to a conflict with their Christian Brethren and earning the players a powerful new enemy.

propagate an unnecessary conflict. They viewed the Scions as descendents of those creatures which had failed to find refuge on the Ark; this made them suspect and potentially blasphemous beings, but God's creatures nonetheless. In short, they could be dealt with at a later date.

As well as agreeing the terms of a truce – whereby the Scions would avoid the Levant altogether – the Templars (whose funds rival those of the Pope) secured the services of Margaritone de Brindisi's pirate fleet in their search for three legendary creatures known as the Nereids. The daughters of the titan, Nereus – the god-like being who ruled the seas before Poseidon – are able to control the element of water. This makes them invaluable to the Templars, whose activities in the Holy Land and Egypt have brought them into conflict with a number of Djinni, creatures born of fire.

Should Brindisi's fleet succeed in locating and capturing the Nereids, the Templars will become even more powerful than they already are, securing a mighty weapon with which to challenge Saladin's hold on Jerusalem.

Wolfshead Cull

It is an acknowledged fact within the Scions of Zeus that the Wolves are out of control. Initially given range over central and northern Europe, they now roam across most of the world's continents. What is more, there is no centralised control or governance, merely a multitude of packs who wander where they will, often coming into conflict with humans.

Things came to a head in 1187 when an especially feral pack attacked a colony of Swans. There were deaths on both sides, and outrage throughout the Scions. Isaakios Comnenos issued a warrant for the pack-leader's head but, to his consternation, membership of this pack actually grew in the aftermath of the edict. The Wolves are an anarchic bunch and seemed to revel in their rebellion.

Any *were-wolf* clans found to be trespassing in regions assigned to other tribes in the *Accord* are summarily culled. The Big-Cats have been especially vociferous in carrying out this command. In addition, any Wolves whose activities are so brazen as to draw the attention of human authorities are to be hunted down and killed. The Scions have long been aware of the Order – but they now know they are being watched by newer groups such as the Inquisition and the rising number of witch-hunters. Until they understand more about these groups, they have no desire to come into conflict with them.

Typical Were–Lion

STR	13/25	Combat Actions	3	1D20	Hit Location (Melding/Human)	AP/HP
CON	13/19	Damage Modifier	+1D2/+1D10	1–3	Right Leg	1/9 0/6
SIZ	13/22	Magic Points	15	4–6	Left Leg	1/9 0/6
INT	13/13	Movement	8m/12m	7–9	Abdomen	1/10 0/7
POW	13/13	Strike Rank	+12/+15	10–12	Chest	1/11 0/8
DEX	10/16			13–15	Right Arm	1/8 0/5
CHA	13/16			16–18	Left Arm	1/8 0/5
				19–20	Head	1/9 0/6
Traits: Dark Sight, Shapechanger Armour: Animal Form: Fur (AP 2), Melding Form: Fur (AP 1) Notable Skills: Athletics 60%, Brawn 55%, Influence 55%, Perception 70%, Resilience 50%, Stealth 65%				1D20	Hit Location (Lion)	AP/HP
				1–3	Right Hind Leg	2/9
				4–6	Left Hind Leg	2/9
				7–9	Abdomen	2/10
				10–12	Chest	2/10
				13–15	Right Front Arm	2/9
				16–18	Left Front Arm	2/9
				19–20	Head	2/9

WEAPONS

Type	Damage	AP/HP
Claw	1D6	As for Leg
Bite	1D8	As for Head

NOTES

Shapechanger: Characteristics before the slash are for the were-creature in human form; those after the slash are the modifiers for its hybrid and animal form.

Typical Were–Crocodile

STR	13/31	Combat Actions	3	1D20	Hit Location (Melding/Human)	AP/HP
CON	13/25	Damage Modifier	+1D2/+2D6	1–3	Right Leg	3/12 0/6
SIZ	13/31	Magic Points	13	4–6	Left Leg	3/12 0/6
INT	13/13	Movement	8m/6m (or 10m in water)	7–9	Abdomen	3/13 0/7
POW	13/13	Strike Rank	+12/+13	10–12	Chest	3/14 0/8
DEX	10/13			13–15	Right Arm	3/11 0/5
CHA	13/16			16–18	Left Arm	3/11 0/5
				19–20	Head	3/12 0/6

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Shapechanger

Armour: Animal Form: Thick Scales and muscle (AP 5), Melding Form: Scales (AP 3)

Notable Skills: Athletics 70%, Brawn 85%, Perception 40%, Resilience 75%, Stealth 50%, Swim 100%

1D20	Hit Location (Crocodile)	AP/HP
1–3	Right Hind Leg	5/7
4–6	Left Hind Leg	5/7
7–9	Hindquarters	5/10
10–12	Forequarters	5/11
13–15	Right Front Arm	5/7
16–18	Left Front Arm	5/7
19–20	Head/Neck	5/9

WEAPONS

Type	Weapon Skill	Size	Damage	AP/HP
Mace	70%	M	1D8	6/8
Bite	70%	L	1D8	As per Head
Tail Thrash	60%	L	1D6	As per Tail

NOTES

Shapechanger: Characteristics before the slash are for the were-creature in human form; those after the slash are the modifiers for its hybrid and animal form.

Typical Were-Ape

STR	16/28
CON	13/19
SIZ	16/28
INT	13/13
POW	13/13
DEX	13/13
CHA	10/10

Combat Actions	3
Damage Modifier	+1D4/+1D12
Magic Points	13
Movement	8m
Strike Rank	+13/+13

1D20	Hit Location (Melding/Human)	AP/HP	
1-3	Right Leg	1/10	0/6
4-6	Left Leg	1/10	0/6
7-9	Abdomen	1/11	0/7
10-12	Chest	1/12	0/8
13-15	Right Arm	1/9	0/5
16-18	Left Arm	1/9	0/5
19-20	Head	1/10	0/6

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Shapechanger
Armour: Animal Form (AP 2), Melding (AP 1)
Notable Skills: Athletics 70%, Brawn 65%, Climb 90%, Engineering 70%, Lore (special*) 70%, Mechanisms 60%, Perception 50%, Resilience 60%, Stealth 50%, Survival 47%, Unarmed 50%

1D20	Hit Location (Gorilla)	AP/HP	
1-3	Right Leg	2/10	
4-6	Left Leg	2/10	
7-9	Abdomen	2/11	
10-12	Chest	2/12	
13-15	Right Arm	2/9	
16-18	Left Arm	2/9	
19-20	Head	2/10	

WEAPONS

Type	Weapon Skill	Size	Damage	AP/HP
Great Bow	65%	H	1D8	6/10
War Maul	65%	H	1D12+1	5/10
Fist	60%	M	1D6	As per Arm
Bite	55%	M	1D4+1	As per Head

NOTES

Shapechanger: Characteristics before the slash are for the were-creature in human form; those after the slash are the modifiers for its hybrid and animal form.

*A typical were-ape has two Lore skills selected from the following list: Alchemy, Architecture, Botany, History, Human Civilisation,

Typical Were–Shark

STR	13/28	Combat Actions	3	1D20	Hit Location (Melding/Human)	AP/HP
CON	13/19	Damage Modifier	+1D2/+1D12	1–3	Right Leg	2/10 0/6
SIZ	14/29	Magic Points	13	4–6	Left Leg	2/10 0/6
INT	10/10	Movement	8m/12m Swimming	7–9	Abdomen	2/11 0/7
POW	13/13	Strike Rank	+12/+13	10–12	Chest	2/12 0/8
DEX	13/16			13–15	Right Arm	2/9 0/5
CHA	10/10			16–18	Left Arm	2/9 0/5
				19–20	Head	2/10 0/6

Traits: Dark Sight, Night Sight, Shapechanger

Armour: Animal Form (AP 4), Melding Form (AP 2)

Notable Skills: Athletics 70%, Brawn 65%, Perception 60%, Resilience 70%, Stealth 55%, Swim 120%

1D20	Hit Location (Shark)	AP/HP
1–3	Tail	4/10
4–8	Hindbody	4/11
9–13	Forebody	4/12
14	Right Fin	4/7
15	Left Fin	4/7
16–20	Head	4/10

WEAPONS

Type	Weapon Skill	Size	Damage	AP/HP
Cutlass	70%	M	1D8	6/10
Bite	75%	L	1D8	As per Head

NOTES

Shapechanger: Characteristics before the slash are for the were-creature in human form; those after the slash are the modifiers for its hybrid and animal form.

Lion–Snake Chimera

	Dice	Avg	Combat Actions	4 (5 with 2 nd head)	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	6D6+12	33	Damage Modifier	+1D12	1-2	Tail	4/9
CON	5D6+6	23	Magic Points	10	3-4	Right Hind Leg	2/10
SIZ	3D6+15	25	Movement	12m	5-6	Left Hind Leg	2/10
INT	2D6	7	Strike Rank	+14	7-9	Abdomen	2/11
POW	3D6	10			10-12	Chest	2/12
DEX	5D6+3	20			13-14	Right Front Leg	2/10
CHA	2D6	7			15-16	Left Front Leg	2/10
					17-18	Lion Head	2/11
					19-20	Snake Head	4/10

Armour: Thick Hide (AP 2) and Scales (AP 4)
Traits: Venomous Bite, Spit Venom
Notable Skills: Athletics 75%, Brawn 70%, Perception 60%, Resilience 72%, Stealth 50%, Survival 60%, Track 88%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite (lion)	M/S	90%	1D8	As per Lion Head
Bite (snake)	M/L	80%	1D6	As per Snake Head
Claw	M/S	85%	1D6	As per Arm
Spit Venom	—	70%	Special-	—

NOTES

Venomous Bite: The fangs of the chimera’s snake head are venomous:

Application: Injection
Onset Time: 1D4 Combat Rounds
Duration: 2D4 Minutes
Resistance Time: One Resistance Roll
Potency: 60
Resistance: Resilience
Conditions: Paralysis. If the victim fails its Resilience roll it is paralysed for 2D4 minutes.
Antidote/Cure: A counteragent to the venom can be manufactured by Swan scholars (the process for which might be taught to trusted human allies).

Spit Venom: The chimera can spit a modified form of its venom up to five metres. Contact with exposed skin causes 1 point of Damage. Exposure to the eyes causes blindness for 2D6 Combat rounds unless the target resists the effects of the venom: the Potency for this effect of the venom is considered 50.

Crocodile–Shark Chimera

	Dice	Avg	Combat Actions	2	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	10D6+15	50	Damage Modifier	+1D12 + 2D6	1-4	Tail	8/18
CON	6D6+6	27	Magic Points	10	5	Right Rear Fin	8/13
SIZ	5D6+40	57	Movement	10m (Swim), 6m (walking)	6	Left Rear Fin	8/13
INT	1D3+3	5	Strike Rank	+ 14	7-9	Hindquarters	8/19
POW	3D6	10			10-14	Forequarters	8/20
DEX	3D6	10			15	Right Front Fin	8/13
CHA	2D6	7			16	Left Front Fin	8/13
					17-20	Head/Neck	8/18

Armour: Thick Hide and Scales (AP 8)

Traits: Thrash

Notable Skills: Athletics 95%, Brawn 110%, Perception 70%, Resilience 90%, Stealth 80%, Swim 100%, Track 88%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	E/L	90%	2D8	As per Head

NOTES

Thrash: Much like a crocodile, this particular type of chimera can grip prey in its jaws then roll vigorously back and forth. This has the duel effect of ripping food apart and drowning it.

A Crocodile-Shark chimera that has successfully used a Grip Combat Manoeuvre in a previous action may elect to Thrash. This automatically inflicts 2D8 Damage.

In addition, any air-breathing creature whose SIZ is less than half that of the chimera must succeed with an Opposed Brawn vs Resilience Test or start to drown (see the *Legend Core Rulebook*, page 76)

Verse 8.6

CATHAYAN COTERIE

Cathay is a vast realm in the distant east that the indigenous people call the Middle Kingdom for, to them, it seems the expanse of the world. It encompasses lofty mountains, scorching deserts, lush forests and grassy plains, plus countless other environments besides.



The Order's powerbase is located in north-western Europe, and though operatives venture as far east as the Holy Lands and as far south as Egypt, they rarely go further. Those few that have done so speak of wondrous lands beyond the kingdoms of Araby where the word of God has yet to take root. These lands have their own deities, their own beasts and their own occult secrets. And just as a few adventurous souls from the Order are beginning to ponder these lands, equally inquisitive individuals from the east have begun to journey west – in search of new riches and new knowledge.

The boundaries of Cathay are indistinct to western scholars and travellers, and a number of competing rulers claim sovereignty over large portions of the realm. Maps of the region are conflicting, and often reverse the western tradition of having the north at the top. If these drawings are even partially accurate, Cathay is comparable in size to the whole of Europe.

In the north of Cathay, hordes of nomadic horsemen roam the endless steppes. For leadership, they recognise a number of tribal khans. From time to time, one of these rulers will rise to prominence and forge the surrounding peoples into a sort of nation. Invariably, these dissolve with the death or dishonour of the guiding khan, with clans once again roving freely across the plains and resuming local hostilities. Despite this, the might of these clans is not to be underestimated; they are unparalleled horse-archers and trackers, and their holy men practise a powerful form of animalistic shamanism.

The Great Khan

Travellers to northern Cathay in the late 12th century may well hear rumours of a warlord named Temujin. He has started to unite a number of Mongolian tribes, and in future years will rise to great prominence under the moniker Ghengis Khan – the Prince of Conquerors.

In the late 12th century, central and eastern Cathay is controlled by the Jin Dynasty. A relatively young empire, the Jin's early success was based on their impressive cavalry. However, their experimentation with gunpowder weapons has started to yield impressive results. Though still unreliable, Jin Scholars have developed prototypes for rudimentary cannons, grenades and even rockets. The success of this rare form of alchemy is a direct result of the work conducted by the eunuch sorcerers of the Cathayan Coterie.

To the south, Cathay is ruled by the Song Dynasty. This kingdom constitutes the major part of the kingdom. In recent times, the Song have lost a portion of their northern territory to their Jin neighbours. A civilised people, the Song are the first to make use of bank notes; they are also experimenting with the use of gunpowder weapons. Where they have the edge over the Jin and Mongols in the north, however, is in terms of their navy. With several strong ports along the south-eastern sea-line, they maintain control of the eastern ocean, facilitating trade and the transportation of military forces.

