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# Medieval Player's Manual

MYTHIC VISTAS



By David Chart

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# MEDIEVAL PLAYER'S MANUAL

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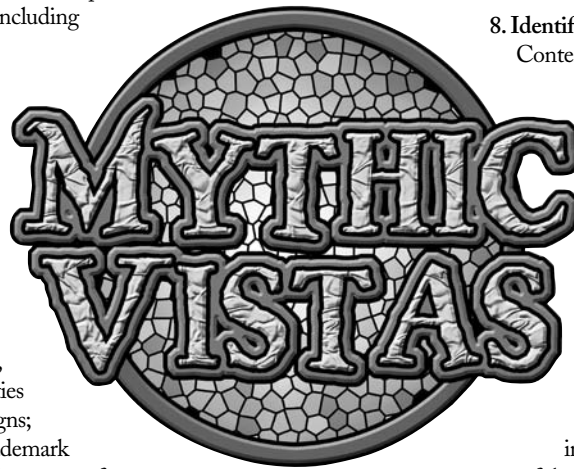
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# CHAPTER ONE : Welcome to the Middle Ages

The Middle Ages were the time of knights and castles, of quests and troubadours, of dragons and giants. In many ways, they are the period most familiar to fantasy roleplayers. In other ways, they are less familiar.

Everyone in Western Europe was a Christian, Jew, or Muslim, and religion played a central role in every day life. Bishops ruled extensive lands, church courts dealt with sexual offenses and debt, and the greatest wars were launched in the name of religion. On the other hand, there was no Inquisition, and heretics were required to burn only their books. Strong-minded scholars and bishops could challenge the Pope and get away with it, and most of the time it was the church that called for aid to the poor and justice for the weak.

There are other differences as well, some of which are quite surprising. For many offenses, swearing to your innocence was enough to secure an acquittal, particularly if your family and friends were prepared to agree with you. Saints not only healed the sick, they cursed people who refused to give them money. The crown did not pass from father to son, but to anyone related to the previous king who could make and maintain a claim. People would queue for hours to kiss a centuries old corpse.

## ❑ How to Use This Book ❑

**Chapter One: Welcome to the Middle Ages**, this chapter, contains general information about the medieval period and notes on the rest of the book.

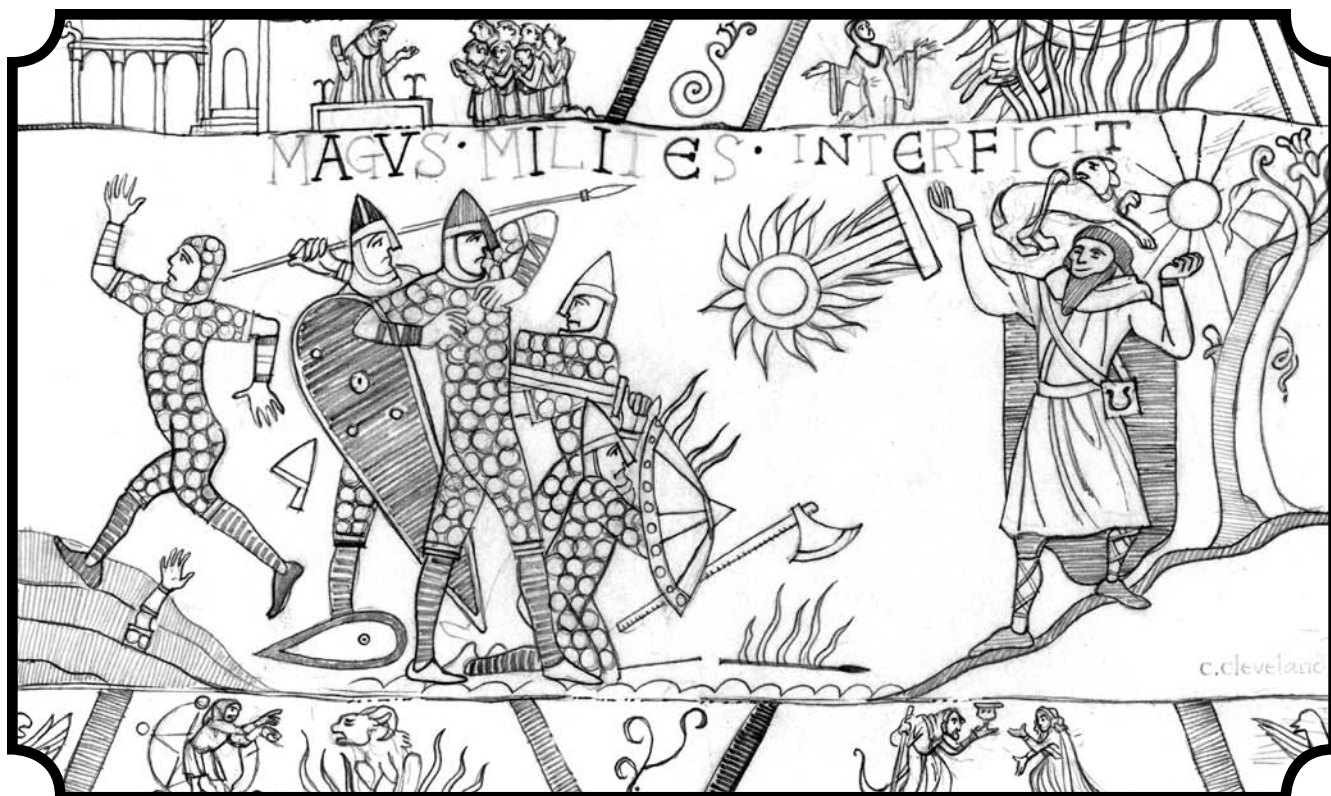
**Chapter Two: Medieval Magic** is concerned with medieval magic, and most of it is taken up with providing rules for three new types of magician. Cunning folk know ancient charms handed down by tradition, and while they cannot cast spells they can make these charms for themselves and others. Natural magicians are learned individuals who know how to summon and control the power of the stars. They make astral charms, which can be invoked to produce a spell effect. Theurges study rituals from ancient books, and summon spirits to do their bidding. Once the spirits have been summoned in a lengthy ritual, the theurge can invoke them quickly to carry out his orders, with much the same effect as spells.

The Middle Ages lasted a thousand years, roughly from the fall of Rome in 476 to the fall of New Rome (Constantinople) in 1453, and things changed a great deal in that time. This book concentrates on the period from 1087 to 1154, what we call the "Kin of the Conqueror" period, although much of the material here could be applied to both earlier and later periods. Europe is a fairly big place, with very diverse cultures; this book concentrates on England, but, by necessity, also includes a significant amount of discussion of northwestern France.

In 1066 William, Duke of Normandy, invaded and conquered England. This Norman Conquest was one of the most important events in English history, transforming the nation's relations with the continent and entirely replacing the ruling class. William died 21 years later, after completing the survey known as *Domesday Book*, and that is where this book takes up the story. The next seventy years were occupied by the fights over William's realm, first between his sons, Robert, William Rufus, and Henry, and then between his grandchildren, Stephen and Matilda. In the end Matilda's son, Henry, became king of England and lord of western France, and with his accession this book ends.

The chapter also provides rules for astrology and alchemy, and ways in which characters who do not emphasize magic can learn some bits of medieval arcana. It also considers monsters and magical treasures, and discusses the role of the standard arcane spell casting classes.

**Chapter Three: The Power of God** deals with divine power in Europe; the Church as miracle worker, rather than the Church as political institution. There are rules for the priest, a non-fighting version of the cleric, the saint, who devotes himself entirely to the will of God, and various prestige classes, including the Knights Templar. A large section of this chapter is devoted to Charisms, new feats representing gifts of miraculous power granted by God. The relics of saints are very important, so this chapter also provides rules for using them as a new kind of magic item. This chapter also deals with the place of clerics and paladins in medieval Europe.



**Chapter Four: Prelates, Painters, and Philosophers** looks at the cultural life of medieval Europe. It falls into three sections. The first deals with the Church as a political institution, covering its structure and activities, and also provides rules for the canonist, a member of the clergy who casts no spells but is expert in politics, and the prelate, a holder of high office within the church with uncanny power over his flock.

The second deals with intellectual life, including rules for holding academic disputations and creating theories. This section introduces the scholar class, and a new class of feats. Books were rare in the Middle Ages, so mastery of a book is represented by a feat, which gives substantial bonuses in scholarly dispute.

The third section deals with the arts, providing a quick overview of the styles of art prevalent in the period, and then rules for

characters who want to create genuine works of art, rather than simple hackwork. This section also includes the artist class.

Finally, all the sections are drawn together in a discussion of how to run a campaign focusing on scholarship, art, and politics, rather than on combat and treasure.

**Chapter Five: Kings, Dukes, and Princes** falls into two sections. The first is a narrative overview of the political history of the period, while the second gives more information, and sometimes game statistics, on the central characters of the narrative: the kings, dukes, and princes themselves.

**Chapter Six: Culture** again falls into two parts. The first looks at the culture of the period, covering peasant life, life in towns, the nobility, and the law. The second section contains descriptions of a number of important non-royal characters from the period, including example full character write-ups of many of the new classes presented earlier in the book.

## Issues

Pseudo-historical roleplaying inevitably raises more issues than pure fantasy roleplaying, as it touches on topics about which people still have strong opinions. It is better to discuss the more obvious of these issues with your group before the campaign starts, so that you can handle them in a way that makes everyone comfortable.

Historical settings also present problems of historical accuracy, which, while they are unlikely to offend anyone, can make people the need to do a lot of research on the subject.

## Religion

The most controversial topic is religion. This book covers the period when the Crusades were launched, and when the Christian forces had the most success. There is no way to write about medieval Europe without making religion central; remove the Church, and you have a fantasy world with familiar names.

Accordingly, this book deals extensively with Christianity, overwhelmingly the largest religion in its area of focus. The



assumption is that medieval Christians were roughly right about what God wanted, and that the Church is basically a good institution. There are a few important points of deviation. First, the church's exclusion of women from the priesthood is treated as a matter of human politics, not divine will. This is reflected in the ability of women to enter, and gain spells in, the priest class. Second, this book assumes that Jews and Muslims are also right, that they are basically good, and that they receive miraculous powers from God, not from demons. There are paladins on both sides of the crusades.

At times, the text draws attention to areas of medieval Christian practice that seem strange to modern tastes. This is not intended to mock them. Rather, it is intended to help the GM make the players feel that they are in a different world, with different cultural attitudes, rather than at a Renaissance Faire.

The book has very little to say about Islam or Judaism. This is a matter of space, focus, and expertise. More information about medieval Judaism can be found in *Kabbalah: Mythic Judaism*, a supplement for *Ars Magica*, and more information about medieval Islam can be found in *Blood and Sand*, a supplement for the same game. These take a base date of 1220, but neither religion changed enormously over the time in question.

Historically, there were no pagans in Western Europe at this time. As a result, the book does not deal with paganism. Historically, there were no spell-slinging priests, either, so this is not an entirely consistent position. If you want to introduce hidden pagans into your games, there is no problem with that. You should, however, avoid portraying the Church as evil, merely as misguided. Christianity deserves the same respect as any other religion.

## Women

Women did not have a prominent or equal social role in medieval Europe. Again, there is no way of changing this without writing about a fantasy world rather than a historical one. However, this is less restrictive than it might initially appear.

While women, on the whole, had a lower social status and fewer opportunities than men, there were a number of exceptional women who did reach high rank and made a significant difference to the course of world events. Player characters are supposed to be exceptional, and thus can certainly be among their number. As a result, there are no restrictions on female player characters, but they will be even more unusual than their male counterparts.

Women adventurers or politicians will encounter some prejudice. However, medieval people seem, on the whole, to have dealt with powerful women as their power merited, rather than on the basis of sexual prejudice. Sexist men should therefore be used as an occasional complication rather than as a constant barrage.

## Race

Racism per se is not really a problem in medieval England, because everyone is white. There are ethnic tensions, between

Norman and Anglo-Saxon in England, for example, and religious prejudice is rife. There is no racism, because non-white people are too rare to be anything but a curiosity.

The exception to this is anti-Semitism, which is almost universal among Christians. This book chooses to play that aspect of medieval culture down, as it was not central, unless you were a Jew. It is treated properly in *Kabbalah: Mythic Judaism* (mentioned above), and any player considering a Jewish character is strongly advised to pick that book up, particularly if they are not Jewish themselves.

## HISTORICAL ACCURACY

Historical accuracy is a tricky subject in a game. On the one hand, it *is* a game, not a history lesson. On the other hand, if you don't worry about accuracy at all you might as well play in a generic fantasy world. It is all about striking the right balance, and this balance varies from group to group.

There are two rules to bear in mind. First, no one should have to do any research they don't want to do. Second, you should avoid inaccuracies that break the sense that you are in medieval Europe. The rules don't change, but their meaning does. If every member of your group has a doctorate in early twelfth century history, the chances are that they will enjoy doing a lot of extra research, and that making up names for the nobility will cause problems. On the other hand, if everyone's entire knowledge of medieval history comes from this book and Hollywood films, you are probably all right as long as you don't include gunpowder and aircraft.

On the positive side, the GM and players should try to work elements of the historical background into plots and characters. If your character is a devotee of St. Cuthbert and plans to make a pilgrimage to Durham, that both adds a medieval element and provides a plot hook. Similarly, the GM could write an adventure revolving around a medieval court case, where gathering evidence is only important as a means to prevent anyone swearing that the guilty party didn't do it. Even starting adventures by saying "As you are all leaving church..." can help to set the mood of a world where it can be taken for granted that all the characters went to church. Obviously, the more you know about the Middle Ages, the more of this you can do, and you shouldn't be afraid to do a bit of research to find a new plot idea or character background element. This doesn't have to be a lot of work, because an isolated fact is perfectly adequate, but if you keep it up over the length of a campaign it can add a lot of depth. The new rules and classes in this book are designed so that you can impart a genuinely medieval flavor by using them.

One thing is very important. You should not be afraid to allow the player characters to change history. If they assassinate Henry in 1098, he obviously is not going to become king when (or if) William is killed in 1100. Let the player characters have an impact on the world; do not feel that you have to follow the historical script.

## MAGIC

There was no magic in the Middle Ages. There is a lot of magic in d20 games. How, then, can these facts be reconciled? This book takes the simplest approach: it simply ignores the problem. This is a game, so d20 magic is simply dropped onto the setting, without worrying about how things could possibly have worked out that way.

Of course, you will occasionally need to explain to your players, and their characters, why magic or miracles failed to change the outcome of major events. The first thing to note is that in most contests God is on both sides to the same extent. This is most notably true of the Crusades, but also applies to local wars and personal vendettas. Miracles thus tend to cancel out. Access to magical resources is likely to be similar to access to mundane resources, so two equally matched groups remain equally matched. Thus, the broad course of history can be the same.

## System Notes

Most of the appropriate system changes are discussed in the next three chapters. There are a few miscellaneous points that do not really fit there, however.

Knowledge (religion) should be replaced by three skills: Knowledge (Christianity), Knowledge (Islam) and Knowledge (Judaism).

Barbarians are not really appropriate to the setting, at least not while you are anywhere near England. Rangers are completely inappropriate, as are druids; that sort of nature magic does not exist. Monks, equally, are drawn from a

You still have to decide on the prominence of magic. You might want to introduce accounts of Harold Godwinson's battle wizards at Hastings, and the charge of the Norman griffon riders that finished them off, or you might want to keep magic subtle, hidden in the background of great events. The text steers a middle course: magic can be quite spectacular when it happens, but it exists as part of the historical social structures rather than adding its own structures. So, many priests can cast spells, but there are no orders of wizards holding castles across Europe.

For particular events, it is often possible to provide an explanation for why magic changed nothing. For example, consider the story of Abaelard and Heloise (pages 118 and 119). Clerical magic could have healed Abaelard's castration, and surely then things would have gone differently? Well, not necessarily. The attack made Abaelard repent of his past actions and genuinely want to enter a monastery. That could be the case even if he was healed of the damage.

different culture. There are a lot of monks in medieval England, but they are scholars, artists, priests, and canonists, not butt-kicking kung-fu masters. Fighters and rogues fit perfectly, and the arcane and other divine spell casting classes are discussed in the Magic and Power of God chapters respectively.

Green Ronin's *Noble's Handbook* provides a new noble core class, and such prestige classes as the commander, the master diplomat, and the lord knight. It also includes rules for creating noble houses. As such, it is a highly suitable supplement to the *Medieval Player's Manual*.

## Further Reading

*Heirs to Merlin*, by David Chart (Atlas Games)

This *Ars Magica* book details England and Wales in 1220. It has a lot more historical, geographical, and cultural detail than this book, and no game rules. With the two books, you could run a 1220 d20 campaign very easily.

*The Black Monks of Glastonbury* by David Chart (Atlas Games)

This is a dual-stat *Ars Magica* and d20 sourcebook, detailing Glastonbury Abbey in the west of England. Again, it takes 1220 as its nominal date, but it could easily be adapted.

*England under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225* by Robert Bartlett (Oxford University Press)

Part of the New Oxford History of England, this book is an excellent general resource on the cultural background of the period.

*Domesday Book to Magna Carta 1087-1216* by A. L. Poole (Oxford University Press)

The corresponding volume in the original Oxford History of England, this book has a better narrative of events than Bartlett's, but its discussion of cultural matters is not so wide ranging.

*Magic in the Middle Ages* by Richard Kieckhefer (Cambridge University Press)

A good, recent account of magic and how it was practiced in the Middle Ages.

*Domesday Book* (Penguin)

A complete, modern translation of Domesday Book: a nearly complete survey of England taken just a year before the nominal start date for this book. This is the ultimate source for deciding where your character was born and who her parents were.

*The Letters of Abelard and Heloise* (Penguin)

This is a translation of Abelard's autobiography and of some letters he exchanged with Heloise after she read it. Fun to read, and an excellent insight into two of the characters who appear in this book.



# CHAPTER TWO: MEDIEVAL MAGIC

This chapter describes the forms of magic practiced in the Middle Ages. Magic falls into three groups. Alchemy, Astrology and Astral Magic are scholarly, and draw on natural powers of the world, while Folk Charms draw mainly on natural powers, but are handed on from one person to another without any need for formal learning and Theurgy is a scholarly form of magic that draws on the power of spirits, and alone among the forms of magic it is sinful in itself.

After giving the rules for the different types of magic, this chapter presents several character classes specializing in one or other type of magic, and it finishes with a consideration of magical monsters, the standard d20 classes, and things magical in the Middle Ages.

## ALCHEMY

The standard d20 Craft (alchemy) skill does not exist in medieval Europe. It is replaced by the rules in this section.

Alchemy relies on the forces of natural magic to transform natural substances into their most perfect forms. Many people have heard that alchemists labor to turn base metals into gold, but this is primarily a metaphor for their activities. It is true that a skilled alchemist can create gold, but none do, as the equipment and ingredients required for this experiment cost more than the gold that would be produced by such a process. The true value of alchemy lies in producing items that are superior to those which appear in nature.

### KNOWLEDGE (ALCHEMY)

The Knowledge (alchemy) skill can be learned by any character, and is a class skill for any class that treats all Knowledges as class skills. However, possession of the skill by itself merely gives the character knowledge of alchemy, and does not allow him to successfully perform any alchemical procedures. It does allow him to recognize alchemical equipment, understand alchemical texts, and identify the products of alchemy. As a rule, identifying an alchemical substance takes at least a quarter of an hour, and requires a Knowledge (alchemy) skill check against a DC of 20. If the check is made against a DC of 30, the character may attempt to identify the substance as a standard action. Other uses of the skill require checks as normal Knowledge skills do.

The Church does not really have an attitude towards alchemy, any more than it has an attitude towards agriculture. It is seen as the exploitation of natural processes, and thus neither sinful nor virtuous in itself. The Church is entirely correct in this belief, and the practice of alchemy is not a sin.