Across the boundaries of these competing dynasties sits the Cathayan Coterie, an affiliation of eunuch sorcerers who have studied mystic arts for millennia. They care little for the rivalries of

fledgling states and, with the perspective afforded them by greatly prolonged life-spans, are interested in temporal power only in as much as it can aid their quest for magical lore. Many members of the Cathayan Coterie are fabulously wealthy; others hold positions of power as advisors to noble houses. But these are not the ends they seek – eternal life, mastery of elements, and the ability to commune with Heaven (or with Hell) – these are their objectives.

In recent years, it has become clear the lands to the west hold untapped stores of occult knowledge. Emissaries from Persia have visited the Cathayan courts, bringing with them glimpses of their impressive science and knowledge of their new religion. Of even greater interest are tantalising tales of djinni magic and the lore of Saracen sorcerers. To the stagnating inner circle of the coterie, these stories are rare delicacies that have whetted their appetites.

Organisation of the Coterie

The Coterie is based on a principle of concentric circles – a theorem that sits at the heart of the sorcerers' understanding of the different planes of existence. Each circle is twice the size of the next, creating a gyre with the outermost level being the largest but furthest from the inner truth of enlightenment.

The inner circle of the coterie contains just three sorcerers – the Transcendent Masters. Their power is unrivalled among their brethren, and they have lived for so long that many within the coterie believe them to be immortal.

The second circle contains the six Enlightened Masters – powerful sorcerers who have studied magic for decades and, in some cases, centuries. These are the most powerful members of the coterie that tend to venture forth into the world, and then only rarely.

The third circle is comprised of the dozen Skilful Sorcerers – devoted practitioners that have sacrificed much for their power and begun to unlock the inner secrets of magic.

The fourth circle – and by far the most numerous – contains the twenty four Questing Adepts. These sorcerers are possessed of impressive skills, but have yet to master either their magic or own inner spiritual power – their *chi*.

Servants of the Coterie

Beyond the four circles, the coterie employs numerous servants and apprentices. These tend to the everyday needs of the sorcerers who must devote themselves to their studies and ensure that they remain spiritually pure.

Chief amongst the coterie servants are the Emerald Guard – a warrior sect that ensures the physical safety of the sorcerers. Upon entry to the coterie, a sorcerer is assigned a warrior as his personal bodyguard, an duty that persists until death. This might be the death of the Emerald Guard in service to his oathlord or the death of the sorcerer, at which point the guard will take his own life anyway.

As a sorcerer is elevated to a new circle, he is assigned a further guard. In this way, the Transcendent Masters are each protected by four Emerald Guardsmen.

Emerald Guard

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	4(5)
STR	16	1-3	Right Leg	5/6	Damage Modifier	+1D2
CON	17	4-6	Left Leg	5/6	Magic Points	12
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	5/7	Movement	8m
INT	13	10-12	Chest	5/8	Strike Rank	+17 (+10 in armor)
POW	12	13-15	Right Arm	5/5		
DEX	20	16-18	Left Arm	5/5		
CHA	12	19-20	Head	5/6		

Armour: Light Plate (5 AP)
Equipment: Jade charm (+10% bonus to Persistence tests when resisting harmful magic)
Notable Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 60%, Perception 90%, Resilience 70%, Ride 70%, Stealth 65%

WEAPONS

Type	Weapon Skill	Size	Damage	AP/HP
Warsword and shield	110%	M	1D8	6/10
Shield	110%	L	1D4	6/12
Recurve Bow	95%	M	1D8	4/5

Sorcerous Ambitions

Members of the Cathayan Coterie that players encounter are likely to be fourth or third circle members. As such, they will be close to the start of their journey and likely possessed of great ambition as they search for occult lore – the thing they believe will earn them advancement and power.

An increasing number of these sorcerers are venturing beyond the confines of Cathay, often travelling by ship to explore Persia and the fabled Byzantine Empire beyond. To a guardian priest, these strange mystics will seem like the worst kinds of alien invader, possessed of strange magic and bizarre customs.

Pagan ritual sites and haunts of witch-cults could all attract the attention of a Cathayan Sorcerer who is intent on acquiring new lore to take back to his homeland.

The Ordeal

In order to join the coterie, an aspirant must undergo a series of trials which test his body, mind and grasp of magic. These culminate, if the aspirant is successful, in his castration. This act robs him of many of the primitive yearnings that might distract him from pursuit of higher goals, and serves to demonstrate his devotion to the path he is about to undertake.

The Quest

The Cathayan Coterie is not an organisation aligned with what a typical European might call good or evil. It seeks a transcendent understanding of the universe – to know the unknowable; to touch the eternal and divine. They believe that what some people call God is not quantifiable in human terms, that mortal language cannot hope to capture and define such a thing.

The further along this path its members travel, the more spiritually pure they become. However, many that embark upon the journey – particularly fourth and third circle-members – are as riddled with petty human ambitions and jealousies as any other group of ambitious aspirants.

It is never made entirely clear to new members that their path will cleanse them of their human lusts and longings, but only those who succeed in this purging are elevated to the inner circles.

Temple of The Transcendent Masters

The temple within which the coterie rulers reside shifts location from one century to the next. This does not indicate an interest in the shifting borders of mortal empires but rather the fact that they may not truly exist on this plane any longer. A number of Cathayan scholars believe the domiciles of each Transcendent Master can move between a number of different worlds, appearing as and when they need.

For as long as any records tell, the Transcendent Masters have been known as Shen lu de, Xianjian and Shenpan. Translated literally these names mean wisdom, foresight and judgement. Some scholars have speculated these names are titles chosen or ascribed to the masters, and that the

man claiming each has changed over the years. This belief is a failure on the part of the scholars to appreciate the longevity of the Transcendent Masters. Though each did, indeed, discard his mortal moniker centuries ago when he assumed his position, Shen lu de, Xianjian and Shenpan are the same men they have always been. They effectively stopped aging a long time ago.

The Transcendent Masters have reached a level of spiritual purity and magical skill that can be likened to the divine. A Buddhist might describe them as having achieved Nirvana; a Christian might call them saintly. Whichever term is used, they have unlocked (though not quite discarded) the shackles of mortal flesh. At any time, they could choose to move on to the next world but have prolonged their stay on Earth until such time as another is ready to replace them.

Of the three, most is known about Shen lu de. He is the oldest of the masters – though only by a century or two – yet appears younger and more vital than his two brothers. This is a relative statement, however; he has skin like wizened bark and only wisps of hair. His eyes, though, remain bright and alert, and his back is unbowed by the passing years.

Shen lu de was born in the far north, the son of a nomadic tribe. Captured by southern soldiers during one of the many wars that divided Cathay, he spent several years as a slave. His exceptional mind soon saw him rise to a position of trust, and then authority. He was taken into the service of a nobleman who was in pursuit of occult knowledge. Shen lu de assisted his master in this quest, and quickly eclipsed his understanding of the mystic arts. Following an agreement that Shen lu de described as the pivotal moment in his life, he was granted his freedom and began a journey that lasted for more than two decades. Traversing the breadth of the Middle Kingdom, he acquired great stores of lore and wisdom. His journey culminated in the scaling of a sacred mountain where he claims to have spoken with a dragon from Heaven that gave him the knowledge he needed to join the coterie. In a single year, he moved from the fourth circle to the third – a feat that has never been repeated.

Even as a Transcendent Master, Shen lu de has never been entirely able to stay out of the affairs of the mortal realm. Acting through members of the outer circles, he often seeks to influence affairs of state, and has had a hand in the rise and fall of several dynasties. In so doing, he has imperilled his ability to ascend, and his brothers have warned him that if he interferes again, he may become trapped in his body forever.

Xianjian is a seer and prognosticator of exceptional skill. In visions, he sees the turning of the world and ages to come. Though he does not try to alter the path of the future in any significant way he does, with a feather-light touch, steer individuals away from unnecessary doom. Even these interventions are chosen with care, for he knows vibrations through the spider-web of time can reverberate far and wide.

Shenpan is the most reserved and withdrawn of the masters. He no longer pays any heed to the matters of the world, or even the passing of years. His vision is fixed firmly on Heaven and he longs for the day when another will replace him so he may move on.

The Enlightened Masters

Those who have started to set aside their mortal concerns and focus their efforts on something higher may – if sufficiently proficient with magic – rise to the second circle. Many of those who have achieved this rank over the centuries have become reformed characters; where formerly they were obsessed with accruing personal knowledge or power, they now see their part in the grander scheme of things. They are able to set aside much of their ambition and discern the true purpose of their existence.

Competition for the Grail

Since his flight from Cathay, Tan Lan De has wandered the globe searching for ways to prolong his life. He is now six hundred years old, and his strength is ebbing fast.

He has heard rumours of the healing properties of various Christian sites and relics – particularly the Holy Grail. He has dispatched a number of his servants, including some with a working knowledge of magic, to investigate these legends. These explorers might well come to the attention of the Order and, in turn, might provide a route back to Tan Lan De himself.

There are occasional blips, however. One notorious sorcerer, Tan Lan De, managed to convince his peers he had abandoned his hunger for personal power and was raised to the level of an Enlightened Master. In the year that followed he proved to be anything but. Having stolen numerous occult secrets, many of which were considered taboo, he fled. In his escape, he murdered two of the Emerald Guard assigned to protect him. The third took his life immediately after, determining that he had failed to protect his master from himself.

Tan Lan De's failings aside, the Enlightened Masters safeguard many secrets of Cathayan magic, catalogue the wondrous beasts which can be found in their land and offer guidance to the third and fourth circle sorcerers. If dangerous occult forces threaten the kingdom, they even venture forth to confront them – ensuring entities from other planes are not free to roam Cathay unchecked.

Cathayan Magic

While the principals of Cathayan Sorcery remain the same in terms of the rules, there are some unique enchantments available to these eastern occultists.

Cloud Step

Concentration

This spell allows the caster to walk upon the air as though it were solid ground. In addition to his own person, he may carry a further 1 SIZ for each 10% of his Sorcery (Grimoire) skill.

Perceive Danger

Autonomous

By plucking softly at the threads of fate, the caster may discern a rough idea of the next danger that will threaten him. Initially, the details are indistinct – no more than a shadow in his unconscious. However, when the moment of danger arrives, he is forewarned.

Once this spell is cast, the player (or Games Master) is free to activate its effects at any time when the caster is threatened with physical harm. This confers a +50% bonus on an attempt to Parry, Evade or otherwise avoid harm. In addition, the caster cannot be surprised by an attack against which this spell comes into effect.

Once this spell is triggered, the caster acquires a level of Fatigue, and may not cast the spell again for at least 24 hours.

Ghost Sword

Autonomous

Casting this spell creates a spectral blade that appears instantly in the caster's hand. This weapon exudes a green glow and is clearly translucent. The blade may be wielded as a normal warsword, which also possesses the ability to damage spirits and incorporeal foes.

Oriental Magical Items

The items gathered by sorcerers from Cathay and other kingdoms in the distant east are always accompanied by a wondrous story. None are simply arcane items but the focus of one or more legendary tales. Many of these involve Gods and demons and other fantastical beings, serving to convey an even greater sense of wonder upon the objects.

Ruyi Jingu Bang

According to popular folklore, this enchanted staff was once the property of a monkey god, who went on a journey into the far west. Different versions of the tale have him searching for a lost love or even his soul. The staff proved an invaluable tool, allowing him to escape all sorts of perilous predicaments.

Whether this staff is truly the one referred to in the stories is unclear. Certainly, it is magical, and is able to change its length between 10 cm and four metres at a thought from the wielder. Its width can shift between 1 cm and 5 cm. In combat, this allows the staff to be wielded as a mace, quarterstaff or great club.

The wood, which is engraved with ancient symbols associated with the elements of water and air, has been treated in a way that makes it very difficult to damage (HP 10, AP 12).

Yata no Kagami

This beautiful mirror, fringed with a border of jade-set emeralds, has been a possession of princes and emperors across the ages. Its origin is unknown but some occult historians suggest a forgotten God presented it to mankind when he saw the suffering they were inflicting upon themselves.

A person in possession of the mirror increases his INT, POW and CHA by 3. In addition, acts of kindness – either his own or others' – cause him great joy, and acts of cruelty cause him to feel terrible sadness.

Verse 8.7

THE FORGE OF MONSTERS

Anxious to consolidate his grip on the Holy Lands, Saladin has started to take increasingly desperate measures. Amongst these have been his pacts with two powerful sorcerers; Sulayman, the Burned One, and the Anointed.



As Sulayman, the Burned One, and the Anointed each pursue the Sultan's favour, there have been inevitable scuffles between their forces, leading each faction to employ ever more secretive methods to conceal their activities. The Anointed, in his use of Techromancy, needs space away from prying eyes to build his arcane machines and to test his sorcerous creations. However, he also needs a way to transport the specialised – and often large – pieces of equipment used during his experiments.

The town of Jubala fits these requirements perfectly. It is situated 12 miles from the coast, due east of the city of Jaffa. It is isolated enough to provide a suitable testing ground, but close enough to a major port to ship items both in and out.

It Lives!

For more than a year the Anointed's most trusted lieutenant, Belaquin, has overseen the construction and operation of the laboratory in Jubala. New designs – conceived by the Anointed and delivered by his *Darisi* – have been built and tested. Many have failed or created abominations that must be destroyed and their remains hidden in the desert. A few, though, have yielded wondrous, if unnatural, promise.

Amongst these are the *Mayyit Lahm* – creatures fashioned from dead flesh and occult machinery. They are utterly loyal, and far stronger and more resilient than mortal warriors. What is more, Belaquin has started to experiment with more esoteric designs, crafting creatures beyond the man-like monsters he was first commissioned to make.

So far, Belaquin has not revealed the full extent of his own experimentation to his master, but has assured the Anointed all is proceeding well. Accordingly, a promise has been made to Saladin that he will soon have new soldiers to chase the Christian infidels from his lands.

Wayward Son

Unfortunately for Belaquin, one of his creations has escaped. More than that, the supposedly mindless *thing* he wrought retains some memory of its former life. Driven by strange, half-understood urges it has made its way to Tyre – where it comes to the attention of the Order.

Restless Dead

The Deus Vult supplement *Sanctuaries* contains an adventure entitled Love after Death. In this scenario, the players encounter two men – Wolfgang and Dietrich Von Leidorf – who perished in the Holy Lands but found themselves mysteriously returned to half-life. These *halb Mensch* (half men) are further examples of the work being performed by the Anointed.

Tyre

During the time of the Third Crusade, Tyre is in unique position; it is the only major city along the eastern Mediterranean coastline that remains in Christian hands. It is therefore a perfect starting point – both for the adventure – and for characters venturing into the Holy Lands.

The ruler of Tyre, the Marquis of Montferrat, has successfully repelled two attempts by Saladin to take the city. Such defiance greatly bolstered the morale of Christian forces in the Holy Lands, and gave the Marquis the sort of support needed to harbour realistic ambitions of claiming the crown of Jerusalem. For obvious reasons, this makes him a rival (and sometime enemy) of the current King of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignon – a man whose reputation lies in tatters after the humiliation suffered at the Battle of Hattin.

An Island City

Tyre is a supremely defensible city that has withstood numerous attacks and sieges.

The city consists of two distinct districts; the island city and its mainland counterpart (sometimes referred to as New Tyre and Old Tyre respectively). They are linked by a causeway built by Alexander the Great – one of the few commanders able to capture the city. Since its construction, silt has built up around this enormous walkway, creating a permanent land bridge which swells and shrinks with the tide.

The island of Tyre is blessed with two harbours; one in the north, one in the south. These are large and deep enough to berth even the biggest vessels, with ample room to load and unload their cargoes.

New Tyre is surrounded by high, thick walls so that, even should the mainland district fall, there is somewhere to which the defenders may fall back and where a siege may be resisted for months – years even, if the harbours remain open.

At the heart of the city is the citadel; a small, fortress keep where the Marquis of Montferrat holds court. This is like a castle within a castle, a place from which attackers could be repelled even if the rest of the city were to fall.

Beginning the Adventure

The players may be in Tyre for any number of reasons, as it represents the only safe port for Christians either arriving in or wishing to sail away from the Holy Lands.

Some of these reasons may include the following.

- Searching for Holy Relics; all sorts of divine objects have a habit of turning up in the Levant.
- Hunting down members of the Orthodox Order.
- Gathering lore on occult beasts and/or practises found in the near east; with the break-away of the Orthodox Order, the masters in the Mont St. Michel have lost much of their information on this region.
- Protecting a dignitary (such as a senior cleric or important noble) who is visiting the area.

Of course, players who are already operating in a region close to the eastern Mediterranean may have been dispatched to the city specifically to deal with the recent strange events.

Background

Three weeks ago an afternoon-patrol of Tyre's city guard (composed of soldiers loyal to the Marquis of Montferrat) encountered something strange. Within Old Tyre's poor quarter – an area they visit but rarely – they encountered a man in some distress. Wailing and sobbing, the man seemed half mad with grief. When approached by the soldiers, he flew into a rage and attacked them. So great was his strength and fury that the eight men were unable to restrain him, and with nothing but his bare hands he bested them in combat and fled.

Word of the attack spread through the city, with interest in events being renewed in the following days as two of the soldiers died from wounds they had suffered in the attack. Suspicious locals wondered if the man had in fact been a Djinni or some other foul monster from the mysterious east.

The rumours were just dying away when the man was sighted for a second time, just before dawn as he tried to sneak aboard a ship, the *Sea Snake*. Once again, he fought members of the city guard, along with the vessel's crew. More bodies were left in his wake, as he once more eluded capture.

Now, a manhunt is under way. The Marquis is keen to maintain the appearance of order. His people have endured two sieges in recent years; the idea that an unstoppable madman is loose in the city is something everyone in Tyre could do without. A reward of 1,000 SP has been offered for anyone who brings the head of the villain or information leading to his capture.

Yearning

The man that the authorities are looking for was, once, Aldfrith Linn – a Saxon warrior from Cumbria who took up the crusader sword to purge his soul. He perished, like so many other Christian souls, in the Massacre at Hattin.

What awaited him next, however, was not an eternity of torment or bliss but a painful return to the land of the living; albeit as one who is not truly alive.

Aldfrith was used like so much raw material in the Anointed's experiments, and moved to the laboratory in Jubala, where his suffering continued at Belaquin's hands. Unlike the other mindless slaves the Techromatic experiments were producing, Aldfrith maintained some fragments of memory from his former life. As time went on, he began to remember more and more.

Aldfrith was careful to conceal his growing intelligence from his captors. As a result, he was able to escape whilst being held in storage in Jaffa, ahead of being transported back to Jerusalem to demonstrate the progress of Belaquin's experiments. Stealing a horse, he fled north, drawn in some way he could not understand toward Tyre.

Aldfrith knew he was a monster – beyond his grotesque appearance, he felt on some fundamental level he had changed. He was careful to avoid contact with others en route, and concealed himself beneath a hood and cloak as he sneaked inside the city.

Once there, the compulsion that had drawn him north grew unbearably strong. He was pulled, inexorably, toward a region of Tyre neighbouring the northern harbour. This dilapidated area – known locally as the Squalor – is the poorest in the city, a place where vagabonds and cut-throats hide like rats among the rubble. For some reason he could not understand, Aldfrith was compelled to dig among the wreckage of an old building. For days, he worked, finally unearthing a holy relic buried there long ago and forgotten.

The relic is the Sword of Joab. Being close to the sword has, in some way, eased Aldfrith's feelings of emptiness. He has surmised – quite correctly – that it is a holy object and possession of it has brought him a little closer to God, and filled the void where his soul should be.

Aldfrith is by no means at peace, however. In fact, his discovery of the relic has made him more determined than ever. He now feels a yearning to travel west (toward Cyprus, though he does not know this) in search of another powerful relic. It was for this reason Aldfrith tried to stow away aboard the *Sea Snake*.

The Sword of Joab

Joab was the nephew of King David, and the general of his armies. He was famed as a military leader, overseeing numerous victories for his monarch. A portion of his military cunning and mastery of battlefield tactics lives on in the holy sword presented to him as reward for faithful service.

A character wielding Joab's sword acquires a deeper awareness of everything that is happening on the battlefield. Accordingly, he may offer advice to the troops around him.

Once each combat round, as a free action, the wielder of the sword may shout a few words of instruction to an allied combatant. This allows the combatant to re-roll his Initiative score to determine when he acts in the *following* round. The combatant may elect not to re-roll but if he chooses to do so, must accept the result of the new roll. Note that a combatant may re-roll his Initiative more than once during a single fight, if he continues to receive instructions from the sword-wielder.

In addition, once each round the wielder may sacrifice one of his own combat actions and use this time to offer more detailed advice to an ally. This bestows an additional combat action on the character being advised, assuming they are willing to listen.

The sword also bestows a +20% bonus to the Divine Fervour Skill. When wielded in combat, the Sword of Joab is classed as a Consecrated Falchion with 8 AP.

Required Asset Points: 9

Locating Aldfrith

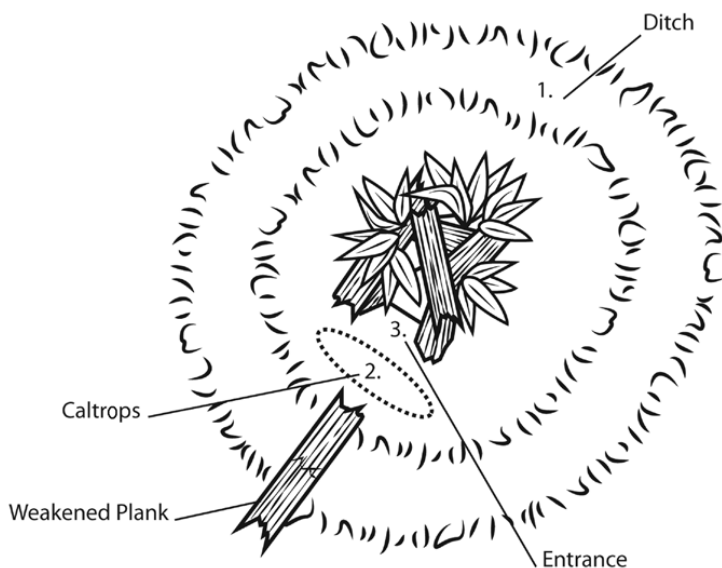
Since his second encounter with the city guard, Aldfrith has elected to maintain a low profile. He has left the Squalor and returned to the hovel where he had been living in Old Tyre.

Players who investigate the slums near the harbour may pick up his trail. None of the locals are keen to talk with the authorities – they know it will be the guards rather than they who receive the reward – but can certainly be bribed, tricked or coerced by players who use a little guile.

Several residents noticed the cloaked stranger who was sleeping in the back-alleys for a week or so before the scuffle at the docks. They noted his prodigious strength as he spent hours searching through the rubble for something he then kept wrapped within a cloth. He has not been seen since the fight, but there are certainly rumours that he made it off the island and returned to Old Tyre.

Aldfrith's Hovel

By day, Aldfrith is careful to stay out of sight; he can see perfectly well at night thanks to the eyes Belaquin gave him. He has a reduced need for food, but scavenges under cover of darkness for scraps and water. It is his intention to wait for the furore to die down, then to try and sneak aboard another ship travelling west.



Before Taking the Cross, Aldfrith was a skilled hunter and he has laid a number of traps for anyone that tries to sneak inside his hovel (See Map 1). This crude structure is built from scraps of wood, roofed with sail-cloth and palm leaves.

1. Aldfrith has dug a crude moat around his home, and placed a board across it near the entrance. The board has been deliberately weakened; if any significant pressure is placed upon it, it will break noisily. The hole beneath the pit is just over a metre deep. This is not enough to cause significant damage to a character who falls in, but a Hard (-40%) Athletics Test is required to avoid falling prone.
2. Hidden beneath a ridge of sand that traces the threshold to the hovel, are several caltrops. These have a 50% chance of hitting any character who enters the hovel without taking care to avoid the ridge. The caltrops inflict 1 point of damage on an intruder with unarmoured soles, and reduce Movement by 50% until the wound heals.
3. When Aldfrith fled from Jaffa, he brought a companion with him, a dog he refers to simply as Mutt. Normal dogs will have nothing to do with him since his change but Mutt shares both his afflictions – having been similarly experimented upon – and his shelter.

Aldfrith keeps Mutt tethered at the mouth of the hovel during the day, then takes him out at night when he goes scavenging. The dog will bark if it detects any intruders approaching the hovel, and bite them if they enter.

Mutt

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	2
STR	11	1–3	Right Hind Leg	1/4	Damage Modifier	–1D2
CON	14	4–6	Left Hind Leg	1/4	Magic Points	10
SIZ	6	7–9	Hindquarters	1/5	Movement	10m
INT	5	10–12	Forequarters	1/6	Strike Rank	+11
POW	10	13–15	Right Fore Leg	1/3		
DEX	16	16–18	Left Fore Leg	1/3		
CHA	11	19–20	Head	1/4		

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	S/T	50%	1D6	As for Head

NOTES

Mutt may be soothed with a Hard (-40%) Influence roll. The Games Master may make this Test easier for a character with a background tending animals.



4. Aldfrith's hovel contains a single room, beneath a covering of tattered cloth. He no longer needs to sleep, but has set out a blanket where he lies down to think. There is also a linen-wrapped parcel of food. Aldfrith is unable to keep down much of what he eats, but clings desperately to the last vestiges of normal human behaviour.

Aldfrith will attempt to fight his way through any intruders and flee, screaming repeatedly that he just wants to be left alone. It is important he comes across as a victim rather than a villain. Until such time as he is captured, the players will not be able to reason with him.

Aldfrith has buried the Sword of Joab within this room, wrapped inside an oiled rag.

Speaking With Aldfrith

The best way to get Aldfrith to open up and share what he knows is through persuasion – in particular, the application of empathy. Any character who speaks to him as a human being and demonstrates sympathy for his predicament will quickly gain his trust.

Conversely, characters who attempt to intimidate or torture him will get nowhere; he barely experiences pain and has suffered more than the players can ever know.

Assuming the players can persuade Aldfrith to talk, he will reveal the following.

- His name is Aldfrith Linn.
- He was born twenty seven years ago in Cumbria.
- He died in the massacre of Hattin in 1187.
- He awoke in what he thought was Hell; he was tortured and his body changed by men who served someone called the Anointed.
- After several months, he was moved to a new prison, where he underwent further experimentation.
- There were many others like him there, and he heard mention that an army was being created to fight the Christians.
- He escaped after being moved to the city of Jaffa.
- Once free, he was drawn north by a force he cannot explain.
- This led him to Tyre and, ultimately, to a sword buried in the ruins.
- Being in possession of the sword makes Aldfrith feel more whole.

The only place that Aldfrith can describe in any detail is the warehouse from which he escaped in Jaffa, which was located overlooking the city's harbour. A sign hung above the entrance depicted three pomegranates and a palm tree. Aldfrith correctly speculates this is the symbol of the merchant who owns the warehouse (Ali ibn Kareem al Jaffa).

Aldfrith never saw the outside of the prison in Jubala; he does not even know that was where he was being held.

Over-zealous Players

For the players to progress further with the adventure, they really need to speak with Aldfrith. In the heat of battle though, it is conceivable they will get carried away and simply kill him.

However, as Aldfrith is not alive in the conventional sense, this can be dealt with without too much difficulty. Even if mortally wounded, Aldfrith need not die – at least, not straight away. As the techromantic ichor, powders and mechanical workings spill from his dying body he will ask to make a final confession. Who better to listen to such frank words of repentance than a priest?

In this way, the players can learn what they need to before Aldfrith passes.

What to do with Aldfrith?

Assuming that Aldfrith survives the encounter with the players, they will then need to decide what to do with him.

If they ask Aldfrith his intentions, he will explain he is drawn westwards – just as he was drawn to the Sword of Joab. If the players have not yet discovered this relic he will reveal it to them at this point. Aldfrith speculates that God still has work for him in recovering holy items that have been lost.

Aldfrith will not join the party – at least, not willingly. If the players decide to keep him captive (perhaps seeing him as a potential sniffer-dog for locating relics), he will try to escape at every opportunity. The further he is moved from Cyprus, the more desperate he will become.

Giving up the Sword of Joab will not be an easy thing for Aldfrith to do, but he will hand the relic over to an individual whom he believes to be holy. Aldfrith will instinctively trust any character who succeeds with a Divine Fervour Test, or he can be persuaded in some other way.

Conformist guardian priests will likely elect to dispatch him once he has revealed what he knows. In death, Aldfrith's face will lose its anxious expression, and he will finally seem to be at peace.

Heading to Jaffa

From Tyre to Jaffa is a journey of about 140 miles, southwards along the coast. It is not a simple passage, however.

During 1189, this area of the Levant is patrolled by forces loyal to Saladin, searching for Christian soldiers and spies. In addition, there are groups of bandits, loyal to no one but themselves, who prey upon pilgrims and merchants.