### ALCHEMICAL PROCEDURES

Alchemical procedures require an alchemical laboratory, and considerable amounts of time. A procedure takes one week for each 1,000 gp of the cost of raw materials. In that period the alchemist can do nothing but tend the equipment, eat, and sleep, probably in the laboratory. Alchemical procedures do not cost experience points, as they draw entirely on natural forces external to the alchemist.

An alchemical laboratory is a bulky thing, and it cannot be transported easily. It must be established in a room with a good roof and walls, and it is advisable to set it up in a stone structure. It costs 500 gp to set up the laboratory, but further maintenance is included in the cost of the procedures performed there.

### ALCHEMICAL FEATS PURIFY EARTHS (GENERAL)

You can use alchemical procedures to purify earths; non-living solids which are not metals.

**Benefit:** You can use alchemy to purify earths in the following ways:

#### CREATE GEMS

You can create gems from ordinary rocks. The DC for this is 15, and the raw materials cost the same as the normal value of the resulting gem. The main advantages of this use of alchemy are that you can make your wealth more easily portable, and create exactly the gem that you want.







## IMPROVE STONE

You can make stone stronger and more durable. The DC and cost depend on the final hardness and hit points of the stone. If you want to add one point to the hardness, or five hit points per inch of thickness, but not both, the DC is 15 and the cost is 1 gp for every cubic foot of stone you transform. For every additional increase of five points to hit points or one point to hardness, the DC increases by three and the cost by 1 gp. Thus, increasing the hit points by ten and the hardness by two would have a DC of 24 and a cost of 4 gp per cubic foot.

## CREATE GLASS

You can make glass. This glass is perfectly clear, and can be made in any color. It is made as raw material, but it does not lose its color when shaped, whether into vessels or windows. The DC is 20, and it costs 10 gp per cubic foot. Normal craftsmen can make glass, but it is not as fine as that made through alchemy.

## CREATE DYE

You can make dyes in bright and persistent colors. Natural dyes tend to be rather muddy, and fade quite quickly, so alchemical ones are far better. The DC is 20, and it costs 1 gp to make enough dye for a single robe.

*Example:* Eleanor Belclerc is a natural magician and the wife of a local lord during the Anarchy. She wants to make the stone of her castle stronger, to resist the attacks that her husband's rivals keep launching. The castle is a shell keep on top of a motte, and the stone walls are six feet thick, fifteen feet high, and two hundred and fifty feet around. This is 22,500

cubic feet, so the transformation will be expensive. She decides to increase the hardness of the stone by five points, for a DC of 27 and a cost of 5 gp per cubic foot. She needs to find 112,500 gp to fund the transformation, so she decides it would be cheaper to simply hire a bigger army than her husband's rivals can muster.

## PURIFY WATERS (GENERAL)

You can use alchemical procedures to purify waters, which covers any kind of liquid.

**Benefit:** You can use alchemy to purify waters in the following ways:

### CREATE AQUA REGIA

You can create aqua regia, a liquid that dissolves all metals. It can be safely stored in glass or ceramic, and does no damage to living tissue. A vial of aqua regia is enough to dissolve a dagger's worth of metal. The DC is 25 and it costs 1 gp per vial.

### CREATE AQUA VIVA

Aqua viva, or living water, is good for living creatures, in moderation. A single vial can purify a barrel of water, making it safe to drink, and if a vial is poured over open wounds it does two hit points of nonlethal damage, but heals one hit point of real damage. The DC is 25 and it costs 1 gp per vial.

## PURIFY METALS (GENERAL)

You can use alchemical procedures to purify metals.

**Prerequisites:** Purify Earths, Purify Waters

**Benefit:** You can use alchemy to purify metals in the following ways:

### CREATE GOLD

You can create gold from base metals. The DC is 15, but the cost is 2 gp for every 1 gp worth of gold produced. Most alchemists do this once, to prove that they can.

### STRENGTHEN METAL

You can make a metal stronger and more durable. If you want to add two points to the hardness, or five hit points per inch of thickness, but not both, the DC is 15 and the cost is 10 gp for every pound that you purify. For every additional increase of two to hardness or five points to hit points, add three to the DC and 1 gp to the cost. Thus, increasing the hardness of a metal by six points and the hit points per inch by ten points would have a DC of 27 and cost 50 gp per pound.

### LIGHTEN METAL

You can reduce the weight of metal without affecting its strength. To reduce the weight by 10%, the DC is 18 and the cost is 50 gp per pound of initial weight. For every increase of 10% in the reduction, the DC increases by three and the cost by 50 gp per pound of initial weight. The best possible

result is a 50% decrease in weight, which has a DC of 30 and costs 250 gp per pound of metal.

These reductions do not stack, so it is not possible to whittle away at the weight of a metal by repeatedly reducing it by 10%.

### Enhance Metal

You improve the general properties of metal, so that it functions better in tools made from it. This procedure gives anything made of the metal an enhancement bonus, which affects hit rolls and damage in the case of weapons, and AC bonus for

**Table 2-1: Enhance Metal**

Enhancement Bonus	DC	Cost/pound
+1	20	200 gp
+2	25	500 gp
+3	30	1000 gp

armor. For other metal tools, it applies to skill checks made while using the tool. The alchemist must know the tool for which the metal is intended when he enhances it, as the enhancements differ depending on the final purpose.

The DC and cost depends on the enhancement bonus, according to the Table 2-1.

The maximum possible enhancement from alchemical purification is +3. This does not stack with magical enhancement bonuses, but it does stack with other sorts of bonus, as normal.

## ASTROLOGY

Astrology studies the influence that the stars and planets have on events on earth. There are seven planets -- the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn -- and innumerable fixed stars, which are formed into constellations. The planets move in a band across the sky called the Zodiac, which contains twelve constellations.

Because of the influence the stars have on earth, it is possible to predict events on Earth by studying the stars. This influence is not total, however, so that interpreting the results of horoscopes is much more of an art than a science. Most competent astrologers can predict the weather, and choose favorable days and times for particular activities. The finest astrologers, working from the same horoscopes, can determine the plans of princes and the locations of armies.

### Game Rules

All uses of astrology depend on the Knowledge (astrology) skill. This is learned as any other skill, and is a class skill for any class that has all Knowledge skills as class skills. Knowledge (astrology) cannot be used unskilled, but anyone who has ranks in the skill may attempt basic astrology, as

outlined below. More complex uses of astrology require the astrologer to also have particular feats, described below.

Astrologers cannot work without astronomical tables, which give the positions of the planets at various times. These tables vary in quality, and in price. An astrologer without astrological tables may not attempt a skill check.

Astrology skill checks take half an hour. If the astrologer is under pressure or interrupted, the test is not possible, so an astrologer may always take ten if he can attempt the test at all. However, it is not possible to take twenty on an astrology check.

Because astrology works by assessing the influence of the stars, it is not blocked by spells or items that block scrying. Astrologers do not cast magic on their targets, nor, indeed, do they use magic at all, so the defense is irrelevant. Astrology is, however, prone to errors if something interferes with the stars' influence.

### Basic Astrology

Basic astrology has two uses. It can be used to predict events in the natural world, such as the weather, or earthquakes, and it can be used to determine a day that is favorable for a particular kind of activity, known as determining an *inception*.

**Table 2-2: Astronomical Tables**

Quality	Description	Price	Check modifier (circumstance bonus)
Poor	Standard western European tables of the last few centuries.	100 gp	-4
Average	Recent Arabic tables, as long as the astrologer can read them.	200 gp	0
Good	A perfect transcription of Ptolemy's tables.	500 gp	+2



TABLE 2-3: BASIC ASTROLOGY SUCCESS

DC	Results
15	Only the most important feature of the weather or other natural events, and only broad details of that. For example, “rain”, “a flood”, or “an earthquake”.
18	Only the most important feature, but some details about it. For example, “heavy rain all day”, “a small flood, about a two feet over the normal level”, or “a medium-size earthquake just before noon”.
20	General details about secondary features, as well as the information about the main feature gained from an 18. For example, “... and gentle breezes.”, “.. and extremely cold weather.”, or “... and a beautiful sunny day.”
25	Full information, at the sort of detail you would get in a report from someone after the event.
30	Fully detailed information about everything that doesn't involve human action. For an earthquake, this would include the exact pattern of shocks.

In order to predict the weather or other natural events, the astrologer must know the time and place for which the prediction is to be made. This means that it is not possible to predict “the next earthquake”. The distance between the astrologer and the place studied has no effect on the difficulty of the check, and neither does the distance into the future that the astrologer is trying to predict. Indeed, the astrologer can predict the past just as easily as the future.

The astrologer makes a Knowledge (astrology) check against a DC of 15. If this succeeds, he makes an accurate prediction. The detail of the prediction depends on how much the check succeeds by, as described on the table.

Calculating inceptions is somewhat harder. First, the astrologer must define exactly what activity he wants to start. The inception is calculated for that activity; if it changes in process, then any bonuses cease to apply.

Next, he does the astrological calculations. The base DC is 20. If he succeeds against that, he can avoid bad luck if he starts the activity on a particular day, which is some time in the next sixty days. Avoiding bad luck means that circumstances do not conspire to upset your plans. Thus, if you were planning a journey, the weather would not be too bad, and you would not meet bandits on the highway.

For every full five points by which the check succeeds, the astrologer may either add a +1 astrological bonus to the activity, or find other times at which he could start. Every increase devoted to increased flexibility multiplies the number of potential starting days by four, so with a success against a DC of 40 the astrologer could avoid bad luck no matter which day he started. This flexibility comes from taking advantage of minor conjunctions, and thus the astrologer will have to do some slightly strange things as he starts. However, this only applies to the beginning of the task; once he has started, he can act freely.

Both sorts of improvement can be applied to the same task, so that an astrologer who succeeds against a DC of 30 could choose to have a +1 bonus and four starting days in the next

sixty days. If the task involves several different kinds of die roll at the same time, the astrologer must choose which one gets the bonus.

*Example:* Eleanor Belclerc's husband has resolved to attack one of his rivals, Robert Malvis, and deal with the problem once and for all. Eleanor wants to calculate an inception, to maximize his chances. She has twelve ranks in Knowledge (astrology) and an Intelligence of 18, and she has also taken the feat Skill Focus (Knowledge: astrology), so her total bonus to the die roll is 19. Her player rolls a seventeen, for a total of 36. This beats a DC of 35, so she can add a bonus or increase the flexibility. Since she knows that her husband will refuse to carry out astrological rituals, she ignores the flexibility, simply going for the best day. If he starts his activity then, he will get a +3 astrological bonus to the attack. Eleanor decides that it will apply to his attack rolls, and starts plotting to send him off on the correct day.

## NATAL ASTROLOGY

Natal astrology allows the astrologer to determine someone's personality and talents from their birth horoscope. Because people have free will, this is never entirely reliable and the astrologer must have the Natal Astrology feat in order to attempt the check.

### NATAL ASTROLOGY (GENERAL)

You can cast birth horoscopes and interpret them.

**Benefit:** You may make Knowledge (astrology) checks to perform natal astrology.

**Normal:** You may not use Knowledge (astrology) to cast useful birth horoscopes.

An astrologer must know the target's date, time, and place of birth in order to cast the horoscope. If any of these pieces of information are wrong, the attempt gives misleading information and unless the astrologer

## TABLE 2-4: NATAL ASTROLOGY RESULTS

DC	Information
20	Alignment
25	Class
30	Abilities, broad outline of personality
35	Level, some details of personality
40	Full game statistics, detailed account of personality

already knows the person, there is no way to spot this. The player should make the check as normal, but the GM should make the answer up.

The information gained depends on result of the skill check. If the astrologer equals or exceeds a DC he also learns all information for the lower DCs.

Natal astrology cannot take account of free will. While, as astrologers say, “A wise man rules the stars”, most men are not wise, and natal astrology is highly accurate. However, it is never perfect, and the detailed account produced by a 40+ result always contains at least one or two minor errors. Occasionally people act to overcome their nature, and in that case the results of natal astrology can be completely wrong. This should be very rare, and apply only to some of the most important NPCs in the campaign.

*Example:* Despite the astrological support, Eleanor’s husband is killed in the battle, leaving Eleanor in charge of the castle. Concerned about the power of her opponent, she decides to cast a natal horoscope for him. Her player rolls a 14, which adds to her skill modifier of 19 for a total of 33. Eleanor learns that the rival lord is chaotic evil (bad!), a necromancer (very bad!), and has Strength 10, Dexterity 13, Constitution 12, Intelligence 19, Wisdom 14, and Charisma 14. He is in love with power, and wants to extend his sorcerous rule over the whole of England. Eleanor seriously considers casting the horoscope again and hoping for a different result.

**Normal:** You may not use Knowledge (astrology) to cast birth horoscopes usefully.

## POLITICAL ASTROLOGY

Political astrology allows the astrologer to assess the mood and likely activities of a place at a time. The place can be as large as a kingdom or as small as a village, although the answers for a large area average regional variation out, and so may not be so useful. Political astrology deals specifically with the activities of people in that region, as basic astrology can deal with purely natural events.



## POLITICAL ASTROLOGY (GENERAL)

You can cast political horoscopes for a region.

**Benefit:** You can use astrology to determine the general mood and actions of people in a particular area.

**Normal:** Astrology can only determine natural events.

In order to use political astrology you must know the location of the place for which you want to cast the horoscope. This is not a problem if the astrologer can visit the place, as he can then make the necessary measurements himself, but most medieval people do not know the latitude and longitude of their hometowns. Astronomical tables contain locations for major cities and other important locations, but in many cases the astronomer must make the measurements himself.

Political horoscopes require a single check against a DC of 20. On a success, the astrologer knows what sorts of actions people in the specified area will tend to undertake at the specified time. These actions can be discouraged in the normal way, so political astrology is most useful for finding potentially rebellious areas, or areas particularly receptive to new teaching, or something similar.

As a rule, if an area is prone to a particular kind of action, a character may automatically incite that activity, provided that no major character actively opposes him. Thus, if an area is prone to rebellion, a character calling

for a revolution will succeed in starting one, unless the king has sent troops to keep the peace in that area.

Political astrology, as its name suggests, is most useful to rulers, or to those who want to overthrow them.

*Example:* Eleanor Belclerc decides to cause trouble for Robert Malvis. She uses political astrology to find out whether the people of his lands are prone to any sort of rebellion. As her total skill in Knowledge (astrology) is 19, her check automatically succeeds, and she learns that they will be prone to rebellion in three weeks' time. Hoping that the necromancer has not learned astrology, she hires a mercenary to travel to his lands and incite rebellion. The plan succeeds, and Malvis has to spend time putting the rebellion down, which he does in a brutal fashion.

## ELECTIONS

Election horoscopes are the hardest to cast, and the least reliable. They attempt to predict the decisions that a person will make at a particular time, and are thus particularly prone to being interrupted by free will. However, they do say what will happen unless someone deliberately intervenes, and thus they can be useful for avoiding disaster.

### ELECTION ASTROLOGY (GENERAL)

You may cast election horoscopes.

**Prerequisites:** Natal Astrology and Political Astrology

## ASTRAL MAGIC

The stars have a strong influence on life below the lunar sphere. Skilled astrologers can use their knowledge of the motions of the stars to predict what will happen and to determine the best days for undertaking certain activities (see page 11). Astral magic goes a step further, concentrating and focusing the power of the stars to bring about spectacular magical effects.

Astral magic works through charms, small objects made of significant materials and inscribed with symbols related to the stars. These charms must be made when the stars are in an appropriate alignment, but once made they can be kept for any length of time before they are used. They are small and easily portable, but their general nature is obvious to anyone with even a basic education.

Attitudes to astral magic are split, even within the Church. Many people think that it relies on purely natural forces, and controls them in a natural way, and thus astral magic is fundamentally no different from any other tool, such as an axe or spindle. Others believe that it works through the invocation of spirits, like theurgy (see page 19), and thus that astral magic is inherently sinful. While it is, in fact, a natural process, astral magicians may sometimes meet with hostility from those who do not believe that their charms find favor in God's eyes.

**Benefit:** You can use astrology to determine what someone will decide at a given time.

**Normal:** Astrology cannot predict the actions of human beings.

In order to cast an election horoscope, you need the person's time, place, and date and birth, and the time, place, and date where they will make the decision. The latter is usually the place where they are now, although decisions to travel can be read in the stars, and the target then followed around.

If a successful DC 30 Knowledge (astrology) check is made, the astrologer learns the decision that the person is most likely to make. With a successful DC 40 check, the astrologer also knows the reasons behind the decision, and the other options that are most likely to be considered. As noted under natal astrology, most people do not rule the stars, so most people take the most likely decision. People almost always take one of the decisions revealed by astrology; the main exception is if they know the result of the horoscope and thus decide to do something different.

*Example:* Eleanor wants to know whether Malvis will decide to attack her castle. She uses election astrology, looking for his decision when he gets back to his castle after suppressing the revolt. Her player rolls a sixteen, so Eleanor learns that he will probably decide to attack. She begins provisioning the castle, and wonders whether it would be worth spending all that money on the walls after all.

## GAME RULES

An astral charm duplicates the effect of an arcane spell, and the level of the charm is equal to the lowest level at which an arcane spellcaster can cast that spell. For example, *hold person* is a third level sorcerer or wizard spell, a second level cleric spell, and a second level bard spell. The astral charm is second level, as bards cast arcane spells. *Hold person's* level as a cleric spell is irrelevant.

Characters must first learn astral charms, then make the charm itself, and finally invoke the charm to produce the spell effect. These steps are described in turn on the following pages.

### LEARNING ASTRAL CHARMS

Astral charms can be learned from written texts, or from someone who already knows the charm. A character can only learn an astral charm if he meets certain prerequisites.

First, natural magicians (see page 25) learn a number of astral charms depending on their level.

Second, any character may take a feat in order to learn a single astral charm.



## ASTRAL CHARM (GENERAL)

You know how to create and invoke a single astral charm.

**Prerequisites:** A number of Astral Charm feats equal to the level of the charm learned.

**Benefit:** You know the astral charm, and can make and invoke it according to the usual rules.

The prerequisites on the Astral Charm feat ensure that a character must learn a 0-level astral charm first, and then may choose to increase the level of the charm. In addition, characters who do not gain bonus feats which can be applied to learning astral charms cannot learn a charm of higher than seventh level by the time they reach twentieth character level.

### CRAFTING THE CHARM

Astral charms are all made of metal, carved with symbolic images. However, the amount of metal is small, so that about 250 astral charms weight one pound, and the images need not be skillfully carved. This means that the astral magician may craft the charm himself, whatever his Craft skill, and the costs are usually negligible. The exception is if the arcane spell which the astral charm duplicates has an expensive material component. In that case, the astral magician must supply the necessary material component when he crafts the charm. In addition, if the spell requires the expenditure of experience points, the astral magician expends them when he crafts the charm, not when he invokes it.

The main restriction on crafting charms is that a charm must be crafted when the stars are right. Low-level charms require common configurations, while a high-level charm can only be crafted on a few occasions. Since all charms require different configurations, and it takes very little time to make one (1d4 minutes), astral magicians never have to choose which charm to craft at a given time. Table 2-5 gives guidelines as to the frequency with which charms can be crafted.

Under normal conditions, an astral magician may craft every astral charm that he knows at every opportunity. An adventuring astral magician may not, as a rule, craft any charms, as there are too many distractions. The same usually applies to a traveling astral magician, as crafting a charm interrupts travel. However, high level charms may be crafted

even while traveling, as any sensible astral magician would interrupt his travel for a rare conjunction.

A character may carry as many astral charms as he can physically lift, although it would be a good idea to organize them in some way.

*Example:* Eleanor Belclerc knows many astral charms, of up to fifth level. She normally has a couple of dozen of each of the lowest level charms, those up to third level, on hand, but she finds that she uses the fourth and fifth level charms more often, so she can rarely get more than two or three of them stored away.

## INVOKING ASTRAL CHARMS

Invoking an astral charm is a standard action which does *not* provoke an attack of opportunity. The astral magician need merely touch the charm and speak a word, and the power takes effect. It is not possible to invoke more than one astral charm at once, even if the magician is touching many of them. It is, therefore, possible for an astral magician to sew the charms into his clothing so that he is always touching as many as possible. The power of the astral charm is expended when it is invoked.

*Example:* Eleanor works the charms into her jewelry, so that she is always touching every one of her charms.

## EFFECTS OF ASTRAL CHARMS

Astral charms have the same effect as the spell they mimic. The save DC is 10 + charm level + astral magician's Int modifier, and the caster level is the astral magician's character level.

## ASTRAL CHARMS AND MAGIC ITEMS

A character who can create astral charms can use them to supply the prerequisites for a magic item, if he has the relevant Item Creation feat. He must have enough charms to invoke the spell effect once every day for the time in which he is creating the item.

Magic items created in this way function through natural power, and thus can be used without sin, as long as the user's purpose is virtuous.

TABLE 2-5: FREQUENCY OF CHARM CRAFTING

Charm Level	Frequency of Conjunction
0-1	Twice per day (e.g., when a particular planet or constellation rises or sets)
2-3	Once per day (e.g. when a particular planet or star rises)
4-5	Once per week (e.g. when the moon is in one of four possible conjunctions with a particular other planet)
6-7	Once per month (e.g. when the moon is in a particular conjunction with another planet)
8-9	Once per year (e.g. most conjunctions of two planets)

# Folk Charms

Folk charms are bits of magic passed down through the years. They can be known by anyone, regardless of education, and indeed are usually known by the illiterate. Most involve Christian prayers, spoken or written. Some involve consecrated items, such as the Host, holy water, or blessed candles. A few involve invocations that appear to be pagan, or even diabolical. Few of those who use them draw distinctions on that basis, however.

In game terms, each folk charm is learned as a feat. Any character may take these feats, and the cunning man (see page 23) gets bonus feats which must be spent on folk charms. Although other people can perform the actions required by the charm, it only has its power if made by someone who possesses the feat. Most charms can be given to, or cast on, other people, however. Crafting a charm takes a day, and costs no money, but the cunning man must expend five experience points, plus one experience point for every character level that is a prerequisite for the charm. Thus, crafting a charm which requires that the crafter be of at least tenth level costs fifteen experience points.

Although folk charms are independent of one another, they do tend to have similar sorts of effect. Many of the charms given below are generic, and represent a number of different feats, one for every specific version. For example, there is a charm for neutralizing poison, and each version applies to a different kind of poison. Characters who know one specific version of a generic charm have no ability with the other specific versions unless they learn those feats as well.

The charms given here, while representative of the sorts of effects that folk charms have, do not constitute an exhaustive list. GMs and players should feel free to make up their own folk charms to extend this repertoire.

## LESSER CHARM AGAINST MAGIC (GENERAL)

You can craft a charm that protects against hostile magic.

These charms vary greatly in form. Holy items are a common component, as are arcane inscriptions, but some consist merely of a particular herb gathered in a particular way.

**Benefit:** The bearer of the charm gets a +1 resistance bonus to all saving throws against magic, of any kind. The charm wears out, physically, in a month, and ceases to have any effect at that point.

## CHARM AGAINST MAGIC (GENERAL)

You can craft a charm that gives significant protection against hostile magic.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+, Lesser Charm Against Magic

**Benefit:** The bearer of the charm gets a +3 resistance bonus to all saving throws against magic, of any kind. The charm wears out as a lesser charm against magic does.

## GREATER CHARM AGAINST MAGIC (GENERAL)

You can craft a charm that provides great protection against hostile magic.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 10th+, Charm Against Magic

**Benefit:** The bearer of the charm gets a +5 resistance bonus to all saving throws against magic, of any kind. The charm wears out as a lesser charm against magic does.

## LESSER CHARM OF WOUNDING (GENERAL)

You can craft a charm that makes its wielder do more damage in battle.

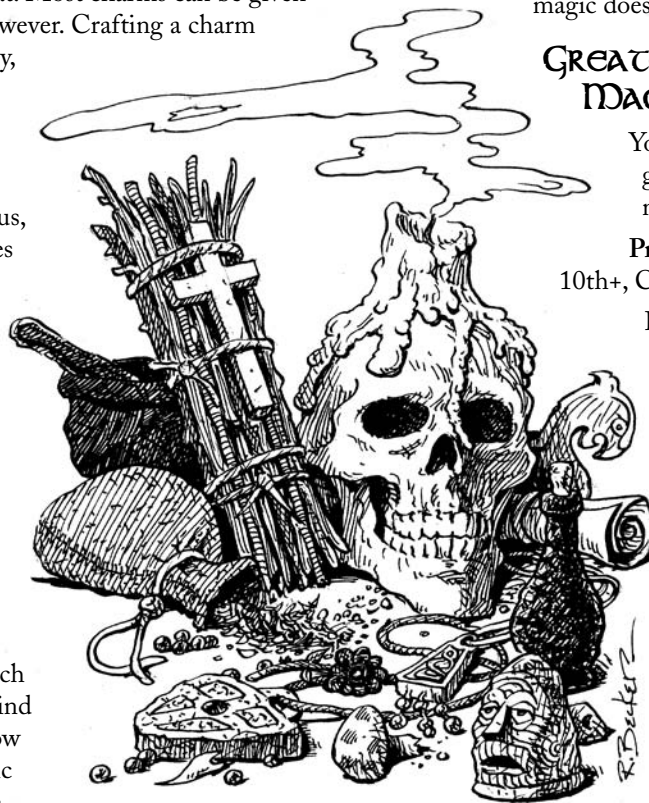
These charms normally take the form of symbolic images, showing an enemy wounded by whatever sort of weapon the wielder

prefers. The wielder must strike the image before the battle to activate its powers. Once struck, the charm will stay in effect for that entire battle. However, the charms can only survive three such blows.

**Benefit:** The wielder gains a +1 enhancement bonus to all damage done in the battle, with any weapon.

## CHARM OF WOUNDING (GENERAL)

You can craft a charm that makes its wielder do significantly more damage in battle.



**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+, Lesser Charm of Wounding

**Benefit:** The wielder gains a +3 enhancement bonus to all damage done in the battle, with any weapon. These charms, like lesser charms of wounding, must be struck in order to activate them and can only be used three times.

### GREATER CHARM OF WOUNDING (GENERAL)

You can craft a charm that makes its wielder do much more damage in battle.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 10th+, Charm of Wounding

**Benefit:** The wielder gains a +5 enhancement bonus to all damage done in the battle, with any weapon. These charms, like lesser charms of wounding, must be struck in order to activate them and can only be used three times.

### LESSER CHARM OF YOUTH (GENERAL)

You can craft a charm which makes its bearer appear vigorous and in the prime of life.

This charm can take the form of an image of the bearer which grows old in his stead, or of many obscure symbols carved on a piece of gold. It is always something durable, to symbolize the recipient's durability.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+

**Benefit:** The bearer of the charm does not suffer any ability penalties from aging, and any penalties in effect are lost. He still dies when his time is up, but he does not apparently grow old.

This charm does not expire, but if it is lost all halted aging afflicts the character over a single week.

### CHARM OF YOUTH (GENERAL)

You can make a charm that halts aging.

These charms look much like lesser charms of youth, and are easily confused with them.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 15th+, Lesser Charm of Youth

**Benefit:** The character stops aging as long as the charm is carried. This is a genuine halting of the aging process, so the character will not die of old age. If he loses the charm, he begins to age, but only at a normal rate.

Using this charm is a sin, as it is an attempt to avoid God's judgment.

### CURSE CHARMS (GENERAL)

There are many different curse charms, with different effects. Each blessing charm described in this section has an equivalent curse charm, with the same prerequisites and granting a penalty equal to the blessing charm's bonus.

These charms must be hidden near the target's residence or place of work, and lose their power immediately if removed. The target gets a Will save against a DC of 10 + charm crafter's Wisdom bonus to resist the effect. If the save is made, that charm is forever useless.

### DAMAGE WARD (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that protects against a specific form of damage.

The charm takes the form of symbolic representation of the sort of damage against which it protects, often wrapped around with twine to symbolically bind it.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+

**Benefit:** As long as the charm is carried, the bearer gains some resistance to damage from a specific source, or is completely immune to one form of environmental damage. The immunity must be very specific, for example drowning in water (but not ale), burns from fire (but not heated metal). The DR granted from a charm is 10/-, and is effective against wounds from the specified type of weapon, such as daggers (but not axes or swords), and so on. The charm wears out, physically, in a month, and ceases to have any effect at that point.

It is quite possible to carry several of these charms at once.

### DISEASE REMEDY (GENERAL)

You can cure a particular disease.

These charms almost always involve a potion with vile ingredients that must be drunk by the sufferer. Often, the ill person must also recite several prayers, and the charmer must also say particular words while making the potion.

**Benefit:** You can cure any one disease.

### LESSER EMOTION CHARM (GENERAL)

You can inspire a specific emotion in a person, directed at whomever you choose. These charms normally involve some sort of image, often with writing on it, which must be given to or hidden near the target.

**Benefit:** The charm inspires one emotion in the target, directed at the person chosen by the charm maker. This might be love, loyalty, lust, envy, hatred, anger, pity, or anything else, but each emotion has its own charm.

The target does not get a saving throw if he freely accepts the charm, even if he has been deceived as to its nature. If the charm is merely hidden near the target, he gets a Will save against a DC of 13 + charm maker's Wis modifier.

The charm lasts as long as the physical charm is carried by or near the target. Since the charms are not very durable, this is normally no more than a week. If the target took particularly good care of the charm, it might last a month at the GM's discretion.

### EMOTION CHARM (GENERAL)

You can inspire a lasting emotion in a person.

These charms are the same as lesser emotion charms in appearance.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+, Lesser Emotion Charm





**Benefit:** As for a lesser emotion charm, but the inspired emotion remains until it is removed by the normal course of events. Since it inspires the equivalent of infatuated love, this takes considerable effort on the part of the object of the emotion, and if he wants to sustain it that takes very little effort.

Saving throws, if allowed, are against a DC of 16 + charm maker's Wis modifier.

### LESSER GIFT OF SKILL (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that grants a bonus to a particular skill.

These charms are all strange words written on parchment, which must be carried by the target of the charm. Sometimes herbs or flowers are wrapped in the parchment, and sometimes the parchment is tied with strange material, but the parchment is a constant.

**Benefit:** The bearer of the charm gains a +1 competence bonus to a particular skill. There is a different charm for each skill. The charm lasts a month before it must be replaced.

### GIFT OF SKILL (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that grants a significant bonus to a particular skill.

These charms appear as for lesser gifts of skill.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+, Lesser Gift of Skill

**Benefit:** The bearer of the charm gains a +3 competence bonus to a particular skill. There is a different charm for each skill, and the charm lasts a month before it must be replaced.

### GREATER GIFT OF SKILL (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that provides a great bonus to a particular skill.

These charms appear as for lesser gifts of skill.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 10th+, Gift of Skill

**Benefit:** The bearer gains a +5 competence bonus to a particular skill. As for the lesser version, there is a different charm for each skill, and one charm lasts a month.

### POISON REMEDY (GENERAL)

You can neutralize a particular poison, and prevent it having any further effects.

These charms involve collecting a herb under particular conditions, and then, when it is time to use it, laying on a wound, or putting it on something that is poisoned, while saying certain words, normally a prayer.

**Benefit:** The charm completely neutralizes a particular poison, whether or not it is already in someone's system. Particular poisons include adder venom, deadly nightshade, monkshood, other poisonous plants, and various mineral poisons.

### LESSER WAR CHARM (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that aids its wielder in battle. These charms take the form of a bundle of herbs and other materials to be wrapped around the handle of a weapon. The bundle sometimes includes parchment with words on it, but not always.

**Benefit:** The charm gives a +1 enhancement bonus to hit with the weapon to which it is attached. When activated, the charm is in effect for the entire battle. The charm only lasts for three combats before falling off the weapon, at which point it is useless.

### WAR CHARM (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that gives significant aid in battle.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+, Lesser War Charm

**Benefit:** As a lesser war charm, but it provides a +3 enhancement bonus to hit. These charms also last only for three combats.

### GREATER WAR CHARM (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that provides great aid in battle.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 10th+, War Charm

**Benefit:** As a lesser war charm, but it provides a +5 enhancement bonus to hit. These charms also last only for three combats.

### LESSER WEAPON PROTECTION (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that protects against weapons. These charms almost always take the form of a miniature shield or piece of armor, often made from holy material, on which protective words are written.

**Benefit:** The charm gives a +1 armor bonus to AC as long as it is carried. As the charm is not very durable, it wears out after a month.

### WEAPON PROTECTION (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that gives substantial protection against weapons.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 5th+, Lesser Weapon Protection

**Benefit:** The charm gives a +3 armor bonus to AC as long as it is carried. It is no more durable than a lesser weapon protection charm.

### GREATER WEAPON PROTECTION (GENERAL)

You can create a charm that gives great protection against weapons.

**Prerequisite:** Character level 10th+, Weapon Protection

**Benefit:** The charm gives a +5 armor bonus to AC as long as it is carried. It is no more durable than a lesser weapon protection charm.

# THEURGY

Theurgy is a form of magic that works through summoning and commanding spirits. The church regards all theurgy as sinful, and as tantamount to trafficking with demons, but this is not entirely true, and some theurgists are good. Evil or selfish theurgists are the most common, however.

Theurgy has three stages. First, the magician must find and learn the ritual to summon and bind spirits that can carry out the effects he desires. These rituals are extremely complex, and are not usually written down clearly, so this takes both time and effort. Second, he must perform the initial ritual. This requires expensive components, and must be done at a particular time and in a particular type of place. Finally, in order to invoke the effect, he must spend a short amount of time considering the symbols and magic circles involved in the ritual, and then recite the names of the spirits.

## THEURGIC RITUALS

Theurgic rituals are long and complex, and every one is different. They do have many features in common, however, so instead of simply giving a list of rituals, this section will discuss the common features and give guidance on how to make up your own. Most of the details of the ritual provide nothing more than color, and so can be created either by the GM or by the magician's player. The examples given below are taken from rituals in *Forbidden Rites: A Necromancer's Manual of the Fifteenth Century*, by Richard Kieckhefer. This is available in paperback, and is an excellent source of further inspiration.

It is important to realize that the power of the ritual is in the actions, not in the person performing them. As long as the actions are performed correctly, the ritual takes effect. The magician does not need to believe in them, nor does he need to have undertaken any training beyond that required to learn the ritual. This can be something of a shock for characters who perform a theurgic ritual as a joke.

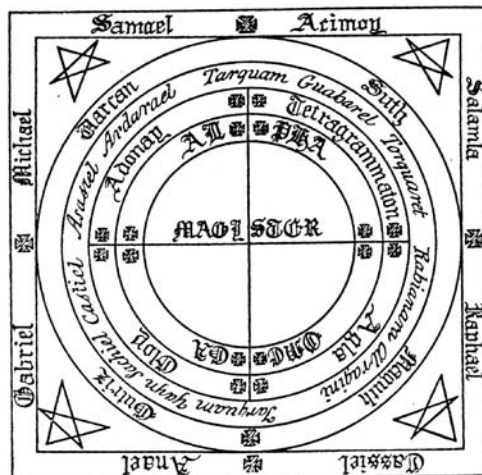
## NAMES OF SPIRITS

All rituals invoke one or more (usually more) spirits by name. These names are outlandish, and nothing like human names. Some examples are Oymelor, Demefin, Lamair, Masair, Tentetos, and Tatomofon.

As the magician must recite these names when invoking the spirits (see below) it is a good idea to come up with the names for each ritual. The number of names is independent of the power of the ritual, because the power of the spirits varies.

## MAGIC CIRCLES

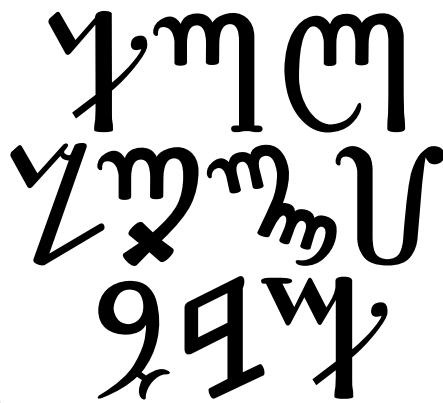
The magician stands inside a magic circle while performing the ritual. These circles are quite elaborate, with several concentric rings, other patterns, and words written inside the circle and between the concentric rings. The pictures nearby provide a couple of examples.



The magician needs a picture of the magic circle to invoke the spirits, so it is worth drawing it. It need not be drawn well, as the drawings in genuine medieval grimoires are often quite crude.

## SYMBOLS

Individual spirits also have symbols, which are worked into the rituals. Examples of these also appear in the illustrations nearby. These symbols often look like slightly modified letters, but some are much more complex. These, along with the magic circle, must be drawn on the scroll that the magician uses to invoke the spirits, so it adds to roleplaying if the player designs some for each ritual.



## PLACE AND TIME

Each ritual must be performed at a specific place and time. The time often refers to a phase of the moon or a time of day, and the location is sometimes as simple as "a remote place", which makes sense if you are going to summon a spirit.

More detailed requirements might be that the ritual must be performed on the first hour of a Friday, under a waxing moon, and the place might be “at a fruit-bearing tree”.

The GM should determine the place and time of the ritual, as this affects how easily the magician can perform it and thus gain access to its power.

## ADJURATION BY NAMES

The ritual also includes an adjuration of the spirits in the name of numerous entities. This invariably includes God, often under several names and as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost separately, and frequently includes the Virgin Mary and other Christian saints. Angels, powerful material things, such as the sun, moon, and stars, and the Last Judgment are also quite common in this context. Occasionally, it also includes the names of other powerful demons, including Lucifer himself. On the whole, however, the ritual claims to use the power of God to bind and control the spirits, and only the most obviously necromantic and evil rituals try to bind spirits in the name of the devil.

## RITUAL DRESS AND STATE

The magician must be in a particular state, and wearing particular clothes, which are specific to one ritual. Pure white clothes are quite common, as are new clothes that have never before been worn. It is also common to require the magician to fast or abstain from sex for a certain period before the ritual is performed.

## MATERIALS

All rituals involve elaborate material components, and obtaining these is the major expense. They must be made especially for the ritual, and must be destroyed once the ritual is successfully completed. If they are not, then they can be used to break the magician’s link to the spirits, rendering him unable to invoke them.

As an example, a ritual might involve a mirror made of steel, inscribed with the names of spirits and made at a certain time. After it is completed, it must be anointed with balsam and fumigated with expensive incense. Other rituals involve knives and swords of specific appearance.

Most rituals involve incense of some sort, which is burned to attract and control the spirits, and many involve an offering. Mixed wine, milk, and honey is a common combination, but animals are sometimes required. Only the most powerful and evil rituals require human sacrifice.

## REQUEST

Every ritual involves a request. Naturally, this includes a request for the effect that the ritual is supposed to produce, but it also includes commands to the spirits not to appear in a frightening form, nor to harm the magician, nor to deceive him.

## CHANT

Some rituals include a set of apparently nonsensical syllables that must be said at a specific point. Some magicians claim that these are statements in the language of the spirits, but if so no one has ever been able to understand them. It is more likely that they are nonsense, but that the actual sounds of the syllables have magical power.