Travel By Sea

If the players wish to reduce their chances of encountering difficulties, they may elect to travel by sea. There will be costs involved, but a ship from Tyre can reach Jaffa in two days. Unless the players can successfully disguise themselves though, they will encounter difficulties when they dock. Generally Arabs and travellers from the southern Mediterranean are granted access to the city. Northern Europeans are likely to be turned away, or even clapped in irons. A chartered ship can weigh anchor a few miles from the city and row passengers ashore, but there is a chance of being spotted by patrols.

A chartered ship, travelling from Tyre to Jaffa, will typically cost 200 SP.

Passage aboard a ship already making the journey runs to 10 SP a head. There will be a wait of 1-6 days for such a ship to be ready to depart.

Through the Desert

Alternatively, the players could avoid the more heavily patrolled coast and take a more circuitous route through the desert. This is unadvisable without a guide; one can be acquired in Tyre for 20 SP.

Locating a guide in an unfamiliar country is not difficult; you need simply go to the marketplace and let it be known you are searching for one. Acquiring a guide who is good at his job and will not try to lead you into an ambush is an altogether different affair.

Players who try to locate a guide may do so using a combination of Culture, Language and Commerce tests. These should be assigned bonuses or penalties according to how sensible their ideas are and how well they role-play any exchange with locals.

A single failed roll will hike up the price. Two failed rolls will see the players following a guide who has very little idea where he is going or where vital oases are located. Three failed rolls or a fumble will see the players acquiring a deceitful rogue who will guide them into the waiting arms of his bandit companions. The Games Master may elect to make these rolls in secret, on behalf of the players.

The Direct Route

If the players elect simply to follow the coastline south, the Games Master should use the following guide to determine what they encounter during each day of travel (typically about 50 miles).

D6 ROLL	RESULT
1	No encounter
2	Christian pilgrims travelling towards Jerusalem
3	An armed merchant caravan
4	2-7 mounted scouts from Saladin's army
5	Bandits, 4-14 men on horseback
6	A mounted Saracen patrol, 3-18 men strong

The Games Master should feel free to modify either the table or the roll according to the particular circumstances of the players. If, for example, they elect only to travel at night you may wish to roll twice and choose the lower result.

A City of Old

Jaffa – known formerly as Joppa, and by a dozen other names – dates roughly back to 7,500 BC. It is a city rich in history and legend, having been governed by a succession of rulers including Egyptians, Canaanites, Babylonians, Alexander the Great and King Solomon, the last of whom used the port as a means to ship in cedar-wood needed to build the great temple in Jerusalem.

In recent years, the city has shifted between Christian and Moslem control. It was conquered in 1100 during the First Crusade, but fell to Saladin's forces in 1187. All things being equal, the city will surrender to Richard the Lionheart in September 1191.

The city's natural harbour provides birthing room for dozens of ocean-going vessels. During the Third Crusade, trade is limited to those individuals welcome in the city; in other words, those viewed as either loyal to Saladin or at least deemed to pose no threat to his empire. A large chain may be raised across the harbour mouth, sealing it off to invaders or preventing those within from leaving.

According to Greek legend, an outcrop of rock near the harbour mouth marks the spot where Princess Andromeda was offered to a sea monster, in an attempt to appease the angry Gods. She was reputedly saved from this fate by Perseus who, according to some tales, slew the beast using the severed head of the gorgon Medusa.

Ancient Jewish tradition maintains the city was built by Japheth, a son of Noah, following the flood. In this tradition, the city's name can be traced back to its founder.

Jaffa

Rising on a hill that commands an impressive view of the Mediterranean Sea, the great city of Jaffa has been an important strategic site for thousands of years. Over the centuries it has passed from Christian to Moslem hands several times, but is currently under the command of Saladin's army.

The City Gates

The city of Jaffa is surrounded by an ancient wall, some four metres high. Along its length, seven watchtowers gaze out over the desert and scan the harbour to the west.

There are three entrances granting access to the city; the North, East and South Gates. In these troubled times, they are all well-guarded. Mounted scouts patrol the roads leading to Jaffa, and a dozen well-trained warriors stand watch at each portal, checking those coming in or out of the city. If an alarm is sounded, a further dozen men will arrive every 3D6 rounds.

In all, some eight hundred infantry and two hundred light cavalry and horse-archers are stationed in the city. Added to this, Sheikh Ramul ibn Zaim (Saladin's lieutenant charged with governing the city) has a personal guard of seventy men.

Getting Inside the City

By far, the players' best route into the city is through cunning and guile.

They will be checked along with everyone else if they enter through one of the gates. This will include an inspection of any baggage they might have with them. The guards should use their Perception skill to try to locate anything out of the ordinary. If the players have gone to the effort of hiding things effectively, this test may be opposed by Stealth, Disguise or another appropriate skill.

If anything out of the ordinary is discovered – such as lots of weapons and/or armour – the players can expect to have these items confiscated. If they are found trying to smuggle individuals into the city (particularly northern Europeans), they will all be arrested and thrown into gaol.

Climbing over the wall is possible, but realistic only at night. If the players elect to climb the wall at a spot furthest from the two closest watch towers, successful Athletics (Climb) and Stealth tests are all that will be required. Elsewhere, and the players efforts will be opposed by watchmen (Perception 50%).

The other alternative is to come in via the harbour on the western side of the city. A small rowboat might be made it ashore or the players might elect to swim. The former requires two successful Boating tests and two successful opposed Stealth tests. The latter requires three successful Swim tests and just a single opposed Stealth test.

The Warehouse District

Overlooking the long stretch of headland that houses Jaffa's harbour are more than thirty warehouses. These are located among a sprawl of cheap housing, stalls and bazaars.

By day the harbour is a busy place, despite the ongoing conflict between Moslems and Christians. Ships from northern cities such as Acre and those from Egypt move in and out of Jaffa on a daily basis.

At night, the docks are frequented by various unsavoury characters but are far less rowdy than typical Christian-held ports. Drinking – though it occurs – is far less acceptable. Accordingly, behaviour is better and there are fewer easy targets for ne'er-do-wells to prey upon.

Three Pomegranates and a Palm Tree

There is only one warehouse that bears the symbol identified by Aldfrith when he was being held in the city. Many of the locals will recognise the mark of Ali ibn Kareem al Jaffa.

Experienced guardian priests may be reluctant to enter the warehouse without first investigating the man who owns it or questioning the locals to see if they can learn anything useful. The application of Streetwise, Influence and other social skills are most useful for this. The locals all speak Arabic but, as with any large port, a multitude of other languages are understood. Of course, if the players try to conduct their business in French or Latin they will quickly draw attention to themselves!

Ali ibn Kareem al Jaffa

Ali ibn Kareem is a respected merchant, born in Jaffa. He has a small house in the southern part of the city, but has not been in residence there for some time. It is understood his holdings are mainly located in Acre and Antioch.

If the players investigate the house, they will discover a lone custodian (Nazeef) who keeps the place tidy and ensures nobody tries to steal anything. He does not hear from his master when he is away and the last time Ali ibn Kareem visited was five months ago. He stayed for a single night,

collecting money accrued from rental of his properties, then left. Nazeef does not expect to see him again soon.

Nazeef knows nothing about his master's business transactions. However, he is aware that a number of letters are kept inside the office. If the players can gain access to the letters, they can discover a deal was made four years ago, securing the use of the warehouse. The name on the lease is Belaquin – an odd name that cannot be traced to any particular culture. Payment is made every six months on a rolling arrangement: a man (it has been a different one each time) comes to the house and pays 200 pieces of gold for the next six months use of the warehouse.

Inside the office, there is also a money-box. This holds the funds accrued from Ali ibn Kareem's remaining ventures in Jaffa, all rents on properties. The box holds 276 gold pieces.

Local Knowledge

A little poking around – and the greasing (or twisting) of a few palms – will unearth a few details about the warehouse. It is known that whoever rents out this property has a long-standing arrangement. The building has not been available for years.

The warehouse is always well-guarded, though very little seems to come in or out.

Players who are especially persistent, skilful or lucky will uncover a story dating back almost a year. One night, there was some sort of commotion within the warehouse. The guards all rushed inside and there was the sound of a scuffle. The following day, the event was hushed-up, and that evening three new guards were on duty, their predecessors having apparently left the city on urgent business. Unsurprisingly, they have never been seen again – and were, in fact, killed by one of the creatures stored within the warehouse.

Not the Only Snoopers

If the players manage three or more successful Skill Test while searching for information on the warehouse and/or Ali ibn Kareem al Jaffa, they will discover they are not the only ones who have been asking such questions. Two others, a man and a woman, have been making similar enquiries.

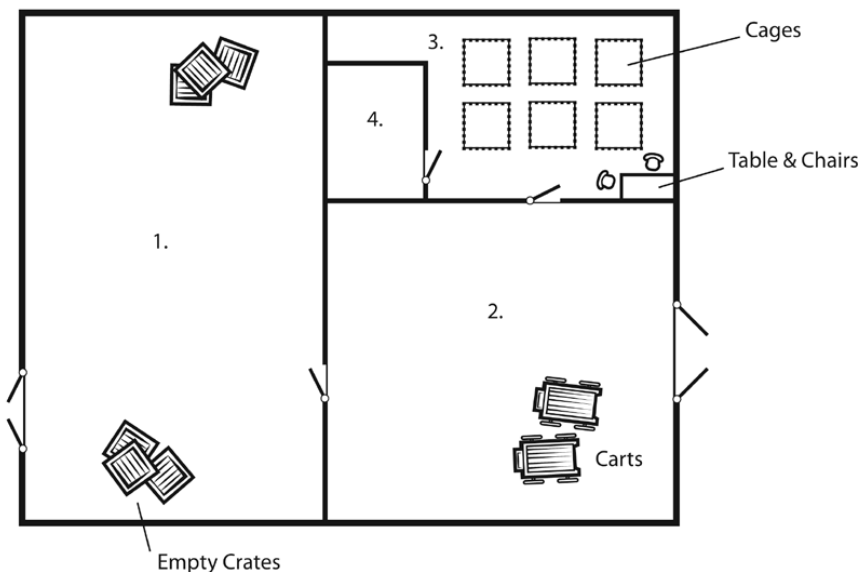
There is no way to track this pair down at this point, but the players can acquire a description. The man was taken for a Persian, the woman was black-skinned like the people of Africa. Both wore local garb and spoke Arabic.

Entering the Warehouse

The warehouse (see Map 2) is guarded both day and night, but this is not unusual; all the warehouses near the harbour are protected. Four men patrol the perimeter – two at the front, two at the back. Two further men are located inside (use the Bandits on page 99, but without recurve bows). Every hour or so, they exit the warehouse through either the front or back entrance, circle the building to see all is well and then go back inside.

Warehouse Interior

The interior of the warehouse is dingy. There are narrow barred windows set high in walls of Rooms 1 and 2 that provide only faint illumination. The windows in Room 3 have been sealed up from within using sturdy boards. There are no windows at all in Room 4. These last two rooms are lit with lamps.



1. This is first of two large areas that dominate the interior of the warehouse. The first thing players will notice when entering this room is how empty it is. There are a few crates containing supplies of dried fish and fruit but nothing else. This is not a working warehouse.

2. The other large room contains two carts, along with equipment needed to harness two horses to each. There is no sign of the animals themselves, however, nor dung to indicate any have been here recently.

3. The single door leading into this room is unusually sturdy. It is fitted with a heavy, well-crafted lock (-40% Modifier on Mechanisms tests). What is more, three iron bolts can fasten it shut from the outside. If the two interior watchmen are out on patrol these will have been slid into place and the room locked; otherwise, the room will be locked but not bolted.

The key to this door is held by the senior watchmen – Tawfik, by day; Omar by night.

Inside the room are six separate cells, set into the centre of the room some 2 metres apart. The cells are identical in size and construction. They measure 3 metres by 3 metres around the base and are 2.5 metres high. The walls of each cell are formed by 3 cm thick iron bars, set 10 cm apart. These criss-cross overhead creating a roof for each cage.

A small metal door has been set into each cage, along with a robust lock (-20% Modifier on Mechanisms tests). Each of the cages is also obscured by large sheets draped across them.

If the two interior watchmen have not been dealt with already, they will be seated inside this room – chatting or playing dice. In addition, two of Belaquin’s creations that have proven themselves reliable will be on guard duty. Once hyenas, they have undergone techromantic surgery that has made them far more dangerous. Their teeth have been replaced with metal fangs and skulls reinforced with iron in order to protect their augmented brains.

The hyenas will attack any intruders on sight – unless ordered not to do so by the watchmen.

Techromantic Hyenas (2)

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3
STR	18	1-3	Right Hind Leg	3/5	Damage Modifier	+1D2
CON	14	4-6	Left Hind Leg	3/5	Magic Points	17
SIZ	9	7-9	Abdomen	3/6	Movement	8m
INT	8	10-12	Chest	3/7	Strike Rank	+15
POW	3	13-15	Right Fore Leg	3/4		
DEX	19	16-18	Left Fore Leg	3/4		
CHA	7	19-20	Head	7/5		

Armour: Thick Hide (3) and Metal plating (7)
Traits: Bite and Hold, Techromantic Vigour
Notable Skills: Athletics 65%, Brawn 70%, Perception 70%, Resilience 60%, Stealth 60%, Track 68%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	M/T	80%	1D6+2	As per Head

NOTES

Bite and Hold: Once a techromantic hyena successfully strikes an opponent, it locks its jaw and will not let go. Worse than this, it continues to tear at the flesh in its mouth until such time as its opponent is dead – or the limb being held is severed.

Each action after it first hits, the hyena automatically inflicts further damage – with the attack being treated as a Sundering attack. The gripped creature suffers a -40% penalty on all actions for as long as he is gripped. While gripping an enemy, the hyena may not attempt to Evade attacks.

Techromantic Vigour: This creature does not feel pain, and neither loses the use of a limb nor risks unconsciousness when it suffers a Major Wound.

The Six Cages

Though there is little else of interest in the room – just a crate of food, some blankets and a couple of lanterns – the six cages will certainly draw the players' attention.

A search of the ground (and successful Tracking test) will reveal something has recently been dragged, kicking and screaming, into one of the cages (A).

If anyone lifts the covering on this cage, they will expose a grotesque creature within. It was human once; now it has a swollen vulture-head sewn onto its shrivelled neck.

The creature will be terrified of any newcomers, shrinking away from them and screeching in terror. It has limited intelligence, and can be reasoned with, but cannot speak. If questioned, it is unable to provide the players with any useful intelligence.

If the players attack the creature, it will be unable to defend itself effectively.

It was Belaquin's intention to use this creation as a scout; its vision is far more acute than even a man with a telescope.