## GAME RULES

In game terms, a theurgic ritual is treated like a magic item. Any member of any class can, in principle, learn and perform the summoning rituals, and once the ritual is learned, the spirits may be summoned as often as desired. The Church is correct, however, about theurgy being a sin, so using theurgy prevents a character from using any Charisms he may have. (See page 49 for details of Charisms.) This does not prevent a character who uses theurgy from being good, as killing people is also a sin, and fighters can be good.

Theurgic rituals can reproduce the effects of any spell, available to any class. The magic is actually performed by the summoned spirits, so by summoning different kinds of spirits the theurgist can produce different kinds of effects. The level of the spell is the lowest level at which it is available to any class. For example, *nondetection* is available to rangers as a fourth level spell, and to sorcerers and wizards as a third level spell. For theurgists, it is treated as a third level spell.

The caster level and save DC for a spell are determined by the particular ritual. The caster level must always be at least as high as the lowest level at which a wizard gains access to that sort of spell. Thus, the caster level for a third level spell cannot be lower than fifth level. Similarly, the save DC must be at least as high as the DC generated by a wizard with the minimum Intelligence necessary to cast the spell. Thus, the save DC for a third level spell cannot be lower than 14 (10, +3 for the spell level, +1 for the Int modifier from an Intelligence of 13, the minimum intelligence required to cast a third level spell).

A theurgic ritual is therefore described by the name of the spell, the caster level, and the save DC. A ritual which replicated a *fireball* with a caster level of five and a save DC of 14 would be written as *fireball/5/14*.

## LEARNING A RITUAL

In order to learn a theurgic ritual, the character must have a written copy of the ritual, and must be able to read the language in which it is written. This is almost always Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or Arabic, but almost all literate characters in the Middle Ages can speak one of those languages. Copies of theurgic rituals are never sold openly, and thus do not have a market price. It is possible to obtain them by trade from other theurgists, but most magicians would want to exchange the ritual for another, approximately equal, ritual, rather than for money or other goods.



A character can only learn theurgic rituals with levels less than or equal to his Intelligence minus 10. Any higher level ritual is too complex for him to understand. Thus, a character with Intelligence 13 can only learn theurgic rituals of levels one, two, and three.

Learning a ritual requires at least one Knowledge (theurgy) check. A character may study one ritual at a time, and may make one check per week. This week must be spent in dedicated study; the character may eat and sleep, but may not take significant time away from study, for example to go on adventures. The DC for the check is 15 + spell level. If the check succeeds, the character has learned the ritual, and may perform it. It is important to note that the character has not yet performed a theurgic ritual, and has no magical abilities. If the check fails, the character may try again as many times as he wishes, spending a week in study for every check.

A character can determine the spell mimicked by a ritual simply by reading it. However, he cannot determine the caster level or save DC until he has learned the ritual.

*Example:* Eleanor Belclerc has some knowledge of theurgy. She has obtained copies of two rituals, *suggestion*/6/18, and *wish*/20/23. Her Intelligence is 18, not quite enough to understand the *wish* ritual, so she decides to learn the *suggestion* ritual. She has four ranks in Knowledge (theurgy), and an Int modifier of +4, so she has +8 to her rolls to learn the ritual. The DC for the rolls is 17, 15 plus 2 for the level of the ritual (*suggestion* is a second level spell for bards), so she succeeds on a 9 or higher. The first week her player rolls an 8, so Eleanor fails to learn the ritual. The next week Eleanor has to go on an adventure to kill a dragon, so she cannot study. In the third week, her player rolls a twelve, so Eleanor has learned the ritual. She has not yet performed it, however, and cannot cast the effect.

## PERFORMING A RITUAL

A character may only perform a ritual that he has learned. The GM should describe some of the features of the ritual, as discussed under Theurgic Rituals on page 19, and, most important, should specify when and where the ritual must be performed. For low-level rituals, these conditions should be quite easy to meet. For example, the ritual might have to be performed at midnight in a graveyard, or at noon beside a river. As the level of the spell gets higher, the conditions should be harder to meet. A high level ritual might, for example, have to be performed during a conjunction of Mars and Jupiter, on the site of a king's murder. The theurgist can determine these conditions from simply reading the ritual, before bothering to learn it, so the GM should not set conditions which are impossible to meet, or which cannot be met within the time frame of the campaign. For example, giving a theurgist a ritual which must be completed at midnight at the beginning of a new century in 1099 is a good piece of campaign motivation. Giving a theurgist the



same ritual in 1100 is unreasonable unless your campaign is expected to cover another hundred years, or you have something in mind involving a different calendar. A ritual performed at any time and place other than that specified is automatically ineffective, although the materials are still consumed.

The materials for a theurgic ritual are expensive. They cost 300 gp, multiplied by both the spell level and the caster level. 0-level spells count as half level for these purposes, so that the cost for a ritual which mimics a 0-level spell is 150 gp times the caster level. The save DC does not affect the cost of the ritual, so it is worth looking for rituals with as high a save DC as possible. As a rule of thumb, the save DC should go no higher than  $20 + \text{spell level}$ . Note that theurgic rituals cost almost as much as a command-word activated magic item that has a spell effect. This is because this is, basically, what they are.

For high-level rituals, some of the required components may be hard to obtain, and require an adventure. Indeed, this is a good way to motivate characters. See the discussion of Theurgic Rituals on page 19 for some ideas as to the sort of thing. Components gained on adventures should be given a gold piece value, which is counted against the treasure allowance for the adventure, and which contributes to the cost of the ritual.

Once a character has the components, and has found an appropriate place and time, he can perform the ritual. No checks are required for this, and the ritual succeeds unless it is interrupted. Most theurgic rituals take an hour or so to perform, so interruption is a serious risk. If a ritual is interrupted, it automatically fails, and 25% of the materials are consumed. This represents things such as incense that has been burned, or milk and honey that have been poured out. Much of the cost is involved in creating elaborate ritual paraphernalia, and these items can be reused if the theurgist attempts to perform the same ritual at a later time.

If the ritual is performed correctly, the spirits appear to the magician and appear to create the spell effect. This is an illusion (so, if the spell is an illusion, they really cast the spell), but serves to confirm to the magician that he has performed the correct ritual. The ritual ends with the magician commanding the spirits to attend on him and perform the effect whenever he requires. This means that he can invoke the spirits at a later time.

*Example:* Eleanor Belclerc wants to perform the *suggestion* ritual, so that she can cast the effect. The materials cost 3,600 gp [2 (spell level) times 6 (caster level) times 300 gp], so it takes her some time to gather them. The GM comes up with interesting-sounding items, including a nine-branched candelabrum fashioned in gold and depicting a king ruling his subjects. The ritual must be performed somewhere that regularly hosts a law court, starting at midnight when the moon is in the sky. This isn't too difficult, and Eleanor finds such a place.

Unfortunately, her first attempt to perform the ritual is interrupted by a couple of thugs who decided that a beautiful woman, alone, with a golden candelabrum, was a perfect target. They learned the error of their ways, but a quarter of Eleanor's materials were wasted, and she needs to find another 900 gp.

After a while, she has the money, and performs the ritual again, this time without interruption. Two spirits, one male, one female, both beautiful, appear to her and swear to obey her and convince anyone to follow her will.

## INVOKING SPIRITS

In order to invoke the spirits, the magician needs a representation of their symbols and the relevant magic circle. This representation can fit on a single scroll, and need not be magical. It has no cost beyond that of the material it is drawn on, and any magician can make a new one for a ritual he has learned given the necessary materials and half an hour. The magician looks at the representation and considers its details while quietly reciting the names of the spirits involved. This takes one full round action per level of the spell, and cannot be done while on the defensive. That is, invoking the spirits in this fashion always provokes attacks of opportunity. Thus, invoking the spirits for a fifth level spell takes five full rounds, during each of which the magician provokes attacks of opportunity from any enemies who threaten him. Invoking spirits is not subject to the chance of arcane spell failure from wearing armor, as it does not involve somatic components.

Once the invocation is complete, the spirits create the effect. They are only visible to the magician, but the effects that they create can affect anyone. If the spell requires an expensive material component, or an expenditure of experience points, the theurge must provide these at the time of invocation.

*Example:* Eleanor Belclerc makes the scroll, and carries it with her. When she wants to cast *suggestion* on someone, she must spend two full-round actions considering the scroll. The target must make a Will save against a DC of 18, and the effect has a range of 55 feet and a duration of six hours. If the target has spell resistance, Eleanor gets +6 on her caster level check, independent of her spellcaster level, because the caster level is determined by the ritual, not by her spellcaster level.

## THEURGIC RITUALS AND MAGIC ITEMS

Theurgic rituals can be used to supply the spells needed as prerequisites for magic items. A character who has performed the necessary theurgic rituals and has the relevant Item Creation feat can create magic items according to the normal rules.

Magic items created in this way draw on the power of the spirits, and thus using them is a sin, even if the user does not know the source of their power.

# ◆ New Magical Classes ◆

The *Medieval Player's Manual* introduces three new magic-using core classes: the cunning man, the natural magician, and the theurge. There are also two new magic-using prestige classes: the necromancer and the theophanist.

## ◆ The Cunning Man Core Class ◆

Cunning men are the wise folk of the peasants, lacking in formal education but knowing a great deal about how to deal with the world. They provide healing and other kinds of aid, and most of them do not worry much about the source of their power. All would claim, sincerely, to be Christians, but some of their charms have pagan roots, and others might seem to draw on infernal powers. Cunning folk are normally respected in their communities, but this respect is tinged with fear, and an unpopular cunning man is often the scapegoat when inexplicable misfortune strikes. Such victims might find it wise to leave their villages.

Despite the name of the class, there are female cunning folk, and, indeed, they are not much outnumbered by the men. A female cunning man is not even remarkable, and draws no more comment than her male counterpart.

### ADVENTURES

An established cunning man might often have to undertake adventures to protect his community from unusual threats, while one who had been cast out would naturally find himself involved in dangerous situations. A few cunning folk seek out danger in the hope of uncovering new knowledge, but that is unusual. Player character cunning men are rather more likely to be among the adventurous members of their class, of course.

### CHARACTERISTICS

Cunning folk are one part witch and one part counselor. Their roles in their communities have as much to do with smoothing over feuds and helping people through difficult times as they have to do with the use of magic. Thus, in general cunning folk are good at getting along with other people. However, they do not get on with other members of their class. Each cunning man portrays himself as the sole repository of ancient power, and other cunning men as far weaker, if not downright frauds. This is not very different from the competition between pilgrimage sites, but it does sour relationships between cunning folk. The main exception is the bond between master and pupil, where each has an interest in the other being seen as powerful, the pupil so that he can claim to be from a great lineage and the master so that she can claim to have handed her power on.

### ALIGNMENT

Cunning folk can be of any alignment. There is a tendency towards chaotic alignment, as the Church does not approve of them, but also a tendency towards good alignment, as they normally look after others. These tendencies are, however, quite weak.

### Other Classes

Cunning folk are generally enthusiastic about working with other classes, seeing the value in their abilities. The main tension is with the educated magicians, who tend to look down on the cunning man's learning and ability. In many cases, the cunning folk try to prove themselves, but sometimes they develop contempt for book learning to match the snobbery of the educated.

### Game Rule Information

Cunning folk have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Wisdom is slightly more important than the other abilities, as saving throws against folk charms often depend on the crafter's Wis modifier. However, cunning men are not particularly dependent on any ability, and different cunning men have very different strengths.

**Alignment:** Any

**Hit Die:** d8





## CLASS SKILLS

The cunning man's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha) Knowledge (all skills taken individually), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int), Survival (Wis), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (4 + Int modifier) x 4

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the cunning man.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Cunning folk are proficient with simple weapons, but not with any kind of armor, nor with shields.

### FREE FOLK CHARMS

At every level the cunning man gains a number of free folk charm feats. He must choose one for which he meets the prerequisites, but there are no other restrictions. The column on the class table lists the *total* number of folk charms, so that a cunning man going from first to second level gains one more charm, for a total of two.

### WEATHER SENSE

At first level the cunning man knows what the weather will be like a week in advance. This is extremely useful in an

agricultural community, or for travelers. At fourth level, he knows one month ahead, and from eighth level, a year. At eighth level the cunning man can predict the quality of the next harvest with considerable accuracy.

### NATURE SENSE

At second level the cunning man can identify plants and animals (their species and specific traits) with perfect accuracy, and can tell whether water is safe to drink.

### LOW-LIGHT VISION

At sixth level the cunning man has low-light vision, and can see twice as far as normal people at night or by torchlight.

### DISEASE IMMUNITY

At tenth level the cunning man is immune to all natural (non-magical) diseases.

### POISON IMMUNITY

At twelfth level the cunning man is immune to all natural (non-magical) poisons.

### WEATHER IMMUNITY

At fourteenth level the cunning man is immune to the ill-effects of bad weather. This includes nonlethal damage from extreme heat and cold, buffeting from wind, and even getting wet in the rain. This immunity only applies to natural weather, not to weather that has been magically summoned or controlled.

TABLE 2-6: THE CUNNING MAN

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Free Folk Charms	Special
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	1	Weather sense (1 week)
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	2	Nature sense
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	4	
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	5	Weather sense (1 month)
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	6	
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	8	Low-light vision
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	9	
8	+6/+1	+6	+2	+6	10	Weather sense (1 year)
9	+6/+1	+6	+3	+6	12	
10	+7/+2	+7	+3	+7	13	Disease Immunity
11	+8/+3	+7	+3	+7	14	
12	+9/+4	+8	+4	+8	16	Poison Immunity
13	+9/+4	+8	+4	+8	17	
14	+10/+5	+9	+4	+9	18	Weather Immunity
15	+11/+6/+1	+9	+5	+9	20	
16	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	22	Timeless Body
17	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	24	
18	+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	26	Weapon Immunity
19	+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	28	
20	+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	30	Magic Immunity

## Timeless Body

At sixteenth level the cunning man no longer suffers ability penalties due to age, and cannot be magically aged. Bonuses still accrue, and he still dies when his time is up. Any penalties already applied remain in place. The cunning man still appears to age, but seems to be in very good shape for his age.

## Weapon Immunity

At eighteenth level the cunning man gains damage reduction 15/magic.

## Magic Immunity

At twentieth level the cunning man gains spell resistance equal to 13 + class level.

# THE NATURAL MAGICIAN CORE CLASS

The powers of astrology and alchemy are available to any scholar, but the natural magician has made the study of such things his life's work. Although the powers of nature may be used without incurring God's displeasure, many people look upon magic of any sort with suspicion, so natural magicians often pretend to be other sorts of scholar. Still, their intimate knowledge of the heavens allows them to create a far wider range of astral charms than any other character.

Most natural magicians are men, as most educated people are male. There is no bar to female natural magicians, however, and a female natural magician would incur no more, and no less, social disapproval than any other educated woman.

## ADVENTURES

Natural magicians often adventure to find out more about the world, and to seek out rare materials for alchemy or the most powerful astral charms. As long as they have their charms with them and easily available, natural magicians are both powerful and flexible. However, when deprived of their bags of tricks, they are nearly helpless. Natural magicians can also fit well into courtly campaigns (see page 93).

## CHARACTERISTICS

All natural magicians are scholars, and for them knowledge truly is power. As a result they tend to look down on the illiterate, and prefer the company of educated men. They can share knowledge with one another, and some do. Others, however, prefer to keep the power all to themselves. The choice is a matter of individual personality.

## ALIGNMENT

All alignments are found among natural magicians, and all are more or less equally represented. Scholarship requires discipline, which tends towards lawful alignment, but studying natural magic requires the scholar to break social taboos, a chaotic trait. These cancel out, and natural magic itself is entirely neutral between good and evil.

## OTHER CLASSES

Natural magicians work well with other classes. In situations of physical danger they appreciate the support of fighters, rogues, and clerics, while in politics they find the canonist

extremely helpful. Many rely on priests to tend their souls, and most find the company of scholars congenial.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Natural magicians have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Intelligence is by far the most important ability for a natural magician, as all his important skills and class abilities are based on it. A natural magician does not get bonus astral charms based on high ability scores, however.

**Alignment:** Any

**Hit Die:** d4

## CLASS SKILLS

The natural magician's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script



**TABLE 2-7:  
THE NATURAL MAGICIAN**

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bonus feat
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	Bonus feat
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9	
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	Bonus feat
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	

**TABLE 2-8: NATURAL  
MAGICIAN ASTRAL CHARMS**

Level	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	6	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	6	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	7	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	7	5	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	8	5	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
9	8	5	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
10	9	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
11	9	5	5	4	3	2	-	-	-	-
12	9	5	5	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
13	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	-	-	-
14	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
15	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	-	-
16	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	-
17	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	-
18	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	1
19	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2
20	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3

(Int), Knowledge (all skills taken individually), Profession (Wis), Speak Language (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Almost all natural magicians have both Knowledge (alchemy) and Knowledge (astrology). A natural magician who lacks either of these skills does not have access to some of his class abilities.

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (4 + Int modifier) x 4

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the natural magician.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Natural magicians are proficient with simple weapons, but not with any kind of armor, nor with shields.

## ❖ The Theurge Core Class ❖

While any character can learn and perform a theurgic ritual to command the power of spirits, the theurge has devoted his life to the practice. The Church holds theurgy to be sinful and strongly disapproves of its practitioners, although it does not actively persecute them. A theurgist is treated in much the same way as a fornicator; he is required to repent, give up his practice of magic, and do penance for his sins.

### ASTRAL CHARMS

The natural magician learns a certain number of astral charms as part of his training. The number of charms of each level that he knows at each character level is given on Table 2-8: Natural Magician Astral Charms. The natural magician makes and invokes these astral charms as normal (see page 15).

### BONUS FEATS

The natural magician gets a bonus feat at levels 1, 5, 9, 13, and 17. These feats can be used to buy any alchemical or astrological feat, or to buy any astral charm. For the purposes of buying astral charms, the natural magician may count the highest level of astral charm he knows through the class as a number of astral charm feats known. Thus, a natural magician who knows third level charms through the class counts as having three astral charm feats.

Theurgy requires literacy, and most literate characters are members of the Church in some capacity. Thus, most theurges are clerks or, for female theurges, nuns. There are a few lay exceptions, however. A clerk or priest who is found to be practicing theurgy is treated quite severely, just as one who was found to be fornicating would be, but the appeal of power, much like the appeal of sex, ensures that clerical theurges are still to be found.

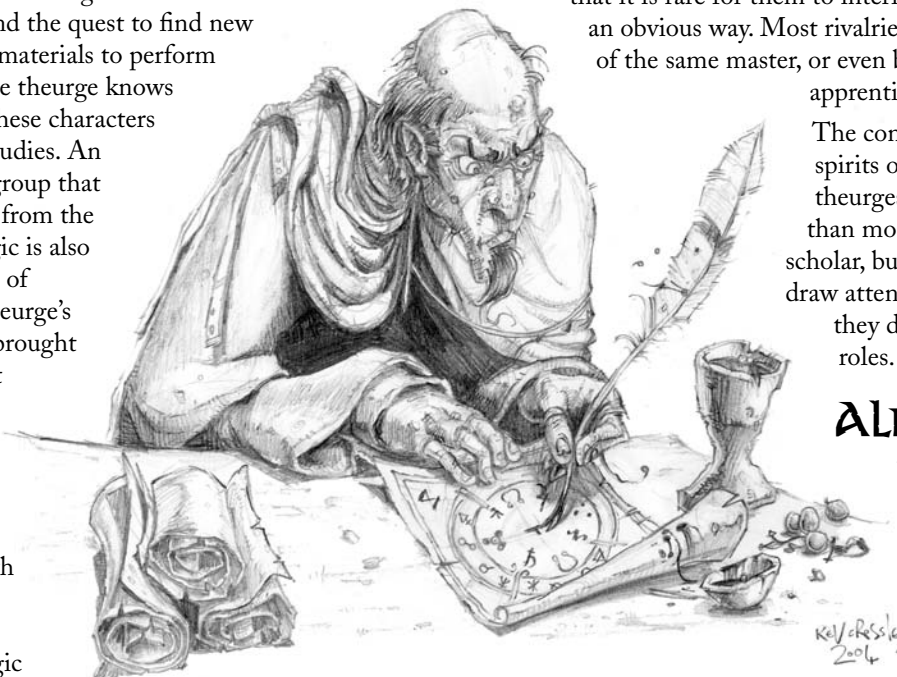
Table 2-9: The Theurge

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	-
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	-
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	-
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	-
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	-
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	-
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	-
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	-
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	-
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	-
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	-
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	-
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	-
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9	-
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	-
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	-
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	-
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	-
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	-
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	-

Because of the general disapproval of his methods, a theurge tends keep his abilities quiet and the source of his power secret. If challenged, most claim to be natural magicians, drawing on the powers of herbs and stars to create their effects.