4. This room serves as a small office. It is kept locked at all times, and the senior guard has the key.

Inside there is a chair and desk. Resting upon the desktop is a box containing four stoppered glass vials. Each contains a powerful sleeping draught (*Deus Vult Sacerdos Custos Training Guide*, page 46). These are used to sedate Belaquin's creations before moving them onto the ships.

All of the guards know what the vials are for. Alternatively, they can be identified with a Lore (Alchemy) test.

Questioning the Guards

All of the warehouse guards know what is stored inside the warehouse and, though unsure of exactly where these monsters came from, believe they are being used to rid their land of Christian invaders. This, and the fact they are well-paid, has ensured their discretion.

If suitably motivated, any one of them can reveal the creatures in the warehouse are moved to and from the town of Jubala, located half a day's ride (12 miles) to the east, or are shipped off to other locations. Shipments arrive on an infrequent basis, perhaps every few months. They do not know when the next is due.

Typically, Christian captives and animals arrive via ship and are stored in the warehouse before being carted to Jubala. On a far less frequent basis, the results of Belaquin's experiments are transported back from Jubala before being loaded aboard a ship and moved on. None of the guards know the names of the ships, nor their destination; members of the crew come and collect the monsters and move them on under cover of darkness.

If the players kill all of the guards before they have a chance to question any of them, it is worth remembering that a new shift of six men will arrive at 7 o'clock – either p.m. or a.m. depending upon when the players make their move. These men can also reveal the information above.

An Orthodox Intervention

The players are not the only ones investigating the contents of Ali ibn Kareem's warehouse. Two members of the Orthodox Order are also interested in discovering what is being stored inside. Just

Extremely Cautious Players

Players being what they are – a frequently paranoid bunch (and with good reason, let us be honest) – they may elect to check the area around the warehouse for other hidden observers. Zahra and Tahmin have had plenty of time to choose a suitable balcony and conceal themselves. They should be considered to have rolled 80 for any Stealth vs. Perception tests to locate them.

If the players discover Zahra and Tahmin, both members of the Orthodox Order will be more interested in talking than fighting, but will defend themselves if necessary. If it comes to blows, they will try to retreat and hide if possible.

like the players, they have been researching the owner and items coming in and out of the building – indeed, the players may well have picked up on this fact already.

As soon as there are sounds of a disturbance from within the warehouse, Tahmin and Zahra will move from their hiding place and enter the building. Their initial intention will be to help the players and capture or destroy any unnatural beasts. If the players attack them, they will make one attempt to explain they are friends. If the hostility continues, they will attempt to flee and hide in the city.

An Offer of Aid

Once the players have met with Tahmin and Zahra, the two members of the Orthodox Order will have a proposal to make. They offer a temporary alliance, in order to track down and deal with whoever is creating the monsters.

Members of the Orthodox Order have, officially at least, been excommunicated. This places the players in a difficult position. They will need to decide whether to accept or rebuff the offer of assistance – and whether to attempt to kill or capture the Orthodox guardian priests before them.

If Tahmin and Zahra's offer is turned down, they will try to leave peacefully. However they will then attempt to shadow the players from a distance, using Tahmin's eagle to spy on them. In this event, they will present themselves to the players once more when the party reaches Jubala and make the same offer of assistance.

Jubala

A small town 12 miles east of Jaffa, Jubala (see Map 3) hosts the Anointed's main magical laboratory outside Jerusalem. His chief aide, Belaquin, oversees the experiments here, fashioning techromantic beasts that will be of use to the Sultan.

The town has no defensive wall, as do the larger coastal cities to the west, but is sufficiently small that it has been spared attention by either Christian or Moslem armies. Nevertheless, the townsfolk are wary of strangers – especially those who look like they might be Christian. All men in the town can handle a sword or bow and will defend themselves if threatened (use the Bandits on page 99 but lower all weapon skills by 10%). All told, there are two hundred people in Jubala, half of which are children.

As the players approach the town, Belaquin's house will dominate their view. It stands upon a ridge of rock, accessible via a twisting pathway spiralling up to the gates. Other buildings in the town, many of which are just a single storey, are traditional flat-roofed Arabian structures painted white.

A Frightened People

It will be apparent to anyone who interacts with the citizens of Jubala that they are on edge. They are wary of strangers, as are many people in the region, but it is more than that. They are palpably afraid.

Before the players can learn anything about the source of this fear, they will need to win the trust of one or more residents. At best, any newcomers will initially be regarded with suspicion.

A character who appears to be Christian or northern European will be shunned. In fact, if they attempt to buy anything or even linger too long, the men of the town will become progressively more aggressive. They will stop short of trying to kill such unwelcome infidels, but are not beyond assaulting and robbing them and dumping them on the edge of town.

Characters who can pass as Moslems or neutral foreigners will still be questioned as to their destination and reasons for visiting the town, but will not encounter aggression unless they cause trouble. They will be allowed to buy things and rent a room in the town's only unused building.

Presented below are some of the ways in which the players might earn the citizens' trust.

Lost Oasis

About two miles north-east of Jubala is a large oasis. The water contains fish, and numerous fig-trees grow upon its banks. Unfortunately, it has been plagued recently by bandits, who tend to lurk nearby and attack anyone who uses it. The townsfolk have been unable to deal with the problem themselves, as the bandits are too canny to become engaged in an open battle, and a plea to Belaquin fell on deaf ears.

If the players can deal with the bandits, and specifically their leader, Bakir, they will acquire a lot of good will.

Bakir has the same characteristics as a bandit, but all of his combat skills are 30% higher.

Piety

The people of Jubala are devout Moslems. Characters who are willing to attend a service in the mosque or perform other pious acts will win favour with the locals.

Generosity

Jubala has suffered under Belaquin's rule. The people are forced to pay taxes that ostensibly go to support Saladin's army. In reality, as many suspect, Belaquin skims a healthy profit.

There are no homeless in Jubala, but several locals live in shacks that do little to keep out the harsh cold of desert nights. These people are poorly-dressed and subsist on a meagre diet of flat-bread and goat-milk. Players who treat them kindly and ease their burden will find friends among the poor.

Local Rumours

Once a degree of trust is established, the appropriate use of skills such as Influence and Streetwise can turn up the following information.

- A council of elders, led by Abdullah bin Ali, officially governs the town. However, in recent years a man named Belaquin has effectively taken charge. Nothing happens in the town now without his say-so.

- Some people believe Belaquin is not even a Moslem. He rarely attends the mosque, and when he does shows little reverence.
- Belaquin not only has a harem within his house, but also exotic courtesans who come to visit.
- His house, and the area around it, is forbidden. Nobody wants to go near it, especially at night. There are rumours it is cursed, and strange noises – like animalistic screams – have been heard from within.
- Every few months wagons arrive or leave Belaquin's house. The contents, which are quite large, are always hidden and guarded.

In addition, one woman – Fatima – has a grisly tale to tell. Her husband, Salim, went out after dark one night to look for their goat, which had chewed its way free of its leash. The following morning, when Salim had not returned, Fatima decided to search herself. Half-buried in the sand leading to Belaquin's house, she found a bloodied piece of her husband's clothing, along with one of his fingers.

Belaquin's House

When the players first see this building, read or paraphrase the following.

A column of ash-coloured rock more than a hundred metres across and almost half as high protrudes from the shifting sand. It looms above the squat buildings of Jubala like a giant above children. Twisting about the rock is a wide pathway leading up to an impressive set of metal gates set into a long wall of carved stone. Visible beyond this is a large house, flat-roofed but for a large golden dome. Protruding from this glistening hemisphere is rod or shaft of some kind.

From time to time, figures move beyond the walls – the long spears in their hands indicating they are guards of some sort.

Players who circle the rock upon which Belaquin's house is built will discover two interesting features. The first is a stand of palm trees and bushes growing about its southern face. The second is a vent in the rock, issuing foul gases.

Hidden Entrance

The trees are fed by water from a stream that flows out of a concealed opening in the rock. The opening is just a metre wide and a little higher, and quickly tapers away to nothing. However, the passage of the stream confirms the existence of an underground channel. In order to traverse this route, players will need to dive beneath the water and swim upstream eight metres.

There is only room for one person to swim through the channel at a time and the Games Master should apply stiff penalties to the Swim test for any characters who try to wear armour or carry lots of equipment with them (see the *Legend Core Rulebook*, page 93 for more on swimming in armour).

The channel emerges in Room 23 (see Map 5).

Vent

Some four metres above the ground on the western face of the rock is a fissure one metre long and half as wide. Around the edges of this rent are traces of brackish residue. From time to time, noxious smells issue from within, accompanied by a mechanical whir.

This opening is a vent that leads down into an alchemical chamber within Belaquin's laboratory (Room 21). Characters who climb up and peer into the vent will find that it is much too small to climb through – although, it can be blocked up.

If the vent is blocked the alchemical room will, over about twelve hours, fill with harmful fumes. This will be enough to incapacitate whoever is inside the room. It will take 1D100 minutes for this

to be discovered – at which point, steps will be taken to unblock the opening and to search for other signs of sabotage.

Scaling the Rockface

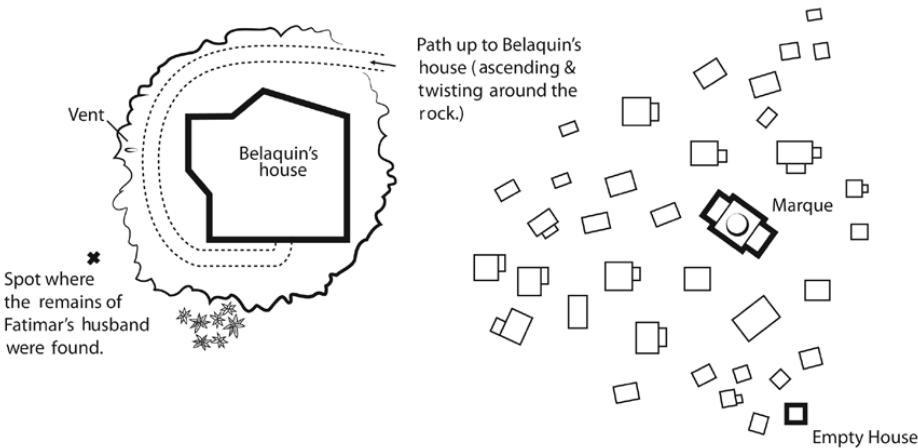
Players who elect to scale the rock supporting Belaquin’s house will find it a difficult climb. Three Hard (40%) Athletics tests are required to reach the level of the house on the northern, southern and eastern sides. Two tests are sufficient to climb up the western side, as the twisting pathway ascends part of the way. However, none of the windows located beyond the wall surrounding the house are large enough for someone to climb through.

The players’ best route is to scale the rock beneath the north-western portion of the house. They may then drop down off the wall and enter the House via windows in the Hall (Room 13). This spot is indicated on Map 4.

Area Descriptions

The grounds of Belaquin’s house (which encompass roughly 2,000 square metres) are surrounded by a 3 metre high wall, which adjoins the house itself on the western side. The rock upon which the site stands falls away on the northern, eastern and western sides, creating a sheer drop some five metres below the base of the wall. On the southern side, the road rise high enough to draw level with the house for the last 25 metres or so. The rest of the road ascends in a steep, swirling spiral around the circumference of the rock.

Several stone pathways link the different buildings within the grounds. Lining the main path from the gates are two parallel lines of lemon trees. A variety of other bushes and shrubbery is dotted about the grounds. Narrow channels flowing out of the water garden near the eastern wall ensure that these are well-irrigated.



Keys

Many of the rooms within Belaquin's house (not his Laboratory) are hidden behind locked doors. For the sake of convenience, each key opens several doors.

Key Designation	Rooms/Areas accessed with this key
Brass	1
Iron	4, 5, 6, 13
Silver	8A
Gold	10, 11, 15, 19 (plus special)
Jade	3
Black	20
White	12

Belaquin has the only two Gold keys; he keeps one on his person, and one in his room(15). These are master keys, which open *every* area in the house and Laboratory, and are the only keys to open 10, 11, 15 and 19.

Abdul Batin has Brass, Iron, Jade, Black and White keys.

All of the guards have Iron keys.

The steward of the house (Salim bin Usef) has Black and Iron keys.

Rooms without a listed key do not have locks.

1. GATES

The gates to Belaquin's estate are forged from thick iron bars (AP 8, HP50), 3 metres high. They are barred from within, using a heavy iron rod.

In the centre of the gates is a skilfully fashioned image of a blazing sun, half eclipsed by the moon. Characters who succeed with a Hard (40%) Lore (Occult) test will recognise this symbol; it is the emblem of Malik Dhukan, King of the Djinn. This legendary figure is believed to be the ruler of all Djinn on Earth.

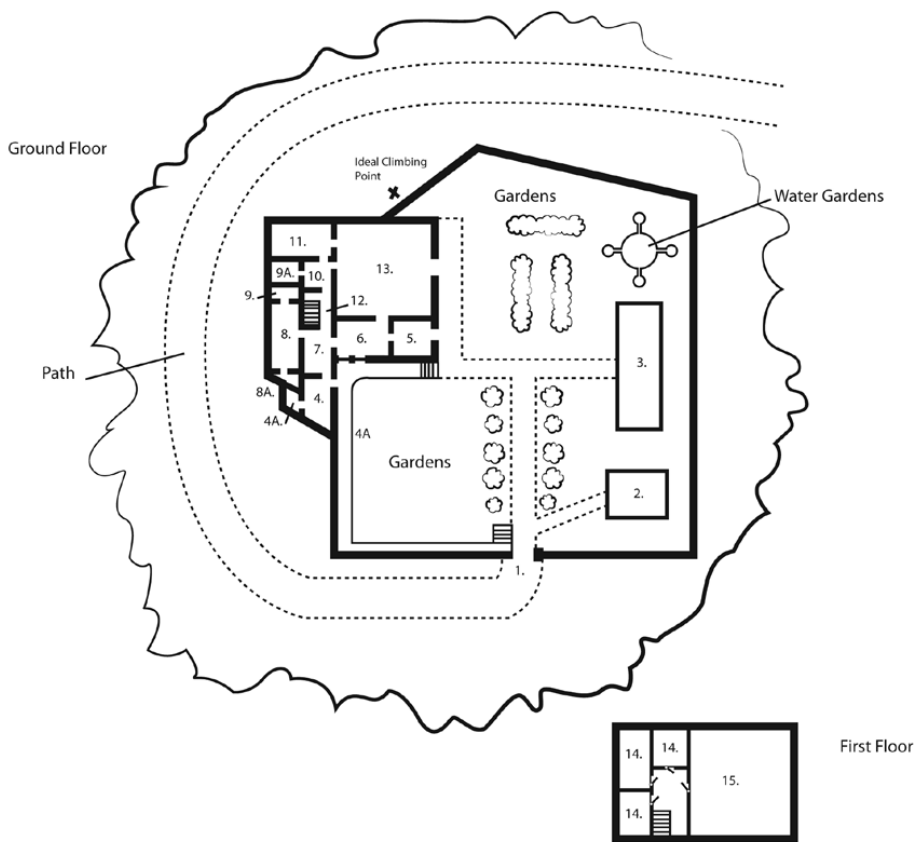
2. STABLES

A groom and stable-hand take care of Belaquin's three magnificent horses and tend to the steeds of visitors.

Belaquin's horses are all white Arabians, two mares and a stallion. His favourite, Scheherazade, measures 15-hands. Combining strength, endurance, alertness and temperament, she is a horse fit for a king.

3. HAREM

Within this opulently decorated building, Belaquin houses his concubines. There is a large central room, containing a marble pool and numerous large sofas, adorned with cushions. The room is divided by a number of silken drapes that hang from the ceiling.



A pair of eunuchs tend to and watch over the harem. Each night, they sleep in the main chamber. For the eunuchs, have use the Saracen Warriors on page 100, but they are unarmoured and carry only a jambiya dagger.

Four doors on the eastern side of the building lead to bedrooms for each of the concubines. At present, only three are occupied.

3A

A Cathayan women named Jing-Ma resides in this room. She has won favour with her master by bestowing upon him the sensual blessings of her eastern homeland. Unknown to Belaquin, however, she is a spy in the service of the Cathayan Coterie. She is tasked with gathering information of Belaquin's strange new magic and returning it to her masters.

Jing-Ma may prove a help or a hindrance to the players depending upon how events unfold. If she thinks she can use the players to gain access to Belaquin's work, she will seek to do so. She has no skills in magic or combat, but is a talented actress (Influence 80%, Insight 70%, Streetwise 60%, Seduction 90%) and can play the part of a damsel in distress very convincingly. She will offer her services as a guide (she knows the layout of the house) while seeking access to Belaquin's secrets.

If the players seem inept or are caught in a sticky situation, she will seek to betray them and continue with her mission.

3B

A Persian by birth, Shyra has been a companion of Belaquin for almost five years. She does not love him, but fears him greatly. This fear will prevent her doing anything to aid the players, even if it might mean her freedom.

3C

Belaquin's final concubine is a French woman, calling herself Madeleine de Guillarme. A courtesan of rare skill, she has tended to the needs of kings and cardinals, and has agreed to stay with Belaquin for three months. She will not involve herself in any plot to oust her employer, ensuring her own safety as she has always done, with discretion and neutrality.

4. GUARD ROOM

Eight well-trained guards are housed in this room. Between them they patrol the grounds and oversee access to the estate.

Typically four guards will be in this room resting, whilst their four companions watch the walls, gate or circle the gardens. For these guards, use the Saracen Warriors on page 100.

The captain of the Belaquin's guard, Abdul Batin, has his own room, accessed through a door in the western wall.

4A

A raised walkway runs along the inside of the wall along its southern and western-most points. This walkway is high enough to allow guards to peer over the wall and observe visitors coming along the path up to the house.

5. ENTRANCE HALL

Visitors to the house are ushered into this room, where there is space to sit (and wait). The walls are adorned with paintings, depicting beautiful oases and Arabian horses.

6. SUN ROOM

Large sections of the southern wall and ceiling of this room are made from glass, an expensive luxury. This ensures the room is always hot, even at night. A number of exotic plants, housed in ornate clay urns, are dotted about. A smaller dining table than the one found in Room 15 provides Belaquin with somewhere more intimate to eat his meals when he is alone or with just one or two guests.

7. KITCHEN

Equipped with a number of ovens and a stone larder designed to preserve food, Belaquin's two cooks prepare meals in this room.

8. SERVANTS' QUARTERS

There are 12 servants in Belaquin's house, all of whom reside in this room.

- 1 Steward
- 3 Footmen
- 1 Groom
- 1 Stable Hand
- 2 Cooks
- 1 Gardener
- 3 Maids

A number of drapes, hung from the ceiling demarcate different sleeping areas and provide some privacy for the residents. All of these servants have proven themselves loyal to their master, and will not willingly betray him.

8A. Storage Area

Cleaning equipment, blankets, and other household items are stored here.

9 AND 9A. BATH CHAMBERS

Sophisticated plumbing that takes advantage of the spring located beneath the house provides both Belaquin (9A) and his servants (9) with bathing and toilet facilities.

10. STUDY

Belaquin uses this room, which adjoins his library, to pore over important letters and manuscripts, and conduct discreet meetings with his guests.

The furniture is an assortment of styles; upon an expertly crafted French desk rests an antique Greek urn, African masks adorn the walls, partially concealed by an elaborate Cathayan folding screen.

Hidden among the oddities that decorate his study is one of Belaquin's creations. It resembles a small rodent of indeterminate origin, its long-necked head tipped with a single lens-covered eye. Whenever Belaquin conducts meetings in this room, the creature, which he refers to as an oculus, observes all that transpires. The oculus is then able to project a flickering image of what it has seen. These images are silent and colourless, but a pronounced luminescence surrounds items or individuals infused with arcane energy. Belaquin has used the oculus to scrutinise many people over the years, identifying those with access to magical energies.

Hidden within the drawers of the desk are letters confirming Belaquin has been paying Ali ibn Kareem for the use of his warehouse in Jaffa. Others missives reveal Belaquin's spies have been watching important noblemen and clerics throughout the Levant, both Moslem and Christian. In particular, they have been monitoring the throneless King of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan, the Knights Templar and Saladin himself. The Games Master should feel free to add anyone else to this, as befits the plans and plots of his own campaign.

There is also a short letter from the Anointed to Belaquin in which the former tersely denies the latter's request to return to Jerusalem. There are no specifics regarding location, but this is significant as it reveals the city within which the Anointed's operation is based.

11. LIBRARY

More than eight hundred tomes, scrolls and manuscripts are arrayed on the shelves in this room. Most detail the geography, history and social customs of the countries Belaquin has visited. These include the kingdoms of the Danes in the north, arid African kingdoms and sweeping steppes north of the Great Wall in Cathay.

There are also numerous bestiaries detailing the creatures from various mythologies and folk tales. Access to these books can assist characters who wish to develop a number of skills. In essence, the books fulfil the role of a teacher, as shown below.

Skill	Equivalent Teacher Skill
Lore (Occult)	85%
Culture (Nordic)	80%
Culture (Cathay)	80%
Culture (Egypt)	75%
Culture (Africa)	70%
Culture (The Levant)	70%
Lore (Nordic)	75%
Lore (Cathay)	70%
Lore (Egypt)	75%
Lore (Africa)	70%
Lore (The Levant)	75%

12. STAIRWELL

A broad stone stairway leads up to the first floor. Tucked out of sight, beneath the rising staircase, is a small, sturdy door (AP 10, HP 30). This is secured with an ornate lock located in the centre of the door. The lock is fashioned in the likeness of a leering Djinni face and the key needs to be inserted between his teeth. Any attempt to pick the lock, which involves numerous bars and levers on the far side, incurs a 60% penalty.

Beyond this door are the stairs leading down to Belaquin's Laboratory.

13. HALL

This large, airy chamber contains an impressive table where Belaquin dines with important guests.

14. GUEST ROOMS

Three large rooms, beautifully decorated in the Arabian style, are situated in the western portion of the first floor. At present, Belaquin has no guests.

15. BELAQUIN'S CHAMBER

This enormous room is crowned with a viewing dome, from where the master of the house gazes at the stars.

The lower portion of the room contains a huge bed and three couches, festooned with cushions. Several wardrobes contain silken clothing, for both men and women. A narrow spiral stairway grants access to a walkway that encircles the base of the dome. From here, a ladder leads up to a viewing platform and a colossal telescope crafted from wood and brass. This device is centuries ahead of its time, and is Belaquin's most prized possession.

Belaquin's Laboratory

Cut into the heart of the rock upon which his house stands is Belaquin's laboratory. It is not a single chamber, but a succession of rooms, each facilitating a facet of his work.

The laboratory was cut from the rock using organic acid produced by one of the Anointed's creations (a monster that Belaquin has since taken, refined and reproduced). This gives each area a similar aesthetic; the walls look as though they were melted rather than hewn, and glisten oddly when light falls upon them.

Unless otherwise stated, each room is sealed by a heavy wooden door, reinforced with bands of iron (AP 6, HP 30). The hinges are made from sturdy metal, fixed deeply into the wall. The locks are all well-crafted (-30% Modifier on Mechanisms tests)

Belaquin's Location

Without interference, Belaquin's typical day runs thus.

6 a.m. till 8 a.m. – Rise (Room 15), breakfast (Room 6), bath (Room 9A) and dress (Room 15)

8 a.m. till 10 a.m. – Weapon training and exercise in the grounds

10 a.m. till midday – Techromantic work (Room 22)

Midday till 1 p.m. – Lunch (Room 6)

1 p.m. till 2 p.m. – Rest (Room 15) or study (Room 11): 50% chance of each

2 p.m. till 6 p.m. – Techromantic Work (Room 22)

6 p.m. till 8 p.m. – Walking the grounds and visiting the Harem (Room 3)

8 p.m. – 9 p.m. – Evening Meal (Room 6)

9 p.m. till 11 p.m. – Star-gazing (Room 15)

Of course, depending upon what the players do once they enter his house, his routine is liable to change. If he feels threatened, he will retreat into his laboratory.

If enemies flee from the grounds, Belaquin will summon a dozen fighting men from Jubala and pursue them with half of his remaining guards, unless he has been wounded, in which case he will wait for nightfall then release the leviathan (see Room 25).

In order to create a dramatically satisfying conclusion to the adventure, the Games Master should make it difficult for the players to confront Belaquin while he is alone. The Games Master need not fudge things too much (unless he wishes to, of course); Belaquin is a shrewd character who will seek to use the creations stored in the laboratory to aid him in any conflict with the players.

16. STAIRWAY

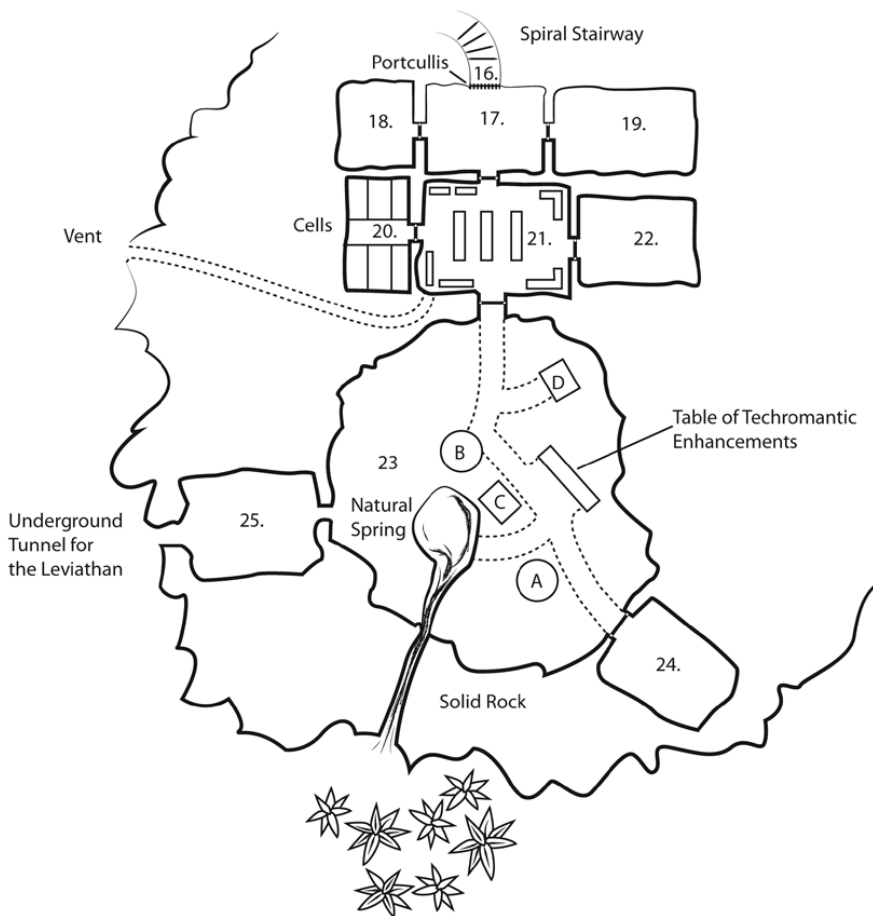
An irregular spiral stairway twists down through the rock, leading to Belaquin's laboratory.

At the base of the stairway is a small portcullis-gate. This thick, iron grid (AP 10, HP 50) rises on runners bolted into the stone. This is raised or lowered by rotating a metal wheel, embedded in the wall on the house-side. This is inaccessible from within, allowing the laboratory to be sealed if there is an emergency.

The portcullis doorway leads directly into Room 17.

17. GUARD ROOM

Two of Belaquin's men are stationed in this area and watch the entrance to the laboratory. Typically one will be stationed in Room 17, while the other is in Room 18 resting.



Between them, the guards hold a set of keys that open Rooms 18, 20, 21, 22 and 23.

The guard cannot open the portcullis gate from inside Room 17. However, he is able to pull a lever that prevents it from opening. If intruders are detected, he will attempt to do this and then alert Belaquin.

18. GUARD QUARTERS

This room doubles as a sleeping area for the guards monitoring the entrance to the laboratory and somewhere to store odds and ends equipment; metal bars, damaged tools, blankets, cloth, cleaning material and so forth.

19. BELAQUIN'S ROOM

This room is crammed with ancient books, scroll tubes and tattered pieces of parchment. These esoteric texts and bizarre schematics cover a desk that squats in the centre of the room. Collectively, these notes record Belaquin's techromatic knowledge and discoveries. Accordingly, they are an affront to the divine nature of existence, and their destruction should be a priority for any group of guardian priests.

There is also a strange device on the desk resembling a long thin whistle. This is the device Belaquin uses to recall the leviathan in Room 25.

Belaquin alone has a key to this room (Gold), which is secured with a fiendishly intricate lock (-80% Modifier on Mechanisms tests).