## ADVENTURES

The power of a theurge is well suited to adventures, and the quest to find new rituals or the materials to perform rituals that the theurge knows often drives these characters out of their studies. An adventuring group that has benefited from the theurge's magic is also a good source of allies if the theurge's practices are brought to light. Most theurges adventure to gain knowledge and power, treating wealth merely as a means to greater theurgic accomplishment.



## CHARACTERISTICS

Theurges must be at least somewhat scholarly, and the general disapproval of their magic leads the vast majority to be rather secretive. Theurges have a lot in common with one another, and many are eager to trade rituals. In a few cases theurges become rivals, but their need for secrecy means that it is rare for them to interfere in each other's plans in an obvious way. Most rivalries occur between students of the same master, or even between master and apprentice.

The constant need to command spirits of great power gives most theurges more force of personality than most people expect in a scholar, but they rarely use this to draw attention to themselves, and they do not seek leadership roles.

## ALIGNMENT

Theurges can be of any alignment, but as theurgy itself is sinful they tend towards neutral and evil alignments. In addition, as they must violate society's



TABLE 2-10:  
THEURGE FREE RITUALS

Level	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	4	4	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
9	4	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
10	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
11	4	4	4	4	3	2	-	-	-	-
12	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
13	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	-	-	-
14	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
15	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	-	-
16	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	-
17	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	-
18	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	1
19	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	2
20	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

TABLE 2-11: THEURGE FAST  
INVOCATIONS PER DAY

Level	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	6	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	6	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	6	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	6	6	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	6	6	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	6	6	6	5	3	-	-	-	-	-
9	6	6	6	6	4	-	-	-	-	-
10	6	6	6	6	5	3	-	-	-	-
11	6	6	6	6	6	4	-	-	-	-
12	6	6	6	6	6	5	3	-	-	-
13	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	-	-	-
14	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	3	-	-
15	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	-	-
16	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	3	-
17	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	-
18	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	3
19	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	4
20	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6

norms in order to learn and practice their craft, they have a tendency towards chaotic alignment as well. These are merely tendencies, and there are a few lawful good theurges.

## OTHER CLASSES

Theurges like working with other classes, as they are weak in a physical fight and prefer not to rely on their magic in public. They may have some trouble with the more aggressively pious classes, unless they keep the source of their powers secret, but theurges are normally willing to work with anyone. They tend to compete with natural magicians, trying to prove that their magic is more powerful.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Theurges have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Intelligence is important to a theurge, as it determines whether he can learn a ritual and also the highest level ritual that he can learn. However, he gains bonus free invocations (see Class Features) based on his Charisma score. Constitution is also useful, as the theurge has few hit points.

**Alignment:** Any

**Hit Die:** d4

## CLASS SKILLS

The theurge's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills taken individually), Profession (Wis), Speak Language (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (2 + Int modifier) x 4

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 2 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the theurge.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Theurges are proficient with simple weapons, but not with any kind of armor, nor with shields.

### FREE THEURGIC RITUALS

At every level, the theurge learns and performs a number of theurgic rituals without cost. The cumulative number of rituals is given on Table 2-10: Theurge Free Rituals. Thus, a theurge advancing from second to third level gains one 0-level free ritual. The theurge may invoke the spirits as normal to create the effects of these rituals. The theurge's dedicated training allows him to perform these rituals without the normal equipment, so it is not possible to trade free rituals for the equivalent amount of treasure. The caster level for free rituals is equal to the theurge's character level at the time he learns them.

Thus, a fourth level theurge gaining his first second level free ritual gains it at a caster level of four. The save DC is equal to 10 + the theurge's Cha modifier + ritual level.

Theurges may also learn and perform rituals in the normal way, and at the normal cost. Free rituals are in addition to any rituals performed in this way.

## FAST INVOCATIONS

A theurge's training gives him a limited ability to invoke spirits more quickly than most people. He may invoke spirits as a standard action, and it is possible to do this on the defensive, subject to the normal rules for casting on the

defensive. Fast invocation does not require a drawing of the magic circle and spirit symbols, and does not require the theurge to gesture or speak.

A theurge may perform a number of fast invocations per day that depends on his level. The numbers are given on Table 2-11: Fast Invocations per Day. A theurge may invoke the spirits connected to any ritual he has performed in the normal way, as many times per day as he wishes. Similarly, fast invocation can be used with any ritual the theurge has performed, not only with his free rituals. A lower level ritual may be invoked using a higher level slot, but not vice versa, and slots may not be added together to allow the fast invocation of a higher level ritual.

# THE NECROMANCER PRESTIGE CLASS

While theurgy is sinful in itself, not all theurges are evil. Among those who are evil, the necromancer is the most feared. He has learned to draw power from the lives of others, and commands greater magic than most. Wise necromancers keep their activities as secret as possible, and only the wise grow to any significant power. Not all necromancers are wise, as almost all evil theurges have heard of this path, and wish to follow it. The foolish are the source of many of the blackest tales about the masters of spirits; the tales of the wise are darker yet.

**Hit Die:** d4

## REQUIREMENTS

**Theurgic Rituals:** A character who wishes to become a necromancer must have successfully performed a theurgic ritual of third level or higher, so that he can invoke the spirits.

**Alignment:** Any evil.

**Special:** Find, learn and perform the ritual of sacrifice. This works much like a standard theurgic ritual at third level and caster level six, but it cannot be learned by a theurge as a free ritual. There are a number of different versions, but all require the theurge to sacrifice another human being.

## CLASS SKILLS

The necromancer's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills taken individually), Profession (Wis), Speak Language (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

**Skill Points:** 2 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the necromancer.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

The necromancer gains proficiency with no armor and no weapons.

## THEURGIC RITUALS

At every level the necromancer gains free and fast theurgic rituals as a theurge (page 26). Levels of necromancer stack with levels of theurge for this purpose.

## SACRIFICE

Necromancers learn, through dark pacts, how to increase their power by sacrificing others. They must still perform the rituals necessary to summon spirits and bind them to their service, but they no longer need to spend money to do so. Instead, they sacrifice the lives of others and a little of their own life force.

For every 1,000 gp, or fraction, of the normal cost of the ritual, the necromancer must instead sacrifice one human being to

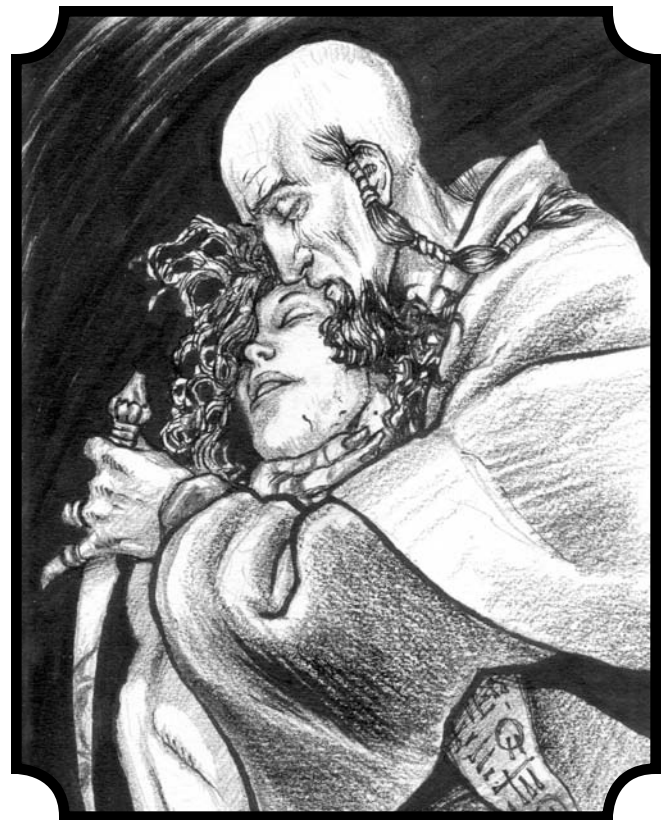


TABLE 2-12: THE NECROMANCER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1 level theurgic rituals, sacrifice
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1 level theurgic rituals
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	+1 level theurgic rituals
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 level theurgic rituals
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 level theurgic rituals
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	+1 level theurgic rituals
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	+1 level theurgic rituals
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	+1 level theurgic rituals
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	+1 level theurgic rituals
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	+1 level theurgic rituals, infernal servant

his dark lords. The victims need have no particular features, although many necromancers do “specialize”. The ritual must still be performed at the right time and place, which can be tricky, as high-level rituals need a large number of sacrifices. The necromancer must also expend experience points equal to one twenty fifth of the normal cost of the ritual.

For example, a necromancer wishes to perform a ritual which gives access to a third level effect at a caster level of eight. The normal cost for this is 7,200 gp. The necromancer must kill eight people (seven complete 1000s and one fraction) and expend 288 experience points.

The highest level ritual a necromancer can learn in this way is equal to his class level, so a character with one level of necromancer can only use sacrifices for 0-level and 1st level rituals.

### INFERNAL SERVANT

At tenth level the necromancer attracts the service of an intelligent demon. Much more powerful than the spirits a theurge controls to produce his magical effects, this demon can act intelligently and independently on behalf of the necromancer. As long as the necromancer is acting for evil ends, the demon is a loyal and helpful servant.

Every necromancer’s servant is different, but they have a few features in common. First, the demon’s challenge rating is two lower than the necromancer’s character level. The challenge rating does increase as the necromancer gains in power, as the demon feeds on a portion of its master’s essence and becomes more powerful. Whenever the necromancer gains a level, the demon’s challenge rating increases by one and it gains additional abilities.

To create an infernal servant, work from a standard demon at around the right challenge rating, and interpolate between that demon and a more powerful one to get the right level. While the selection of demons in the *MM* is fairly sparse, there are many more options in Green Ronin’s *Book of Fiends* and some Biblically appropriate ones in *Testament*.

Second, all infernal servants are able to take a relatively inoffensive form. Cats, rats, bats, and toads are common choices, with snakes not far behind.

Finally, an infernal servant is interested in seeing that his master is, finally, damned. Thus, it will take steps to prevent him from attending church, or doing anything else that might indicate repentance. This is not often a problem, as most necromancers glory in their evil.

## ❖ The Theophanist Prestige Class ❖

Some theurges become ambitious. They have learned that they can summon spirits to do their bidding, and start thinking about the greatest spirit of all: God. They wonder whether they could summon God, and those who take the speculation seriously have embarked on the path of the theophanist.

Motivations for these deep seekers vary. Some theophanists hope to actually control God, and thus become omnipotent. These characters are, of course, insane, as no human could control the Godhead, but apart from this delusion they may appear completely normal. Others merely seek a way

to attain the ultimate end of virtue without having to bother with personal virtue and self discipline. Still others see the path of the theophanist as the most pious use of their theurgic abilities. This last motivation is particularly common among those who do not want to believe that theurgy is truly sinful.

Theurgy can, in fact, grant the beatific vision, letting the theurge see God present everywhere around him. This vision presents the character with the most important choice he could ever have to make.

Hit Die: d4

## REQUIREMENTS

**Theurgic Rituals:** A character who wishes to become a theophanist must have successfully performed a theurgic ritual of third level or higher, so that he can invoke the spirits.

## CLASS SKILLS

The theophanist's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills taken individually), Profession (Wis), Speak Language (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha, exclusive skill).

**Skill Points:** 2 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

The theophanist gains proficiency with no armor and no weapons.

### THEURGIC RITUALS

At most levels, the theophanist gains free theurgic rituals and fast invocations as if he had gained a level as a theurge. If he already had levels as a theurge, these gains stack. If he did not, he gains the abilities of a first level theurge when he takes the first level of theophanist, and these abilities increase by one level every time the theophanist class grants an increase. If a character takes his first level as theurge after his first level as a theophanist, the levels still stack.

### BEATIFIC VISION

At tenth level the theophanist learns a ritual that will give him the beatific vision. This is direct sight and experience of God, and is the ultimate fulfillment of human existence. All theophanists perform this ritual as soon as they learn it, because this was the whole point of their study.

When the theophanist performs the ritual, the sight of God makes it impossible for the theophanist to deceive himself



about the sinfulness of theurgy, and in the moment of that sight the theophanist must make a choice, as the angels did in the moment of their creation. He must choose either to accept God, or to reject Him and fall. Either decision is as absolute for the theophanist as it is for the angels, as it is made under the same conditions.

If the theophanist chooses to accept God, his alignment changes irrevocably to good, but his alignment with respect to law and chaos does not change. The character loses all levels of theophanist and theurge, and loses access to the spirits bound by any theurgic rituals. These levels are genuinely lost; the character loses the necessary character levels, along with all skills and feats, other than Charisms,

TABLE 2-13: The Theophanist

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1 level theurgic rituals
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1 level theurgic rituals
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	+1 level theurgic rituals
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 level theurgic rituals
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	+1 level theurgic rituals
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	+1 level theurgic rituals
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	+1 level theurgic rituals
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	+1 level theurgic rituals, beatific vision



associated with the higher levels. By way of compensation, the character gains one level in the saint class (see page 54), and can gain more. The character is no longer capable of sinning, or even of desiring to sin. If the player says that the character does something that is sinful, the GM must tell him that he does not. From the player's perspective, this is a loss of freedom, and may not be wanted. The *character*, however, is truly free.

Alternatively, the theophanist may choose to reject God. In this case, his alignment changes irrevocably to evil, although it does not change with respect to law and chaos. The character is now eternally damned. He retains all his previous abilities, other than Charisms, and can act as he

wishes. Apparently good actions are not truly good, however, and the character can never redeem himself; as with the angels, his fall is absolute.

No matter what his decision, the theophanist is permanently marked by his vision of the divine. He gains the Resurrection Body Charism (page 49), even if he does not meet the prerequisites (which is extremely likely), and he retains the ability even if he has fallen and thus sins constantly. A virtuous theophanist would lose the Charism if he sinned, but he cannot sin, so the situation does not arise. The fact that the fallen theophanist retains the charism is a mystery, on a par with the continuing power of the fallen angels.

## STANDARD D20 MAGIC

### SORCERERS, WIZARDS, AND BARDS

As one might expect, standard d20 wizards do not fit at all well into medieval Europe, and are best replaced by either theurges or natural magicians. These classes have the same studious approach to magic, but with properly medieval trappings.

Sorcerers are a more difficult case. There are figures in medieval myth with inherent powers similar to a sorcerer, but they are rarely entirely human. Certainly, the Church would regard such a person as at least half demon, and wholly damned. The GM should decide whether to allow sorcerers in the campaign, and if they are allowed at all some sort of special background should be required, such as having a demon for a father, as Merlin did. Characters that do not start as sorcerers should not be allowed to take levels of sorcerer later in the campaign, as they obviously do not have the necessary supernatural heritage. Characters who so

start as sorcerers, on the other hand, should be allowed to multiclass normally.

### INAPPROPRIATE SPELLS

Most standard spells can be used in medieval Europe as they are, as long as they are cast by the methods given in this chapter. The main exceptions are those that deal with the outer planes, including those that summon creatures from those planes. *Gate*, *ethereal jaunt*, *planar binding* and the like have no theurgic or astral charm equivalents. The outer planes simply do not exist, and summoning and controlling spirits is done though theurgy, with the effects noted there. This restriction means that the *summon monster* spells are unavailable. Astral charms cannot produce this sort of effect, but theurges can use *summon nature's ally* instead.

In addition, *raise dead*, *resurrection*, and other spells that restore life to the dead are not available to magicians. The dead can be raised, but only by God or His saints. Theurges can use magic to heal, however.

## MAGICAL MONSTERS

While the Middle Ages were filled with magical beasts, not all of the standard d20 monsters are appropriate to the setting, and some are particularly apt. The most important group of inappropriate monsters is the "mundane" humanoids. That is, non-human but humanoid races that live by farming, raiding, or trade. Examples include elves, orcs, and goblinoids of all sorts. Medieval tales do describe similar creatures, but they are all magical beings, living somehow apart from the everyday world, and are thus better treated as some kind of magical creature. Standard creatures can be used as a basis for these creatures, and the *Being of Unknown Form* template on page 33 can be used to convert them. They should exist only in small groups, and should not have a normal economy of any sort. Giants are a partial exception to this, in that the standard

d20 statistics are appropriate. However, they should also be isolated families rather than communities, at least in the British Isles. Further north, in Scandinavia and Iceland, giant clans play a larger role in myth.

Outsiders and aberrations are usually inappropriate. Aberrations generally seem weird because they do not fit into the conventions of Western myth, much of which goes back to the Middle Ages. There are no other planes in the medieval world, so most outsiders have nowhere to come from. Elementals are a partial exception, as they can be summoned from the energy of the world, rather than coming from outside. Angels and demons can also be modeled by outsiders, but need special care—see page 64 for details.

In addition, creatures found in the *MM* but not in the d20 SRD are mainly original creations, and inappropriate for use in a medieval campaign. Unfortunately, we aren't allowed to list them here.

The undead are highly appropriate, but they should only be encountered in small groups, no more than half a dozen. Medieval legends are full of tales of the dead returning, but only as individuals. Armies of rotting corpses are not part of the setting.

Dire animals, and other more powerful or changed versions of common animals and plants also fit very well, particularly in areas of the world where people go rarely. As a rule, however, they should not have human intelligence; they remain animals, despite their extra abilities. Many animals were thought to have particular special abilities, and *The Medieval Bestiary, Revised Edition for Ars Magica* is a good source for these beliefs.

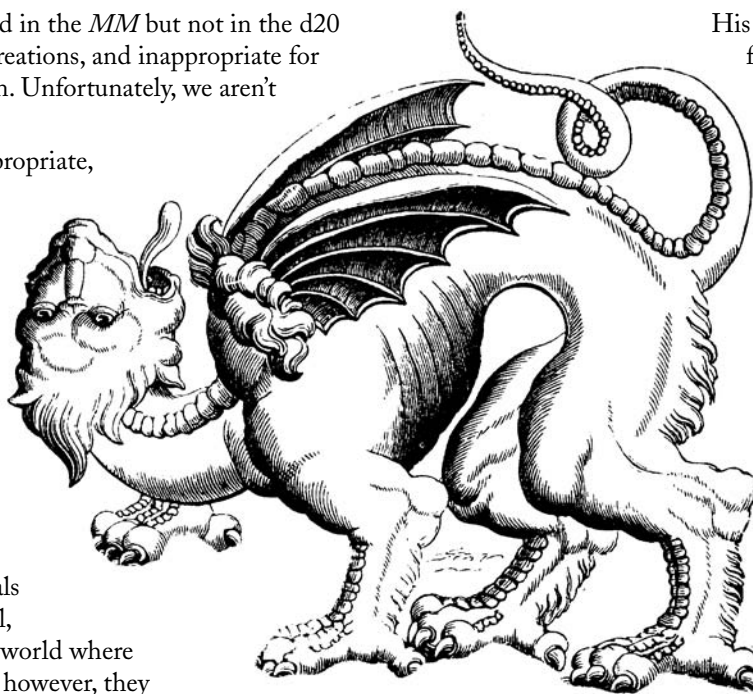
By the same token, lycanthropes, particularly werewolves, are among the most appropriate monsters to use, as they figure prominently in medieval legends. The blurring of the boundaries between men and beasts was a major concern of many writers. The fey, as nature spirits, are generally appropriate for similar reasons.