20. HOLDING CELLS

For his experiments, Belaquin needs a steady supply of subjects. There are six cells in this room, three of which are currently occupied. The first contains a lion, the second a crocodile, and the third a sickly-looking man.

The prisoner is Anton de Gasquet – a member of the Inquisition. While working undercover to investigate Belaquin's activities, he tried to finagle his way into the man's confidence, but discovered too late that Belaquin had known what he was doing all along.

After successfully resisting torture Gasquet was heavily drugged, and has been kept in this condition for some weeks.

21. ALCHEMICAL CHAMBER

Three long benches, each sporting alembics, glass vials, metal tripods and blackened jars, dominate this room. The air is thick with pungent aromas that have coated the walls in a sticky residue. Shelves line the walls, filled to bursting with alchemical ingredients of every kind – including some that Belaquin and his magi have refined themselves.

Typically two magi are present in this room, conducting alchemical procedures and experiments. They will use the various potions to hand in order to defend themselves, but their priority if faced with intruders will be to alert Belaquin.

The following alchemical concoctions can be found inside this chamber.

Flaredust (2)

Healing Draught (3)

Greek Fire (3)

In addition, there are some unique alchemical brews that Belaquin and his followers have devised.

Gravedust (2)

When the vial containing this grey powder is smashed, a cloud of ashen particles large enough to fill a small room is released into the air. These motes are a fine powder derived from ghoulish flesh and Death's Head Blossom. Inhalation can cause both asphyxiation and hallucination.

Application: Inhalation

Onset time: 1 combat round

Duration: Time spent inside cloud plus special

Resistance Time: Special

Potency: 45

Resistance: Resilience and Persistence

Conditions: Asphyxiation and Hallucination

Antidote/Cure: Moving out of the cloud ends the Asphyxiation effect; vomiting ends the hallucinations.

A character that inhales gravedust must make both Resilience and Persistence tests. Failure of the first causes Asphyxiation. Failure of the second causes Hallucination.

The hallucinations – which are always flavoured with images of death and decay – last for 1D3 hours. A character who makes himself sick can alleviate the symptoms in 1D3 minutes.

Fiendish Elixir (2)

Belaquin has worked long and hard to distil the power and vitality of various hellish monstrosities into a potion that his men can imbibe. This particular batch contains the blood of a demon, along with other ghastly ingredients.

Anyone who drinks it immediately suffers 1D8 Damage to the abdomen. Armour does not reduce this damage. Assuming the imbiber remains conscious, he boosts his STR, CON and SIZ by 6 for 1D6 hours. After this time, he suffers 2D3 levels of Fatigue.

22. MAGI'S ROOM

The six magi who serve Belaquin reside in this chamber. When not working, they are usually resting in this room or making infrequent sojourns about the grounds.

If confronted by the players (use the Bandits on page 99) they will each employ one of the following alchemical potions or bags and then try to escape in the chaos.

- Greek Fire
- Choking Dust
- Gravedust
- Flaredust

23. LABORATORY PROPER

This huge cavern contains the heart of Belaquin's operation. When players enter this room, read or paraphrase the following.

Before you is a vast cavern with walls of slick, glistening stone. The uneven ceiling is between four and six metres high, its recesses filled with shadow. A pool and stream bisect the chamber, the gently flowing water vanishing beneath the southern-most wall.

Placed irregularly about the cavern are strange mechanical devices. Some of these are larger than a wagon, with pipes, valves, wheels and cogs emerging from their metallic exteriors.

Unmistakably, above the rattle of the machinery and the hiss of escaping steam, you hear the anguished cries of something living.

In this room, Belaquin has implemented and improved upon the discoveries of his master. Beyond the numerous pipes and smaller machines, there are four large contraptions in this room, designated A to D on Map 5.

Machine A is a large metal cylinder. At the front, a translucent crystal window reveals the hazy outline of a creature inside, immersed in liquid. It is humanoid in size, but below the waist flares out in a squid-like fashion with multiple limbs.

This creature is an aquatic hybrid – combining aspects of a human, octopus, and jellyfish. Though able to deliver a nasty sting with its secondary tentacles (D6+1 Damage, negated entirely by armour), the creature is not aggressive.

If the players release it from its cage (there is a visible handle), it will collapse as the water around it gushes free and then immediately start to drown. Feebly, and with little success, it will try to crawl towards the pool in the centre of the chamber. Unless the players help it to reach the water (at which point it will vanish into the borehole through which the spring emerges), it will soon die of asphyxiation.

Machine B is a transparent crystal sphere 3 meters in diameter. A purple electrical field ripples about its interior. At the centre of the sphere, a vaporous form is held in place by the prongs of energy.

This device has imprisoned an ancient, and very knowledgeable, spirit. Using a speaking tube attached to the sphere, it is possible to ask the spirit questions. It will not answer at first – not until a lever attached to the tube is pulled. This delivers a surge of power, which clearly tortures the spirit and makes it answer 1D3 questions.

The spirit has the following skills.

Lore (Occult) 90%

Lore (Arabic History) 90%

Lore (Alchemy) 80%

Lore (Theology) 80%

This spirit is an excellent way for players to learn what Belaquin has been doing here.

Machines C and D are identical iron cages, each containing a techromantic beast. The first was once a gorilla; the second a werewolf in *Melding* form. The gorilla-creature has an enormously powerful torso, and protruding from its mouth are long serpentine fangs. The werewolf has diamond and metal claws affixed to its paws.

If either creature is released from its cage, it will indiscriminately attack any living creature it sees. The only exception to this is Belaquin, who has trained each beast to obey his commands.

Techromantic Enhancements

In addition to the cages, a long table has a series of smaller tools and oddities on its surface. A number of these are functioning devices.

Read or paraphrase the following to any character who examines the long table.

The peculiar items covering this long workbench are bizarre. Besides a host of half-constructed mechanical oddments are a fleshy brown organ, a conical device made from bone, and a bowl of fleshy liquid.

Living Liver

A successful Healing test identifies the brown organ as a human liver. If anyone touches it, it will spring to life, bounding forward with little, rippling jumps. Even more bizarre, it will try to climb inside the nearest person's mouth, then slither down into their guts. A successful Evade or Unarmed test can prevent this, otherwise the liver forces its way in.

Once inside a subject, the techromantic liver will consume the subject's own liver and take its place. This causes 1D4 Damage to the subject's Abdomen. A day after this process is complete, the subject will acquire an immunity to all poisons and venoms.

Necrotic Acid Spray

The hollow bone horn is affixed to a fleshy sphere, with a small sphincter-mouth at one end. From time to time, this pulsates unsettlingly.

If the sphere is squeezed, acid shoots out of the bony protuberance. This acid is engineered so as to only affect metal (causing 1D3 Damage for 2D3 rounds), leaving all other substances undamaged. The acid spurt has a range of 5 metres.

In order to keep this device 'alive' it must be fed 1 kg of soft organic matter each day, through its mouth.

Alongside the acid-sprayer is a sealed glass vial containing a clear, sticky paste. This is a neutralizing agent that can be used to protect metal from the corrosive effect of the spray.

Liquid Skin

This bowl contains a gloopy mixture that, when introduced to a wound, congeals to form a protective layer. It does not entirely heal an injury, but does prevent it from deteriorating further ss.

A character who smears Liquid Skin over an open wound recovers 1D4 hit points. However, this process will not restore the character to maximum Hit Points; the final point of damage must be recovered in some other way, such as by natural healing.

24. EXPERIMENTATION CHAMBER

Three Mayyit Lahm, the same type of Techromantic creatures as Aldrith Linn, are sealed within this room.

Following Aldrith Linn's escape, Belaquin grew mistrustful of these creations and had them sealed in this room so he could examine them. He was never able to discover what had caused Aldrith to act as he did, but has yet to decide what to do with the other Mayyit Lahm in here. They remain shackled, each upon a wooden table, with the top of its skull removed to facilitate an examination.

It will take Belaquin five minutes to awaken each Mayyit Lahm, something that he will attempt to do if he becomes aware of the players attempt to infiltrate his home.

The Mayyit Lahm have the same characteristics as Aldrith Linn, except for their INT, POW and CHA which are all 4. They also lack his Heroic Abilities.

25. LEVIATHAN CHAMBER

By far the largest of Belaquin's creations, the creature he dubbed leviathan rests in this chamber. This enormous worm-like beast resembles a lamprey of horrific size, one that lives not in water but in sand. From time to time, he releases it via a subterranean tunnel, allowing it to roam freely at night. He can recall it by means of a hypersonic whistle – and the promise of food, typically live. It was this monstrosity that devoured Fatima's husband.

This creature is too large to enter the laboratory chambers. However, Belaquin will release it in order to deal with unwanted skulkers near his house – or as a nasty surprise for players as they leave his home.

Wrapping Things Up

Given the freeform nature of the last part of the adventure, there is a danger of an anti-climactic ending. Cunning players may manage to deal with Belaquin and his forces one at a time, ensuring they pose only a limited threat. To some extent this is to be commended (and recommended), but the players should not have things all their own way.

Players and Games Masters alike will be presented with a far more satisfying finale if there is at least one sizeable battle at the end of the adventure. If Belaquin is killed or captured before he can set loose any of his techromantic creations, Abdul Batin is a sufficiently skilled adversary that he can step in and take that role. Having the players struggle against foes both human and inhuman will give them something to remember, especially if they are unsure what further horrors might emerge from Belaquin's laboratory!

Once the Anointed's followers have been dealt with – especially if Belaquin and/or Abdul Batin are captured – the players may unearth clues that lead them closer to the Anointed himself. He is a foe beyond the power of mere mortals, but his operations can certainly be disrupted and schemes thwarted.

But that is a tale for another day...

Aldfrith Linn

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3
STR	30	1-3	Right Leg	2/9	Damage Modifier	+1D10
CON	15	4-6	Left Leg	2/9	Magic Points	17
SIZ	17	7-9	Abdomen	2/10	Movement	8m
INT	14	10-12	Chest	2/11	Strike Rank	+15
POW	3	13-15	Right Arm	2/8		
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	2/8		
CHA	9	19-20	Head	2/9		

Armour: Necrotic flesh (2 AP)
Equipment: Knuckleduster, Sword of Joab
Heroic Abilities: Martial Strike, Martial Parry
Notable Skills: Athletics 80%, Brawn 86%, Perception 72%, Resilience 90%, Stealth 78%, Unarmed 95%



WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Knuckle-duster	S/T	90%	1D3+1	3/3

Zahra (Second Degree Orthodox Guardian Priest)

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	1/6	Damage Modifier	+1D2
CON	17	4-6	Left Leg	1/6	Magic Points	10
SIZ	12	7-9	Abdomen	1/7	Movement	8m
INT	13	10-12	Chest	1/8	Strike Rank	+15 (13)
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	1/5		
DEX	16	16-18	Left Arm	1/5		
CHA	9	19-20	Head	3/6		

Armour: Silenced soft leather (1) and a ring mail helm (3)

Equipment: Staff sling, 20 bullets, 10 silvered bullets, 2 daggers (one concealed), climbing claws, grapple line, smoke bomb, smoke powder, healing draught, 50 SP

Heroic Abilities: Dead Eye

Notable Skills: Athletics 63%, Culture (The Levant) 55%, Language (Arabic) 71%, Language (Egyptian) 39%, (Latin) 46%, Language (French) 28%, Lore (Occult) 51%, Resilience 69%, Sleight 73%, Stealth 106%*, Tracking 88%



WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Staff Sling (melee)	M/L	87%	1D8	3/6
Staff Sling (ranged)	H	113%	2D6	3/6
Dagger	S/S	76%	1D4+1	6/8

NOTES

Magical Skills: Sorcery (*Divinum Veneficio* Grimoire) 55%, Manipulation 26%

Divinum Veneficio Spells: Holy Weapon, Warrior of God

Zahra hails from a land south of Egypt. Her people were nomads who were destroyed by a terrible beast she refers to as *Emela-ntouka*. Adopted and raised by an Egyptian tribe, she came to the notice of Amun-Re, the Preceptor of Cairo, whilst visiting the city. He passed her on to Father Demetrius who oversaw her training as a guardian priest. Zahra has sworn to one day return to her homeland and destroy the *Emela-ntouka*. Somewhat impulsive and fiery-tempered, Zahra is prone to rash decisions that sometimes land her in hot water.

Tahmin (Second Degree Orthodox Guardian Priest)

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3
STR	14	1-3	Right Leg	2/6	Damage Modifier	+1D2
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	2/6	Magic Points	17
SIZ	15	7-9	Abdomen	2/7	Movement	8m
INT	14	10-12	Chest	2/8	Strike Rank	+16 (13)
POW	17	13-15	Right Arm	2/5		
DEX	17	16-18	Left Arm	2/5		
CHA	15	19-20	Head	2/6		

Armour: Hardened leather (2)

Equipment: Damascene scimitar, consecrated dagger, buckler, light crossbow, 12 bolts, 10 incendiary bolts, 10 explosive bolts, 10 corded bolts, 4 throwing daggers (concealed), spyglass, 50 SP

Heroic Abilities: Animal Ally (Eagle), Severing Slash, Wall Leaping

Notable Skills: Acrobatics 98%, Athletics 95%, Culture (The Levant) 69%, Language (Arabic) 80%, Language (Latin) 45%, Language (French) 58%, Lore (Nature) 86%, Lore (Occult) 68%, Resilience 49%, Ride 53%, Stealth 55%, Streetwise 88%



WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar and buckler	M/M	101%	1D8	6/10
Buckler	M/S	101%	1D3	6/8
Light crossbow	L	97%	1D8	4/5
Thrown Dagger	S	75%	1D4	4/6

NOTES

Magical Skills: Sorcery (*Divinum Veneficio* Grimoire) 51%, Manipulation 36%

Divinum Veneficio Spells: Angelic Shield, Djinni Bane

Tahmin was a foundling raised from birth by the Order. He was tutored in Constantinople and considers that his home, despite the lack of details regarding his parentage and inevitable wandering his life entails. He is a calm, pragmatic man, sometimes inclined to over-think a situation. This makes him a perfect partner for Zahra; his caution balances her impulsiveness, her sense of urgency counters his occasional dithering.