Finally, dragons are the medieval monster *par excellence*. They should be rare, just as in any campaign, but twelfth-century legends tells of two dragons, one red and one white, fighting constantly in a cave somewhere beneath Wales. Good dragons are not a Western legend, and should be used extremely sparingly, if at all. In Western myth, the dragon is always the enemy.

## BEING OF UNKNOWN FORM

Beings of unknown form are creatures found throughout medieval Europe which are not humans or animals, but do not seem to be angels or demons. The term is generally applied to creatures of the same general size and shape as human beings, as other beings are treated as animals of some sort.

These creatures are, indeed, a race apart, being a manifestation of the spirits suspended between heaven and hell. When Satan rebelled and fell, some spirits stood apart from the war. As they had not truly rebelled against God, they were not damned to hell, but as they had not defended



His rule, they were cast out from heaven. These spirits have a wide range of attitudes, from the malicious who stood aside because they didn't want to risk themselves to the virtuous who had friends among the rebels.

When the spirits manifest they normally take human-seeming shapes, although these can be distorted to a greater or lesser extent. However, it is not unheard of for them to appear as animals, or even stranger creatures from fever dreams.

## CREATING A BEING OF UNKNOWN FORM

*Being of Unknown Form* is a template that can be added to any creature, no matter what its original type. There are no restrictions on the base creature. The creature's type changes to "outsider", but it otherwise uses the entire base creature's statistics and special abilities, except as noted here.

**Special Qualities:** A being of unknown form has all the special qualities of the base creature, and adds those listed below.

*Vanish (Su):* If the creature is not observed, it can disappear, returning to its spiritual existence between heaven and hell. A creature is observed if anyone is currently aware of it through any sense. Thus, a creature cannot vanish while it is held, nor if it is seen or heard. Since scents normally persist in the absence of the source, smell is not sufficient to prevent the creature from vanishing.

**Climate/Terrain:** As base creature

**Organization:** As base creature, but never in groups of more than a dozen

**Challenge Rating:** Same as the base creature

**Treasure:** Same as base creature, but all ephemeral. When the creature vanishes, its treasure also vanishes if it is not observed. If it is observed at that time it remains until it is unobserved, at which time it vanishes. Exceptionally, a being of unknown form may guard genuine treasure.

**Alignment:** Any

**Advancement:** Same as the base creature

# THINGS OF MAGIC

## OMENS

Medieval Europe is filled with omens, messages from God to warn His people about their current sins or future events. This section describes a few common types.

## COMETS

New stars, with tails of fire, appear in the sky to herald the most important events. Most recently, a comet announced the Norman invasion in 1066, but comets also preceded the coming of Arthur and the death of Julius Caesar. A comet may have a very elaborate shape, appearing as a dragon, or even a mounted warrior. They normally move across the sky at almost the same speed as the sun, and are visible for several days. Sometimes, however, they move more quickly, and appear more briefly. The brighter and longer-lasting the comet, the more important the event it portends.

## BLEEDING WALLS

Sometimes the walls of buildings, or the ground nearby, bleed. This is not too uncommon; there is an instance every two or three years in England. The blood is almost always human, and seems completely normal. This may have several causes. Often, it is an omen sent by God to warn the people of that place. For example, a bleeding church is normally a warning to the people who worship there to reform. It can also be a sign of infestation by evil spirits.

## ITEMS

### CALIBURN, ARTHUR'S SWORD

Caliburn, the sword wielded by King Arthur, is a greater artifact. It was lost when Arthur died at the battle of Camlann, but legend says that it will reappear in England's, or Britain's, time of need. While it is a fine battle weapon, its main powers are concerned with leadership and sovereignty over Britain.

Caliburn is a +5 *longsword*. The wielder may act as if he had the Great Cleave feat, striking repeatedly in a round as long as each blow drops an opponent. If the wielder has the Great Cleave feat, he may take a five foot step after dropping an opponent and before making the free attack allowed by Great Cleave. He may not move more than a single normal move in this way.

Anyone who wields Caliburn gets a +10 enhancement bonus to Charisma, and a +10 competence bonus to Diplomacy checks. When leading natives of Britain against invaders, he can inspire his allies to fight beyond their normal ability. Caliburn's wielder can inspire a total number of people equal to his character level plus his Charisma modifier

(including the bonus from Caliburn's Charisma enhancement). The inspiration lasts for as long as Caliburn's wielder is fighting in the front of the battle, and affects all those inspired as the bardic power *inspire greatness*. The inspiration also benefits Caliburn's wielder.

A person is a native of Britain if his parents were born and lived most of their lives there, as long as he has lived in Britain for at least a year. Thus, the Norman lords start to become natives of Britain in the early twelfth century, but the

kings in this period are not native. Caliburn's power works if the invaders have native allies, as long as those allies are in a subordinate position. If a native lord allies with invading lords on equal terms, Caliburn cannot inspire natives against them.

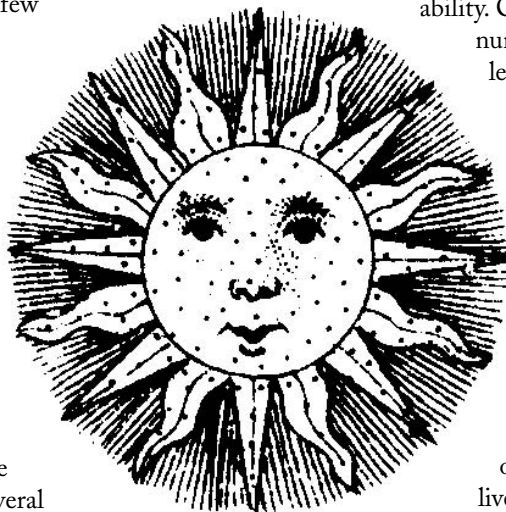
### OWEIN'S STANDARD

This standard was owned by Owein, a Welsh lord in the time of Arthur, but he did not make it, and its origin is obscure. It is a staff of dark, almost black, wood, topped by a metal image of a raven. The raven grips a crossbar in its claws, and a banner could be hung from the bar, although no banner comes with the standard. The item is a minor artifact, and almost impossible to damage.

Once per day, the owner of the standard can summon a raven. This raven is completely mundane, but it serves the owner of the standard as an animal companion serves a druid. The raven, being mundane, does not disappear at the end of the day, and continues to serve the owner of the standard for the remainder of its life; around ten years, unless violence intervenes. This means that the owner of the standard can have several *thousand* ravens as loyal servants.

The owner of the standard can communicate with his ravens, and they are capable of learning to imitate human speech. However, they are normal animals, and thus not terribly communicative.

The ravens will fight for their master, but they are not terribly effective against most opponents. If the standard is



raised at the heart of the battle, however, the ravens each gain four temporary hit points, +2 to attack rolls, and do 1d4 damage with their claws.

*Caster level:* 20th; *Weight:* 6 lbs.

## PLACES

### The Giants' Ring

The Giants' Ring is a ring of enormous stones on Salisbury Plain. It is also known as the Stone Gallows, or Stanehang, because the stones are placed with enormous slabs forming lintels and looking like a gallows. The Ring is made of stones from Africa, which were originally erected in Ireland by the giants. In the time of Arthur's father, Merlin brought it from Ireland to England to mark the burial place of victims of Saxon treachery.

The stones all have magical properties, which can be invoked by anyone with the necessary knowledge. Each of the vertical stones can cure a different disease. To receive the cure, the victim must take a bath at the base of the stone, making sure that the bath water splashes against the stone. This functions as *remove disease*, except that it only cures a single disease. A bath takes about half an hour, and six baths could, just, be arranged around the base of each stone.

The horizontal stones along the tops of the vertical ones have slightly different properties. If water is poured over them and mixed with certain herbs, it has the effect of a *potion of cure serious wounds*. Anyone can learn which herbs to use, but those who do know keep the secret so it requires an adventure to find out. One person can only benefit from the water once per week; further doses simply have no effect.

### The Isle of Avalon

The Isle of Avalon is a most mysterious place, for no one seems to know where it is. Caliburn was forged there, and Arthur was taken there after his last battle. Merlin may be there still, and many magical events are attributed to its influence.

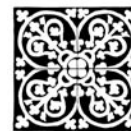
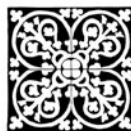
One theory is that the Isle of Avalon was Glastonbury, in Somerset, and that the abbey there now occupies the site. It might have been a place of magic in Arthur's time, but for hundreds of years it has been a place of faith. The problem with this is that the abbey was founded in the first century, by Joseph of Arimathea, and that is long before Arthur was taken to Avalon to be healed. One solution is to claim that Caliburn was forged long before Arthur, to repel the Roman invaders, and that the king was taken to Glastonbury to be buried at the abbey, as many Saxon kings were after him.



Others claim that the magic is still at Glastonbury, but that its wielders live inside the Tor, or are disguised as monks, or are beings of unknown form and thus can vanish at will. Glastonbury is not a true island, but it is mostly surrounded by marshland, and thus is called an island by most people who live near it.

Another theory is that Avalon was an island off the coast of Cornwall, which sank beneath the waves because of the sins of its inhabitants. That fits well with the idea that the magical Caliburn was forged there, and it could have sunk after Arthur's death. Indeed, the legends of the sinking land tend to put the event in the time of the Anglo-Saxons. If so, there may be great magical treasures hidden under the waves. Some even suggest that the inhabitants of Avalon sank their own island, and use their magic to protect their homes far beneath the sea.

The final popular theory is that Avalon is not a place at all, but rather a set of illusions created by beings of unknown form who want to confuse and bewitch humans. The isle can thus be anywhere that the powerful creatures choose to make it appear, and can appear in many different ways. The magic is real enough, but most of the gifts of that place are illusions.







# CHAPTER THREE: The Power of God

This chapter provides rules for handling the miraculous power of God within a d20 game. It opens with a short discussion of the most important features of medieval Christian theology, which provides the framework for the rules that follow. Next, the text gives rules for characters who cast divine spells. This includes the priest core class, and a couple of prestige classes for holy warriors, as well as a discussion of the roles of normal clerics and paladins.

The second part of the chapter covers *Charisms*, gifts of divine power to an individual. These are treated as feats, so a substantial part of the chapter describes these feats. This is followed by new classes, including the saint and mystic, and rules for relics, martyrdom, and angels and demons.

## Theology

Theology, the beliefs of the Church about God, virtue, and the place of man in the universe, is a complex subject, but it is impossible to understand the Middle Ages without some idea of the basics of Christian doctrine. The summary that follows is extremely brief, and glosses over distinctions that people have died and killed for. It also tends to pick one position from medieval theology, even when, historically, there was some dispute.

A fairly common concept is that of the mystery. A mystery in this sense is a theological belief that cannot be truly understood with merely human reason. Most mysteries appear to be incoherent, but God can see how they fit together and make sense.

### God

There is only one God. He is eternal, existing without beginning and without end, and depending on nothing but Himself for his existence. God made everything that exists, and keeps it in existence. The world only persists because God chooses that it should.

God is absolutely simple. That is, He has no attributes. God is not large, or wise, or loving, if these are conceived of as things added to God. Instead, God is simply God, and being God he is also ultimate wisdom, ultimate love, and all the other perfections. While these perfections are different when they are found in imperfect humans and other creatures (things created), in God they are all the same, and all God.

As God is simple, He cannot change in any way. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. As a result, God is outside time. He knows everything, as knowledge is a perfection, and thus God is perfect knowledge. He knows the future, but to Him the future is no different from the present.

Although God is one, simple, and has no attributes, He is also three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Son is begotten by the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, but all three are one, and simply God.

The nature of God is the greatest of the theological mysteries. No human intellect can hope to understand how God can be as He is.

(Note that, strictly speaking, God is neither male nor female, but in the Middle Ages He is almost without exception referred to as male. There are occasional exceptions, but they are very rare indeed.)

### CREATION

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the Earth. He created the angels, and the highest of the angels was Lucifer, the light-bringer. Then He created time, and the world. In six days He made the world, and on the seventh day, He rested. Thus all Christians rest one day in seven, on Sundays.

Man was created on the sixth day, and the first man was Adam, made from the dust of the ground. God placed him in the Garden of Eden, and brought the animals to him to be named. No animal was a suitable companion for Adam, so God placed the man into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs, and from it fashioned the first woman, Eve.

At the center of the garden were two trees, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the Tree of Life. God forbade Adam and Eve to eat of the Tree of Knowledge.

### The Fall

Lucifer was the first creature to sin. In his pride he desired to be like God, and so he fell from heaven. One third of the angels

listened to his voice, and fell with him. In his sin and wickedness, Lucifer wanted to corrupt others, so he returned to the world and tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit. She fell to the temptation, and ate, and then gave the fruit to Adam, who also ate. For this sin, Adam and Eve were cast out of the Garden of Eden.

The Fall is responsible for many of the miseries to which human beings are subject. Most significantly, humans are incapable of acting well by themselves. Only when God infuses them with his grace can they act in a meritorious way. Thus no human can earn any merit, and all humans are tainted by the original sin of Adam and Eve.

Further, the ailments of the human body and the imperfections of the mind are all due to the Fall. Before the Fall, the world served man willingly; now the rest of creation turns against him. None of the evil in the world is God's fault; all of it is due to the actions of men, the actions of demons, or the lingering effects of the Fall.

## THE INCARNATION

God did not leave human beings in sin and damnation, however. God the Son was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary and incarnated as Jesus Christ. Christ was wholly God and wholly man, perfectly human but no less perfectly divine. The nature of Christ is another of the great mysteries, for, as God is unchanging, Christ was truly human before the universe was even created. God the Father and God the Holy Spirit were not incarnated, and so are not human, but nevertheless God the Son is exactly the same as God the Father, and has no properties, not even the property of being human.

It is, as said before, a mystery.

As a human being Christ preached his message through Judea, in the time of the Roman emperors. After three years he was arrested, charged with treason by the chief priests of the Jews, and crucified under Pontius Pilate.

On the cross, Christ took upon himself the just punishment for all human sins, and thus redeemed the human race. Through Christ, all human beings can become worthy of heaven once more.

On the third day after his death, Christ rose from the grave, and promised his followers eternal life before ascending into heaven.

## SIN AND FORGIVENESS

Human beings, since the Fall, are naturally inclined to sin. The seven deadly sins, which bring damnation, are Pride (the greatest sin, and the sin of Lucifer), Wrath, Envy, Sloth, Gluttony, Avarice, and Lust. It is the sin of lust to have sex with your wife because you enjoy it, just as it is the same sin to commit adultery with every woman in town. Irritation with someone who is walking too slowly ahead of you is wrath just as is a rage that drives you to kill thousands. All sins are evil because they are rebellion against God, and their consequences for other people are of relatively little importance.

At birth, all humans are stained with the original sin of Adam and Eve. Baptism washes this stain away, and also cleanses the stain of any sins that the person has committed. A baby who dies unbaptized is damned to Hell for eternity by the stain of original sin, so all Christians are baptized as quickly as possible. Baptism can be performed by anyone, even a non-Christian, as long as they intend to baptize in the way that the Church does.

After baptism, Fallen humanity commits more sins. If a person truly repents of her sins and asks for God's mercy, she can be forgiven through Christ's sacrifice, and become without sin once more. Only those who are without sin can enter Heaven; anyone whose soul is stained with the slightest sin is damned to Hell where she will be tortured for all eternity. The problem is that Fallen man cannot truly repent, so no one can repent unless God grants his grace to them.

There are many mysteries here, such as how eternal torment is compatible with perfect love, or how it can be just for God to punish those to whom he has freely chosen not to offer his grace. God understands, and the saints understand in God, but those on earth cannot.

## THE SACRAMENTS

The seven sacraments are central to Christian life in this world. They are essential for salvation, and the Church tries to maintain a monopoly on them. The sacraments work regardless of the intentions or state of sin of the person performing them, so that ordinations performed by a devil-worshiping bishop are still valid.

**Baptism** washes away sin, and is performed by dipping a person in water, or anointing them with water, while saying "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit". As noted above, this can be performed by anyone, even a non-Christian.

**Confirmation** is a repetition of the baptismal vows made once the child reaches adulthood. Only a bishop, who is supposed to ensure that the child understands the Christian faith, can administer it. In large dioceses, this tends not to happen.

**Penance** is the demonstration of remorse for sin. People confess their sins to their priest, who then assigns a penance, based on the severity of the sin. Prayers, the saying of Psalms, and pilgrimages are all common penances. The penance does not "earn" forgiveness, but rather demonstrates that the sinner is truly sorry. The priest is not allowed to repeat anything that he hears in confession to anyone, not even his superiors in the Church. Only a priest or bishop can administer this sacrament.

**Ordination** confers a special grace on a person. There are four minor orders (acolyte, lector, exorcist, and doorkeeper) and four major, or holy, orders: sub-deacon, deacon, priest, and bishop. Men are ordained to the minor orders in a simple ceremony that involves giving them the tonsure,





shaving the hair from the top of their head. Holy orders are more serious, and there is a growing movement in the church to require all men in holy orders to be celibate. Ordination can only be performed by a bishop.

The Church does not knowingly ordain women, but God has no objection to women priests, and such ordinations are effective.

**Marriage** binds a man and woman together for life. Any couple can perform it, and all that is necessary is that they both freely declare that they are now married to each other. If they have promised that they will marry, they automatically become married if they have sex. However, marriage is usually performed in an elaborate Church ceremony, with lots of witnesses, because that avoids later disputes.

A couple may not marry if one is already married, if one or both are too young to understand, or if they are too closely related. Otherwise, there is no way to reverse a marriage. The Pope does grant annulments, but these are simply official recognition that a couple was never married in the first place.

**Extreme Unction** is given to the dying, and involves anointing with oil. It is not essential for passage to heaven, but it gives a person a chance to confess any remaining sins, and thus improves their chances of salvation.

**Eucharist** is the highest of the sacraments. In imitation of the Last Supper before Christ's crucifixion, a priest blesses bread and wine, and then distributes the bread to the congregation. The clergy also drink the wine. In the Eucharist, also called the Mass, the bread and wine are

transformed into the body and blood of Christ. They still appear to be bread and wine, but their underlying substance is the true body of God. This is a common argument for why priests should be particularly pure: their hands will touch the body of God. For the same reason, people are required to confess all their sins before receiving the Eucharist, and as a result, most lay people only actually participate once a year or so, generally at Easter, although they attend Mass most weeks. The consecrated bread is referred to as the Host, and popular superstition attributes many powers to it.

## FESTIVALS

There are two main festivals in the Christian year, Easter and Christmas, and each has a cluster of lesser festivals surrounding it.

Easter is the most important festival, commemorating Christ's death and resurrection. Easter Sunday, which celebrates the resurrection, is the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox. This means that it is on a different date every year, and one of the main uses of astronomy and mathematics is working out the date of Easter.

The preparations for Easter start nearly six weeks beforehand. Lent consists of the forty days before Easter, and is a period of abstinence in which Christians remember the forty days that Christ spent fasting in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry. The first day of Lent is Ash Wednesday, on which people confess their sins, and are marked with ashes as a sign of repentance. During Lent



people are supposed to abstain from sex, meat, and most fats. It is an inappropriate season for any sort of celebration.

The Sunday before Easter Sunday is Palm Sunday, commemorating Christ's entry into Jerusalem. This is often marked with a procession to the church, carrying some local substitute for palm branches. The week from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday is Holy Week, because it commemorates many important events.

The Thursday of Holy Week is Maundy Thursday, marking the Last Supper, when Christ instituted the Eucharist. The Friday is Good Friday, marking the crucifixion. This is a very solemn festival, and in many churches the Host is symbolically buried, as Christ was buried. Demons and other spirits are much freer to act than usual between Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Easter Sunday commemorates the resurrection, and is a joyful celebration. People who only receive the Host once per year usually do so on this day.

Christmas celebrates the birth of Christ, and happens on the 25th of December. The preceding four Sundays mark the season of Advent, when people prepare for God's incarnation. Christmas celebrations last twelve days, from Christmas day to Twelfth Night, January 5th, which commemorates the arrival of the magi to worship the Christ-child.

The year is also peppered with saints' days, which commemorate particular saints. The importance of these days depends on the local importance of the saint, so that the saint to whom a church is dedicated gets particular attention.

## SAINTS

Saints are dead Christians who have entered heaven. From heaven, they can watch over earth and intercede with God for living human beings. As they are pure, their intercession

is particularly effective, and so it is common for living people to ask saints to intercede with God on their behalf. This seems a lot like praying to saints, but it is not the same as praying to God; saints are never worshiped, only asked to take the petitioner's request to God.

The living do not, in general, know the fate of the dead, and the Church acknowledges that there are many unknown saints. However, some people live lives of exemplary holiness, and many people are sure that they are among the saints. If prayers to this person result in miracles, the Church confirms that this individual is among the saints, in a process known as canonization. During the twelfth century this process becomes more formal, but in the early years many saints are accepted in a local area with no intervention from the wider church.

Important saints include the twelve apostles, particular Saint Peter and Saint John, the four Evangelists (authors of the gospels), Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (the apostle), John the Baptist, Saint Paul, the apostle to the gentiles and author of much of the New Testament, early martyrs, including Saint Alban, the first British martyr, and the archangels Michael and Gabriel. More important than all of these, and second only to the Godhead, is the Virgin Mary, the mother of God. She is no more worshiped than any other saint is, but she is believed to have particularly strong influence with God who is, after all, her son.

## THE LAST JUDGMENT

Time will come to an end, when Christ returns in power and majesty to judge the living and the dead. This Last Judgment will be preceded by the coming of Antichrist, who will lead many people away from God. But Christ shall return, Antichrist shall be defeated, and the sinners shall be cast into the lake of fire for eternity while the saved enter the New Jerusalem to enjoy a perfect vision of God for eternity.

# NEW DIVINE CLASSES

This section includes the priest, a new core class, and several new prestige classes, like the crusader and the templar.

## THE PRIEST CORE CLASS

Priests are ordained to serve all people, and also to act as Christ's minister and mouthpiece. This is a grave responsibility, with several aspects. First, priests perform most of the sacraments. Only priests can perform the Eucharist, and this is the most important part of their role; in the Mass, the priest handles the body of God Himself.

Second, priests serve as counselors for the people of their parish. A priest in charge of a parish is described as having cure of souls, because his main concern is with the spiritual well-being of his parishioners, although their physical health should also be important to him. The two main aspects of this are preaching and confession. When he preaches, the

priest tells the people how they ought to live. In confession, people tell him what they have done wrong, and he sets penances by which they can demonstrate their remorse, and thus be forgiven. Some priests do not have a parish, but serve as chaplains to particular individuals, having the priest's responsibilities to those individuals instead.

## ADVENTURES

Most priests do not go on adventures, and those that do usually do so because they serve as chaplains to someone who does want to adventure. An adventuring priest is concerned that his companions should not sin more than

is necessary, but most accept that some sins are inevitable. These priests take the view that it is not possible for weak human beings to do good in the world without occasionally falling into sin.

## CHARACTERISTICS

All priests are required to be chaste (having sex only within marriage) and celibate (unmarried), which means that they are not allowed to have sex at all. A married man may not become a priest, but a widower may. Priests are also supposed to be humble, poor, and the servant of all. These characteristics are not universal, but all good priests try to live up to them.

## ALIGNMENT

All priests are good. This does not mean that they are without sin, but they hold themselves to higher standards than most people.

## Sex

Priests are all men, as a member of this class must be ordained a priest by the Church, and the Church only ordains men. Player characters may be exceptions, but female priests must be pretending to be male, and will face severe social penalties, including imprisonment, excommunication, and possibly death, if their imposture is revealed. They do, however, get all the benefits of the class; God has no problem with ordaining female priests.

## Other Classes

Priests are concerned with the state of the soul, not outward show or choice of profession. They are willing to work with any class, encouraging them not to sin.

**Note:** There are a lot of priests in medieval Europe, and making them all members of the priest class, even of low level, may create a higher level of magic than you are happy with. In that case, most priests can be canonists (see page 69) or experts.

## Game Rule INFORMATION

Priests have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Wisdom determines the number of bonus spells, maximum spell level, and save DC for priest spells, so it is the most important ability. As priests are expected to preach and deal with people, Charisma is also important.

**Alignment:** Any good. There are ordained priests in the Church who are not good, but none of them receive the blessings of God's power. On the other hand, God does not distinguish between lawful, neutral, and chaotic priests.

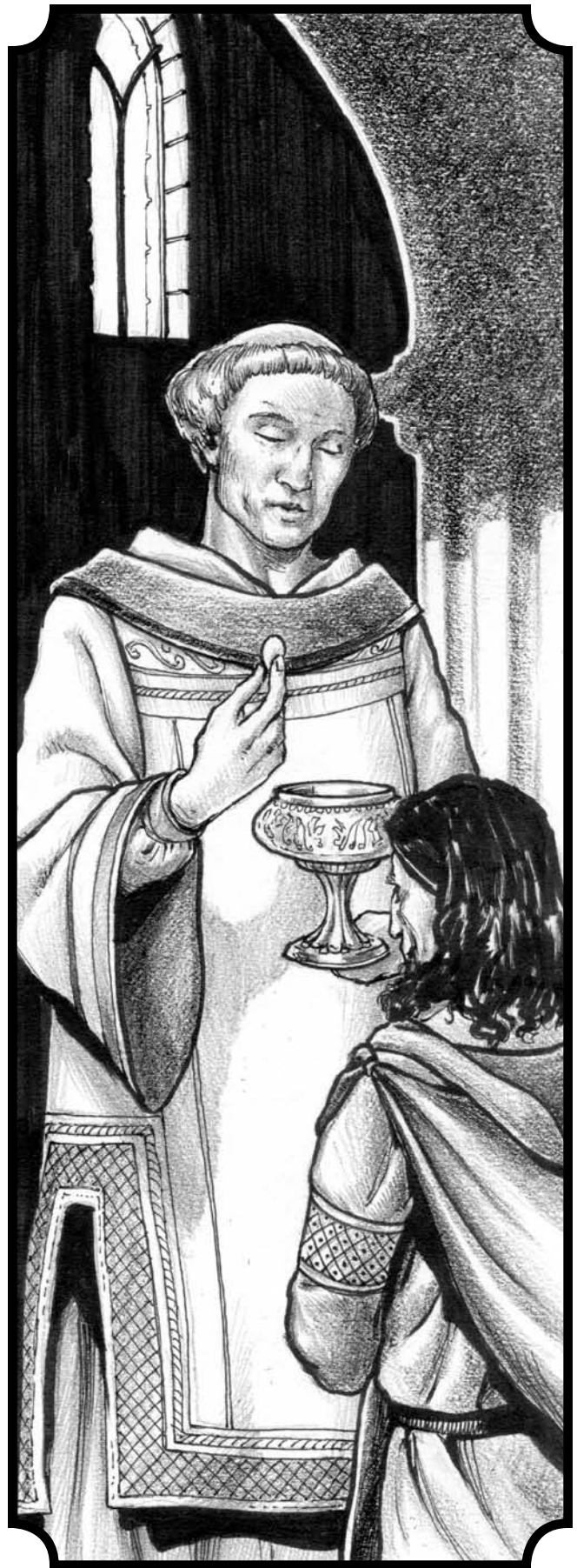


TABLE 3-1: The Priest

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Sacraments
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Exhortation
3	+1	+3	+1	+3	
4	+2	+4	+1	+4	
5	+2	+4	+1	+4	Lesser Penance
6	+3	+5	+2	+5	
7	+3	+5	+2	+5	
8	+4	+6	+2	+6	Absolution
9	+4	+6	+3	+6	
10	+5	+7	+3	+7	
11	+5	+7	+3	+7	High Mass
12	+6/+1	+8	+4	+8	
13	+6/+1	+8	+4	+8	
14	+7/+2	+9	+4	+9	Excommunication
15	+7/+2	+9	+5	+9	
16	+8/+3	+10	+5	+10	
17	+8/+3	+10	+5	+10	Greater Penance
18	+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	
19	+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	
20	+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	Great Mass

A priest who sins does not lose any of his class abilities, as he is God's agent. A sinful priest who tries to use those abilities against the will of God may, however, find them less reliable. For example, a fornicating, avaricious, murderous 14th level priest could still say High Mass, and all who participated would still get the benefit. However, if he tried to excommunicate someone for showing a lack to respect to him (which is a sin, as he is still a priest), God might choose not to concur. A priest who changes from good alignment loses all but the first level abilities of the class, although his class level remains the same.

God often sends saints to carry warnings to sinful priests.

Hit Die: d6

### CLASS SKILLS

The priest's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the priest.

#### ARMOR AND WEAPONS PROFICIENCY

Priests are proficient with simple weapons, but with no type of armor, nor with shields.

#### Spells

A priest casts divine magic according to Table 3-2:

Priest Spells. A priest may prepare and cast any spell on the cleric spell list which is not Evil.

The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a priest's spell is 10 + the spell's level + the priest's Wisdom modifier.

Priests prepare their spells by performing a full Mass. This takes approximately one hour, although it can be done in half that time if the priest hurries. It can also take much longer, if desired. A priest who hurried Mass every day would soon fall into disrespect for God, and thus into sin.

#### SACRAMENTS

Any priest has been ordained to the priesthood, and thus may perform the sacraments

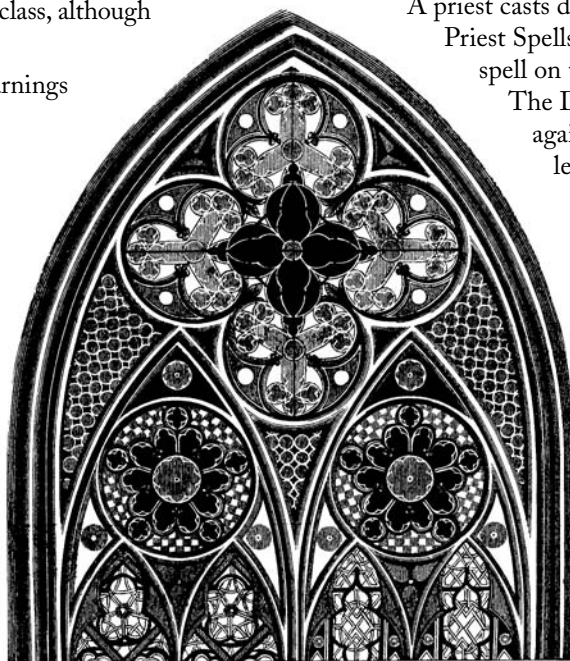


Table 3-2: Priest Spells

Level	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	5	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	5	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	5	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	6	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
8	6	4	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-
9	6	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	-
10	6	4	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-
11	6	5	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-
12	6	5	4	4	3	3	2	-	-	-
13	6	5	5	4	4	3	2	1	-	-
14	6	5	5	4	4	3	3	2	-	-
15	6	5	5	5	4	4	3	2	1	-
16	6	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	2	-
17	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	2	1
18	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	3	2
19	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	3	3
20	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4

of baptism, penance, marriage, the Eucharist and extreme unction. Only priests ordained as bishops may also perform the sacraments of confirmation and ordination.

### EXHORTATION

The priest preaches against a particular sin, and all those who hear the sermon become reluctant to carry out that sin for a number of days equal to the priest's class level. Anyone who wishes to commit that sin must succeed with a Will save against a DC equal to 10 + one half the priest's class level. The preaching must be to more than one person, takes at least ten minutes, and only those who can understand the sermon are affected. This ability is gained at second level.

### LESSER PENANCE

At fifth level the priest may enforce any penance on someone who has freely confessed his sins. The penance must be commensurate with the sins committed, but otherwise the sinner has no defense; there is no saving throw and spell resistance does not apply. If the sinner fails to carry out the penance, he suffers as if under the influence of a *geas/quest* spell.

### ABSOLUTION

At eighth level the priest may absolve anyone who has freely confessed to him. This has the same effect as an *atonement* spell, but the priest may absolve at will, as a spell-like ability. The target of the absolution must, however, have freely confessed, and cannot be absolved of any sins he has

deliberately kept back. Sins which were honestly forgotten are absolved, as are sins which the sinner truly believed were a part of one of the sins he did confess.

### HIGH MASS

When the priest says Mass, the Eucharistic wafer has the same effect as a *heroes' feast* spell on anyone who consumes it, including the priest, provided that they devoutly attended the whole Mass. The High Mass takes about an hour to perform, and the wafer is consumed at the end. There is no limit other than the size of the church and the carrying power of the priest's voice on the number of people who may attend. However, it takes a standard action to administer the Eucharistic wafer to one person. This ability is gained at eleventh level.

### EXCOMMUNICATION

The priest may exclude a persistent sinner from the congregation of the faithful on reaching fourteenth level. The target must have sinned, and refused to repent and confess. In general, the sin must be serious, but the ability affects those who are persistent in minor sins. A priest must try to convince the sinner to repent before resorting to excommunication, however. There is no saving throw, and spell resistance does not apply.

In order to excommunicate someone, the priest must announce the excommunication publicly, typically from the pulpit or the church door. The priest must make a serious effort to ensure that everyone gets to know of the excommunication.

An excommunicated sinner cannot enter churches or other consecrated places. Any attempt to do so is resisted by a force that is slightly stronger than the force the excommunicate is using to enter. In addition, all Christians know that he has been excommunicated, and he suffers a -5 penalty to all Charisma based skill checks when dealing with Christians. Most will simply refuse to have anything to do with him, as dealing with an excommunicate is itself a sin worthy of excommunication.

### GREATER PENANCE

The priest may impose a penance on a sinner, even if that sinner has not repented, on reaching seventeenth level. This ability otherwise functions as Lesser Penance, above, and may be used at will. Imposing a penance takes at least a standard action. The priest must specify the sin for which the penance is imposed; if the target has not committed that sin, the ability does not take effect.

### GREAT MASS

The same as High Mass, except that the Eucharistic wafer also has the effects of a *heal* spell. When the character says Mass, angels attend and join the choir, and those present can see them. These celestial beings take no part in the proceedings other than to join with humankind in praising God. This ability is gained at twentieth level.



## CLERICS AND PALADINS

The militant focus of the cleric class means that it is not generally appropriate for priests, or indeed for other clergy. Most men of God are expected not to fight, even under provocation. There are, however, exceptions: the militant orders such as the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaller. These groups are founded around the beginning of the twelfth century, and are dedicated to fighting the enemies of the Church, primarily the Saracens.

Clerics function well as the priests of those orders, with extensive military training but emphasizing prayer and miracles. Such characters do not have a natural place in the lands of Northwestern Europe, but this makes them good player characters. Without a natural role, they are much more free to follow up on adventures, and this is the sort of thing that Knights Templar would be expected to do.

Christian clerics must be of good alignment, and be ordained as priests (see the priest class, above, for details on this). As God is the source of all things, they may choose any two domains which have no evil domain spells. Christian clerics always channel positive energy and cast *cure* spells spontaneously. As for priests, player character clerics *may* be female, as long as they are pretending to be men. The social consequences of being found out are the same as for any woman ordained to the priesthood.

Paladins, as holy warriors, fit well into the Church in this period. Pope Urban first preaches the Crusades in 1096, and, as mentioned above, the Knights Templar and Hospitaller are founded in the early twelfth century. While the Church expects all such warriors to be formally affiliated with it, God has no such requirements, and player character paladins may be free agents. Such holy warriors are not ordained, and thus only come under canon law (see page 68) if they are members of some order. On the other hand, while a female paladin would have to pretend to be male, the social consequences of being found out would be somewhat less severe.

As God accepts followers of any good alignment, so paladins in medieval Europe can be of any good alignment, chaotic or neutral as well as lawful. This makes little mechanical difference, except that losing lawful alignment is no longer a problem.

Holy warriors, particularly paladins, face the problem that fighting is, in itself, sinful. Thus, strictly speaking, any paladin who engages in combat could lose his status. While this is unplayable, it is important to retain the idea that God disapproves of most violence. God approves of warriors defending the helpless, or even the apparently helpless, and self-defense is not a sin, although it is not a virtue. Aggression is much harder to justify. Rescuing prisoners is, effectively, defending the helpless, but attacking someone because they have the capacity to attack you, appear to be evil, and seem likely to attack you in the future is not. Sometimes, God commands His servants to attack without waiting to be attacked, but this is rare, and pretending to hear God's command is an even greater sin than violence. In general, then, paladins should not initiate violence unless they have a direct and unmistakable command from God.

## THE CRUSADER PRESTIGE CLASS

The crusader is a holy warrior with a definite purpose: to drive the enemies of God from the Holy Places, most notably Jerusalem and the other sites of the Holy Land. All crusaders are mighty warriors, and they are greatly admired by almost everyone in Europe. The infidel Saracens loathe and fear them, for they first come in 1099 in an unstoppable army, which drives the Moors from Jerusalem and establishes Christian kingdoms.

Crusaders need not join any organization, nor must they swear loyalty to anyone under God. This can lead to problems in the field, as many crusaders believe that their way is the only way to fulfill God's purpose. Still, it is unheard of for Christian crusaders to fight one another; they serve the same Lord, in the end.

Muslims seeking to drive infidel Franks from the Holy Places, most notably Jerusalem, may also enter the crusader prestige class. Muslim and Christian crusaders often fight, both sides blessed by Almighty God, who truly moves in mysterious ways.

A brave, but not stupid, crusader who dies in battle dies a martyr, and his body is a holy relic. See page 60 for details.

**Hit Die:** d10

### REQUIREMENTS

**Base Attack Bonus:** +6

**Alignment:** Any good.

**Special:** "Take the cross": swear to fight the enemies of God in the Holy Land. Muslim crusaders must swear to drive the infidels from the Holy Land.

TABLE 3-3: THE CRUSADER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Warrior's Return
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Bonus feat
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Divine Justice (+1)
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Divine Justice (+2)
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Bonus feat
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Divine Justice (+3)
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Holy Rage

## CLASS SKILLS

The crusader's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Christianity or Islam as appropriate) (Int), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str).

**Skill Points:** 2 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the crusader.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Crusaders are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields.

### WARRIOR'S RETURN

God watches over crusaders, and brings them back from the very edge of death. Once per day, a crusader who has been reduced below zero hit points may heal up to 10 hit points +1 per level of crusader. This healing is instant, so that a crusader reduced below -10 hit points by the damage does not actually die. This healing may only be taken when the crusader first drops below zero hit points; if the crusader chooses to fall unconscious, he may then be killed in the usual way.

## BONUS FEATS

At second, fifth, and eighth level, the crusader gets a bonus feat. This feat must be either a Charism, or one of the feats that fighters may take as bonus feats.