Belaquin, Favoured Disciple of the Anointed

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3 (4)
STR	20	1-3	Right Leg	5/8	Damage Modifier	+1D6
CON	22	4-6	Left Leg	5/8	Magic Points	7
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	5/9	Movement	8m
INT	18	10-12	Chest	5/10	Strike Rank	+19
POW	7	13-15	Right Arm	5/7		
DEX	17	16-18	Left Arm	5/7		
CHA	14	19-20	Head	5/8		

Armour: Blessing of the Anointed

Equipment: Crescent blade, shield, Jambiya dagger

Heroic Abilities: Advanced Evasion, Sudden Strike, Zeal

Notable Skills: Athletics 90%, Brawn 86%, Culture (Arabic) 74%, Evade 90%, Influence 79%, Insight 96%, Language (Arabic) 81%, Language (French) 64%, Language (Latin) 61%, Language (German) 46%, Language (Italian) 51%, Lore (The Levant) 88%, Lore (Occult) 112%, Mechanisms 109%, Perception 81%, Persistence 97%, Resilience 82%, Ride 56%, Unarmed 87%, Techromancy 93%



WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Crescent Blade and Shield	M/M	135%	1D12	8/12
Shield	L/S	105%	1D6	6/12
Jambiya dagger	S/S	85%	1D4	5/7

NOTES

Blessing of the Anointed: A powerful charm placed upon Belaquin’s skin protects him from harm. As well as providing 5 points of armour, the spell forces all attackers to roll all damage dice twice and select the *lower* of the rolls. A character who employs a Heroic Ability such as Severing Slash rolls damage as normal; in effect, the Heroic Ability and this portion of the charm nullify each other.

Crescent Blade: Belaquin’s sword was a gift from his master. Forged using the same magic employed to create a Djinni blade, its edge is impossibly sharp and never dulls. It also bestows great skill upon Belaquin when he, and he alone, wields it (+30% Modifier, already included in his profile). Belaquin may select the Bleed and Sunder Combat Manoeuvres when wielding this weapon.

Abdul Batin, Captain of Belaquin's Guard

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	3 (4)
STR	15	1-3	Right Leg	4/7	Damage Modifier	+1D4
CON	16	4-6	Left Leg	4/7	Magic Points	9
SIZ	16	7-9	Abdomen	8/8	Movement	8m
INT	13	10-12	Chest	8/9	Strike Rank	+14
POW	9	13-15	Right Arm	4/6		
DEX	14	16-18	Left Arm	4/6		
CHA	13	19-20	Head	8/7		

Armour: Breastplate with light chain, greaves, bracers and full Saracen helm, plus gilded bone.
Equipment: Damascene falchion, 2 jambiya daggers, Sling, 10 bullets, plate and chain armour, brass, iron, jade, black and white keys
Heroic Abilities: Arrow Cutting, Severing Slash
Notable Skills: Athletics 65%, Brawn 55%, Courtesy 45%, Culture (Arabic) 67%, Influence 58%, Perception 75%, Resilience 64%, Ride 77%, Unarmed 71%



WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Falchion and Jambiya	M/L	110%	1D6+4	10/14
Jambiya dagger	S/S	110%	1D4	5/7
Sling	-	90%	1D8	1/2

NOTES

Gilded Bone: Abdul Batin's ribcage and skull are laced with metal, thanks to a techromantic operation. This affords far greater protection to his brain and internal organs.

Abdul Batin has served as Belaquin's bodyguard for six years. When his master moved from Jerusalem to Jubala, he travelled with him and assumed command of the guards who patrol Belaquin's estate. Abdul Batin is fiercely loyal to his master, and sees him as a warrior of God, a man who will rid the east of the barbaric Christians.

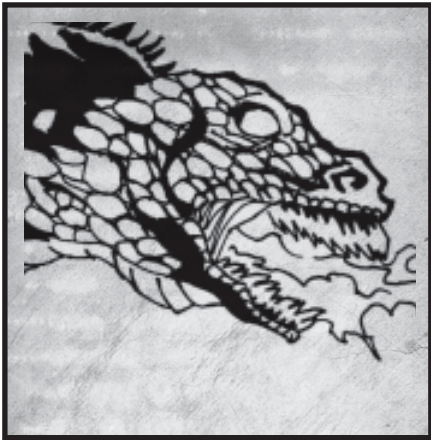
Leviathan

STR	35
CON	18
SIZ	65
INT	4
POW	11
DEX	11
CHA	4

1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1 –6	Tail	5/20
7–10	Lower Body	5/21
11–16	Upper Body	5/22
17–20	Head	5/21

Combat Actions	2
Damage Modifier	+1D12
Magic Points	11
Movement	9m
Strike Rank	+8

Armour: Thick skin (5 AP)
Traits: Acidic Saliva, Earth Sense
Notable Skills: Athletics 90%, Brawn 110%, Resilience 96%, Perception 60%, Stealth 70%*



WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Bite	E/L	95%	1D6	As per Head

NOTES

Acidic Saliva: This creature’s spittle is corrosive, allowing it to chew through rock at a rate of 1 metre per round. In addition, the creature’s bite inflicts an additional 1D6 damage. At 15 metres long the leviathan is a terrifying foe, one that players might do well to avoid rather than fight. It can move freely through sand, but its passage is greatly slowed by rock. If the players can trick it into entering a large body of water, such as the oases two miles north-east of Jubala, it will drown. When hunting, the Leviathan seeks to grasp a foe in its jaws and drag it under the ground where it can feed.

*Only when below the sand

Bandits

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	2 (3)
STR	11	1-3	Right Leg	1/5	Damage Modifier	—
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	1/5	Magic Points	9
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	1/6	Movement	8m
INT	8	10-12	Chest	1/7	Strike Rank	+11 (9)
POW	9	13-15	Right Arm	1/4		
DEX	11	16-18	Left Arm	1/4		
CHA	10	19-20	Head	3/5		

Armour: Soft leather (1) plus half-helm (3)
Equipment: Leather armour with half helm, spear, shield, recurve bow, 10 SP
Notable Skills: Athletics 40%, Perception 60%, Resilience 40%, Ride 50%, Stealth 50%, Track 55%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Spear and shield	M/L	50%	1D8+1	4/5
Shield	L/S	50%	1D6	6/12
Recurve bow	L	60%	1D8	4/7

Saracen Warriors

		1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP	Combat Actions	2 (3)
STR	12	1-3	Right Leg	1/5	Damage Modifier	—
CON	12	4-6	Left Leg	1/5	Magic Points	9
SIZ	13	7-9	Abdomen	1/6	Movement	8m
INT	10	10-12	Chest	1/7	Strike Rank	+11 (7)
POW	10	13-15	Right Arm	1/4		
DEX	12	16-18	Left Arm	1/4		
CHA	11	19-20	Head	3/5		

Armour: Saracen Armour
Equipment: Scimitar, metal shield, recurve bow (horse-archer only), longspear (light cavalry only)
Notable Skills: Athletics 45%, Perception 50% (70% for scouts), Resilience 45%, Ride 50% (mounted warriors only), Survival 45%, Unarmed 40%

WEAPONS

Type	Size/Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Scimitar and Shield	M/M	65%	1D8	6/10
Shield	L/S	65%	1D6	6/12
Jambiya dagger	S/S	55%	1D4	5/7
Recurve bow*	L	70%	1D8	4/7
Longspear**	L/VL	65%	1D10+1	4/10

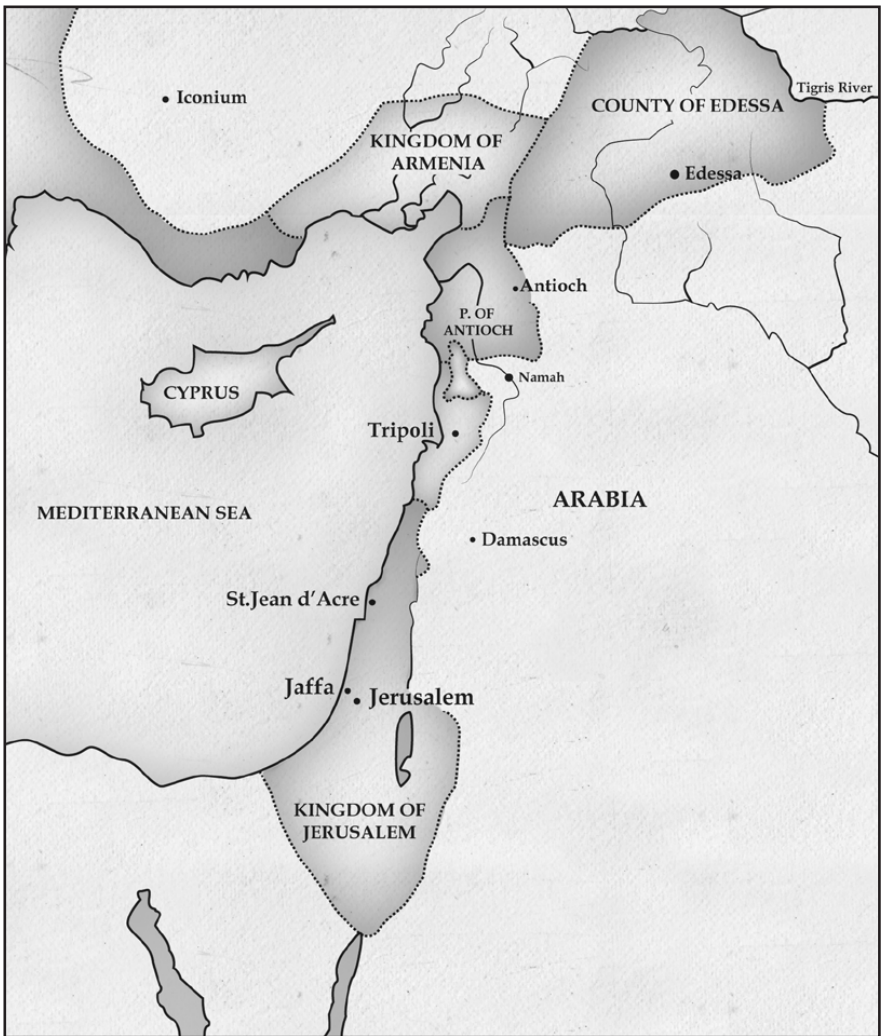
NOTES

Saracen Armour: The warriors guarding Jaffa wear armour that combines supple leather with overlapping metal plates to protect the wearer’s most vulnerable areas. It includes a metal helm.

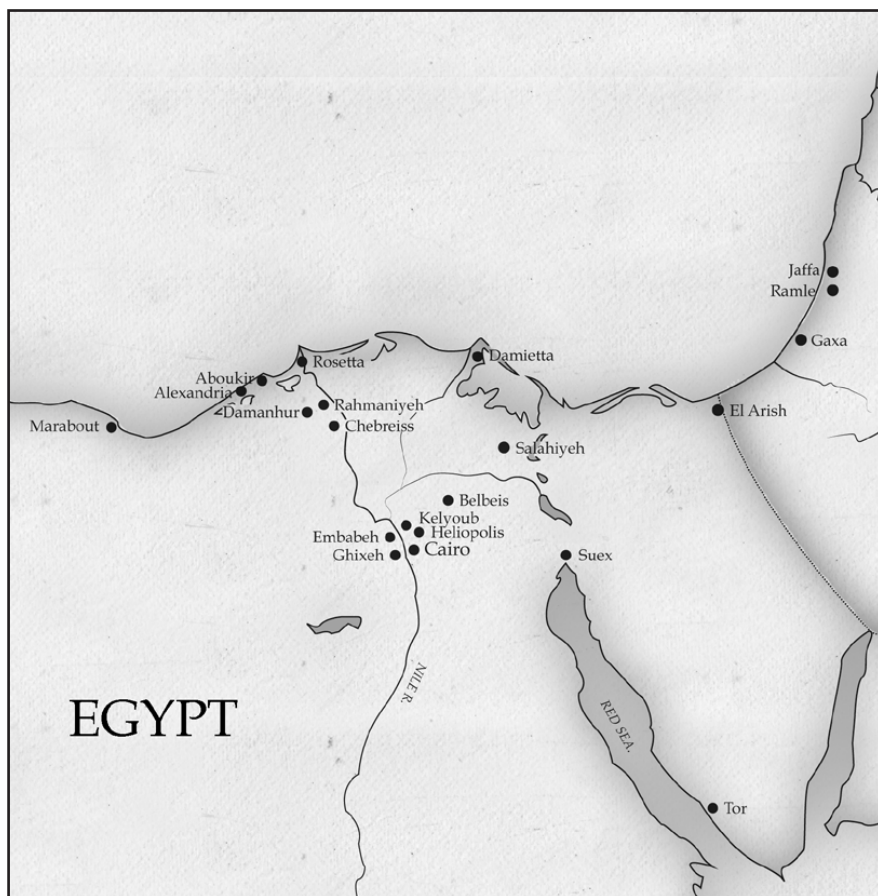
*Horse archers only

** Light Cavalry only

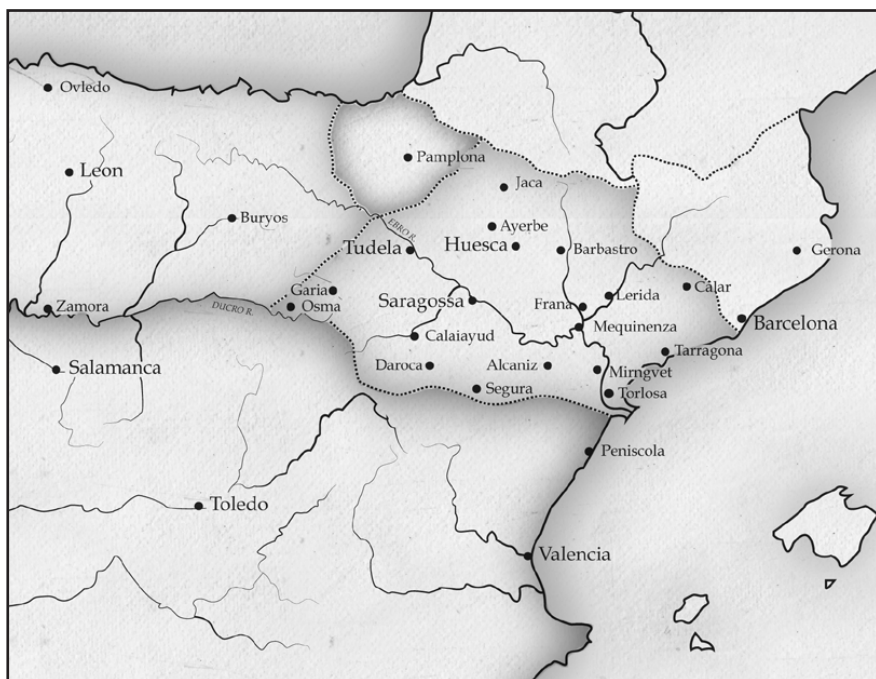
The Levant



Egypt



Moorish Spain



Cathay