### DIVINE JUSTICE

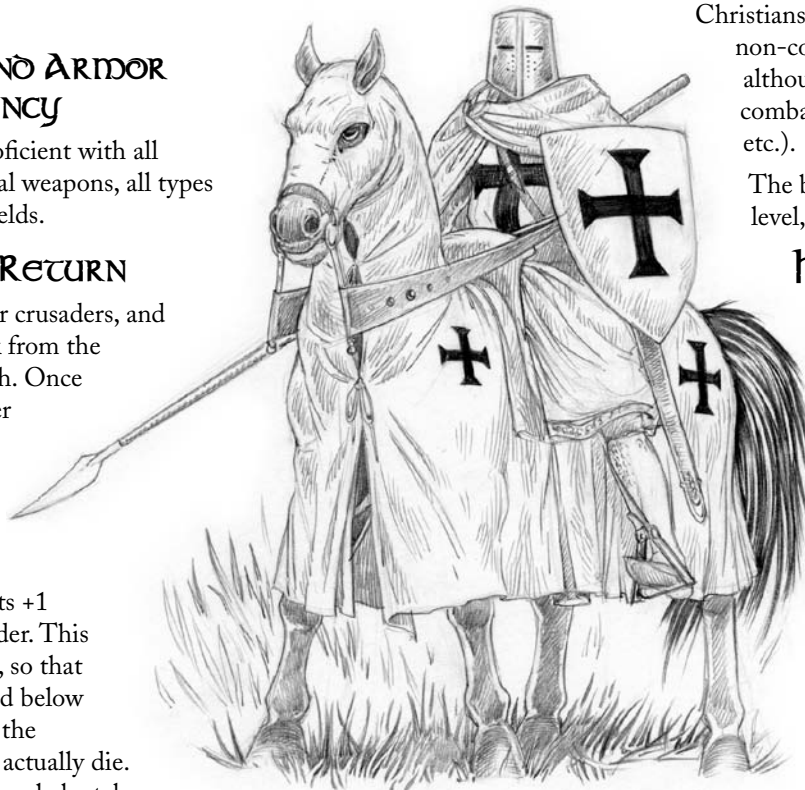
At third level the crusader gains a +1 holy bonus to attack and damage rolls when fighting the enemies of the faith. As noted above, this includes Christian crusaders for Muslims, and Muslim crusaders for Christians. It generally does not include non-combatants of either religion, although particularly evil non-combatants might qualify (politicians, etc.).

The bonus increases to +2 at sixth level, and +3 at ninth level.

### HOLY RAGE

At tenth level the crusader gains the ability to embody the anger of God at the faithlessness of the unbeliever. He can only use this ability when fighting the enemies of God, and when the situation is dangerous. If the crusader is winning easily through his normal abilities, God does not grant him the rage.

When a crusader is blessed with divine fury, he gains a temporary +6 bonus to Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity. This gives him bonuses to attacks, damage, armor class, and hit points as



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normal. The bonus hit points are not temporary hit points, and are not lost first.

A crusader can call on holy rage once per day, and the bonuses last for the duration of the combat. They end if the crusader loses consciousness (in which case he dies due to his wounds, as he loses his bonus hit points when the Constitution bonus ceases), or when there are no longer any active opponents. Opponents cannot fake surrender to end the rage; God knows the heart, and is not deceived.

A crusader who dies when his holy rage ends automatically dies a martyr. Again, it is possible for there to be crusaders with holy rage on both sides (Christian and Muslim) of a particular battle.

## ❖ The Templar Prestige Class ❖

The Knights Templar was founded in 1119, after the successes of the First Crusade, to defend pilgrims traveling through the dangerous country to Jerusalem. The first knights were Hugh of Payns and Godfrey of Saint-Omer, and they took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the patriarch of Jerusalem. This was a new combination: monastic vows, but a military vocation. In the atmosphere of the Crusades, it quickly began to gather support.

The growth of the new Order was slow in the beginning, and by 1125 there were only about nine members, with barely enough money to maintain their arms and armor. In 1127 the master of the Order, Hugh of Payns, sailed for Europe to gather support.

He was spectacularly successful. Many great nobles gave the fledgling order generous gifts of land, and Hugh himself attracted many followers by his preaching. In 1128 he spent time in Normandy, England, and Scotland, receiving gifts from Henry I and gathering yet more followers. At this time the Order gained a base in London, and began building a round church to recall the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

In January 1129 an ecclesiastical council gathered at Troyes to consider this new Order, and create an appropriate rule. It was attended by many important churchmen, including Bernard of Clairvaux, a Cistercian abbot and possibly the most influential churchman in Europe at the time, and by a number of lay lords who gave their advice. The result was a rule of seventy-two clauses, which specified that full Templars had renounced their own wills, and entered fully into the service of God. They swore poverty, chastity, and obedience, like monks, and lived in austere conditions. Meat was only allowed three times per week, and meals only twice per day. The professed knights were required to wear plain clothing, although they were granted white vestments with a red cross to mark their purity.

This formalization, and the enthusiastic support of the Church and nobility, set the Order on a course of growth

## FORMER CRUSADERS

Crusaders who lose good alignment, or abandon their mission to fight against the heathens, lose all of the special abilities of the class. They retain hit points, saving throws, skills, and base attack bonus, but can no longer use abilities of the crusader class. A crusader may repent, atone, and take up his sword against the enemies of God once more, thus regaining his abilities.

A crusader who converts (Christian to Muslim or vice versa) loses all his abilities. If he then takes up the sword of God against the infidel according to his new religion, he regains all his abilities, at the level he had them before conversion.

and influence that would last nearly two centuries. By 1150 they had half a dozen substantial properties in England, very distant from their base of operations in Jerusalem. These properties, called *preceptories* or *commanderies*, supplied money and other resources to the knights fighting the Saracens in the east, and were often supervised by an elderly knight who had retired from active service.

Professed knights among the Templars are members of a unique prestige class. Ordinary knights are allowed to join the Order for a fixed period, but they are not entitled to the white vestments, nor are they eligible to join the prestige class, which reflects God's blessings on the Order.

**Hit Die:** d10

## REQUIREMENTS

**Base Attack Bonus:** +5

**Spell casting:** Ability to cast first level divine spells.

**Alignment:** Any good.

**Special:** Join the Knights Templar as a professed knight.

## CLASS SKILLS

The Templar's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Christianity) (Int), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

**Skill Points:** 2 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Templar.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Templars are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields.

### PALADINS AND MULTI-CLASSING

Christian paladins may freely multiclass as Templars.

## Templar's Mount

At first level the Templar may summon a special mount. This is the same as the paladin's class ability, and if the Templar also has at least four levels of paladin his levels of paladin and levels of Templar stack to determine the abilities of the mount. If the Templar has fewer than four levels of paladin, including no such levels, then the mount's abilities are determined from the Templar's Templar level +4. If the Templar already had a paladin's mount before entering the Templar prestige class, the Templar's Mount is the same mount; the character does not now have two mounts.

## PALADIN Spellcasting

At first, fifth, and ninth levels the Templar gains one level of spellcasting ability, as if he had gained a level of paladin. If he previously had levels of paladin, these levels stack. If he did not, they start from first level, and so the Templar gains no actual spellcasting ability. However, if he later gains levels of paladin, the levels do stack for the purposes of determining spellcasting ability. For example, a fifth level paladin who takes a level of Templar can cast one

first level spell per day, plus any bonus spells from high Wisdom, with a caster level of three.

This does not improve any other paladin abilities.



## DIVINE Spellcasting

At second, third, fourth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and tenth levels the Templar gains one level of spellcasting in any class he possesses which gives access to divine spells. If the Templar has more than one such class, he must choose the class to which the bonus applied, although he need not choose the same class at every level. This does not improve any other cleric abilities, such as the ability to turn undead.

## DEFENDER

The Templar can choose to defend a group of people from a group of attackers. He places himself between the attackers and the group he wants to defend, and the attackers cannot attack the defended group, in any way, until the Templar is dead.

Any attacks attempted on the defended group are directed at the Templar instead, so missiles mysteriously swerve, and the Templar moves with unnatural speed to intercept other attacks. This applies to magical attacks, as well as mundane.

Table 3-4: The Templar

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Templar's Mount, +1 level paladin spellcasting
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	+1 level divine spellcasting, Defender 1/day
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1 level divine spellcasting
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	+1 level divine spellcasting, Defender 2/day
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1 level paladin spellcasting, Infallible guide
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	+1 level divine spellcasting, Defender 3/day
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	+1 level divine spellcasting
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	+1 level divine spellcasting, Defender 4/day
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	+1 level paladin spellcasting, Guardian of the Sacred
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	+1 level divine spellcasting, Defender 5/day



The groups may be of any size, so a single Templar may choose to defend a city from an army. Templars normally use this ability to defend Christian pilgrims from Saracen attacks, as even if the attackers are an army, the Templar can usually buy the pilgrims enough time to flee to safety. A Templar who dies in this manner dies a martyr.

A group of Templars may choose to work together as defenders. In this case, the attackers may attack any of the defending Templars, and attacks directed at the defended group are assigned to one of the defenders at random.

At second level the Templar can use this ability once per day. This increases by one at every even-numbered level, so that a tenth level Templar can defend five times per day. This is an extraordinary ability, not a supernatural one.

### INFALLIBLE GUIDE

At fifth level the Templar gains the ability to act as a perfect guide to a group of pilgrims. He can only lead them to a holy place, but he can lead them even to a place he has never been, through country he has never seen. In desert country, such as Palestine, each day's journey ends at a sufficiently large water source, and in all terrain the day ends at a place offering safe shelter, possibly a pilgrim hostel, if those exist on the route. The route that the Templar chooses avoids all threats, including mobile ones such as Saracen raiders.

This is a manifestation of the power of God, so the Templar finds a safe route even if there is none to be had. Thus, if a solid wall of Saracens surrounded Jerusalem, a Templar could still lead a group of pilgrims safely to the Temple Mount, without encountering any guards. This does not circumvent natural terrain; the pilgrims must still use boats to cross seas, and climb to pass mountain ranges.

## ☐ DIVINE MAGIC ☐

There are, as noted, divine spellcasters in medieval Europe. Their spells are miracles, granted by God at the discretion of the priest. A divine spell works even if it is used for sinful ends, unlike Charisms (see below). This power is a test for God's servants, and they pass or fail the test in the way that they use it.

It might be thought that this obvious presence of the divine would remove the need for faith, and thus, paradoxically, undermine the Christian religion. This is wrong on two counts. First, Christianity will be just as strong in heaven, when faith will no longer be necessary and hope will be fulfilled, for love remains. Second, even the miracles and spells of priests and saints do not prove that Christianity is true. Theurges can duplicate almost all of a priest's spells, and folk charms can mimic many Charisms. There is no guarantee that the priest is truly getting his power from the Creator and Sustainer of the world.

The maximum size of the group is equal to the character's Templar level multiplied by his Cha modifier. Thus, a seventh level Templar with a Charisma of 15 could lead fourteen pilgrims.

The intent of the pilgrims is irrelevant. They might actually be Saracen spies determined to overthrow the holy places; the Templar can still lead them there. However, the route only avoids hazards which would be dangerous to genuine pilgrims. Christian guards are not, so in such a situation, the Templar's group will encounter them if they exist.

This is an extraordinary ability.

### GUARDIAN OF THE SACRED

From ninth level a Templar guarding a holy place may call on the power of God to sustain him. He gains a +8 bonus to Strength and Dexterity, and a +4 morale bonus on Will and Fortitude saving throws. These bonuses last until the attack on the holy place ends. There is no limit to the number of times per day that a Templar can call on this ability, but it can only be used in response to an attack on a holy place, and only to rush to its defense. The Templar cannot use the bonuses to pursue fleeing attackers, for example, nor in the middle of a battle.

For these purposes, "holy place" should be construed quite narrowly. The building of a church, the building and precincts of a cathedral, and pilgrimage sites which do not have churches qualify, but very little else does. The notable exception is that the whole city of Jerusalem is considered a holy place.

This is a manifestation of what humans were supposed to be, and so is an extraordinary ability.

## ☐ MODIFIED AND UNAVAILABLE SPELLS ☐

Most cleric spells are appropriate for medieval Europe. God is as willing to punish his enemies as to help his servants, and will create spectacular miracles to impress his power on the watching masses. However, there are a few spells that do not fit in, and a handful that need to be changed.

The most important restriction is that God is good, so no priest can acquire or cast an evil spell. This only applies to spells with [Evil] listed as part of the spell type; other spells can be used for good purposes.

As noted in **Chapter Two: Medieval Magic** (page 8), medieval Europe does not have other planes in the same way as a standard d20 world, so spells that cross into those planes or summon creatures from those planes do not exist. This includes the *summon monster* spells.

Finally, while *raise dead*, *resurrection*, and *true resurrection* all exist and are cast as in standard d20 games, they often simply fail to work. God does not permit those he has damned to hell to return to earth, and those in heaven do not wish to return, because they have finished their labor and gone to their reward. Thus, the spells only work on those who are not damned, but whom God wishes to send back to the world.

This means that the GM must decide whether dead player characters can be raised from the dead. As a rule of thumb, evil characters can never be raised. They are damned, and confined to hell. Neutral characters may be raised, but they have been impressed with the fear of hell-fire, and should aim to reform to avoid damnation. Good characters can be raised if they still have work to do for God. One way to determine this is to consider the manner of their death. Did they die heroically, at a climactic moment of the campaign, in a scene that was dramatic and appropriate? If so, that is what they were meant to do, and they have gone to heaven and cannot be raised. If, on the other hand, they died due a bad die roll in a minor skirmish, they still have work to do, and can be raised.

## CHARISMS

Charisms are gifts from God that go beyond His normal gifts to human beings. In game terms, they are feats that may be taken by any Jewish, Christian, or Muslim character. A character only gains the benefits of a Charism if he is currently without sin. For Christians, this means that he has been properly baptized, and has confessed and done penance for all sins he has committed. For game purposes, a character with a Charism only sins if the player explicitly has him think, say, or do something sinful. That is, any sins he commits while he is not being played, he also confesses and does penance for while he is not being played. Note that a sinful character does not *lose* his Charisms; he is merely unable to use them until he has returned to a pure state.

As gifts from God, Charisms are extraordinary abilities. They go beyond the normal powers of human beings, but they are not magical. Indeed, Adam and Eve had all the Charisms when they were created, and only lost them at the Fall. Thus, these gifts merely return a person to what he should have been, before sin intervened. In addition, any bonuses granted by a Charism are charismatic bonuses, and thus do not stack with each other.

The Charisms fall into several groups. *Prophecy* covers Charisms which grant access to information that the character would not normally have. They are not limited to foretelling the future, as most of God's prophets were more concerned with the present. *Healing* covers Charisms which allow the character to heal others. *Body* includes Charisms which enhance the character's own body. *Teaching* describes those Charisms concerned with

encouraging and informing others. *Vengeance* concerns the punishment of the enemies of God.

All Charisms have the prerequisite: Good alignment.

## Body

### FAST AND PRAY (CHARISM)

You no longer need to eat.

**Benefit:** You remain perfectly healthy without eating or drinking, and do not even become thin, so people cannot tell that you are fasting constantly. You still feel hunger and thirst, but you quickly become used to this, so it has no game effect. You may eat or drink if you wish, and this does assuage hunger and quench thirst.

### IMMUNITY (CHARISM)

You are immune to a particular kind of harm.

**Prerequisite:** Any two other Charisms.

**Benefit:** You are immune to a particular kind of affliction. The scope of the immunity is the same as the scope of the healing power of *Miracle Cure* (page 50).

**Special:** You can take this Charism multiple times. Each time you take it, it applies to a different kind of affliction.

### RESURRECTION BODY (CHARISM)

You have the perfected body that most people receive only at the final resurrection of the dead.

**Prerequisites:** Any sixteen Charisms, character level 20th+

**Benefit:** Your body is only affected by the laws of nature to the extent that you want it to be. Among other things, this means that you are immune to all poisons, diseases, and physical damage, do not need to eat or drink, and can walk through walls. This ability extends to your clothing, but not to other possessions. You can walk on water, fly, turn invisible (by deciding that your body no longer sends out visible images), lift anything that can support its own weight, move at any speed, simply appear at any location, and so on.

Using this Charism for sinful purposes is often fatal, as it ceases to function if the character sins, just like any other Charism.

### WATCH AND PRAY (CHARISM)

You no longer need to sleep, and can spend the hours of darkness in prayer.

**Benefit:** You no longer need sleep, and suffer no penalties from lack of it. You do not have to spend all night in prayer, but most characters with this Charism do. A character with this Charism and levels of *theurge* does not regain fast rituals, because intending to do so is sinful and temporarily negates the Charism, requiring the character to sleep.



## HEALING

### HEALER'S HANDS (CHARISM)

You are particularly adept at healing people.

**Benefit:** You get a +3 bonus to all Heal checks. Heal becomes a class skill for you if it is not already. This bonus does not apply if you treat yourself.

### HEALING PRAYER (CHARISM)

Your words and touch alone are enough to bring comfort to the injured.

**Benefit:** You may make a Heal check to help someone without using ointments or treating them in anything like the usual way. All you need to do is lay your hands on them and speak a short prayer for healing. This is a full-round action, and has the same effect as a Heal check performed with adequate tools. In order to provide long-term care you must do this once per day, and thus you may provide long-term care to dozens of patients simultaneously.

If you wish to treat yourself, you must do so in the normal fashion.

### MIRACLE CURE (CHARISM)

You can heal a particular kind of affliction with your words and touch.

**Prerequisites:** Another Healing Charism, character level 5th+

**Benefit:** You can completely heal other characters of one type of affliction, chosen when you take this Charism. This might be injuries from a particular source (falling, swords, or the claws of wolf), poison of a particular type (snake venom, plant venom), or a particular disease (leprosy, tertian fever, quartan fever). To do this, you must touch the character and pray for healing. This is a full-round action. At the completion of your action, the character is healed of all ill-effects from that source. This Charism cannot raise the dead, nor can it be used to heal yourself.

You may not want to keep records of the source of all damage. If you do not, the GM should use her judgment to decide how much damage the character can heal.

**Special:** You may take this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a different sort of affliction.

## RAISE THE DEAD

You can restore the dead to life.

**Prerequisites:** Five different Miracle Cure Charisms, character level 12th+

**Benefit:** This functions as a *raise dead* spell, except that no material components are needed.

The use of this Charism is more often sinful than the use of any other Charisms. The dead have gone on to judgment, and it is sinful to attempt to raise any that God has not already decided to send back into the temporal world. Because there is no way for the character to know this in advance, the Charism simply fails if he tries to use it against God's will. As long as he does not try again, he retains the use of his other Charisms, and can try to raise other people.

## PROPHECY

### BEATIFIC VISION (CHARISM)

You can see God as he truly is, an experience normally reserved for the saints in heaven.

**Prerequisites:** Burning Synderesis, Divine Message, character level 15th+

**Benefit:** This is the ultimate good, the perfection of human life.

When a character gains this feat, he is immediately rapt in the presence of God. At that moment, he must decide forever whether he will serve God or rebel against him. While one would assume that saints would choose to serve God, this is not necessarily the case. This is a genuine choice, and one that the player must make.

If the character chooses to serve God, he becomes forever incapable of sinning. If the player announces that the character does something sinful, the GM must over-rule him. There are almost always several non-sinful actions

available in a situation, but the player should consider whether he is willing to lose this freedom. If the player does announce a sinful action, and must reconsider, the reconsideration takes no game time, as the character would not have thought to sin in the first place. As the character cannot sin, he cannot lose access to his Charisms. In addition, the character knows when not to take certain actions, which can tell an alert character quite a lot about a situation. The character's freedom means that he is also immune to all mind-affecting spells.

If the character chooses to rebel against God, his alignment changes irrevocably to evil, although it does not change with respect to law and chaos. He instantly loses all Charisms, and any levels of the saint class that he has. Levels of saint are replaced by levels of theurge on a one-for-one basis, and the character is treated as if he has already performed all his free rituals. Note that hit points, saves, and skills must be recalculated. This represents the temporal favor of the fallen angels. A fallen character cannot act virtuously, although he may appear to do so. In game terms, the character has complete freedom of action.

If the character chooses to serve God, he may experience the beatific vision again. This state may take a moment, or many years, as God wishes, and the character can gain any benefit from it. The character may not actually die, instead being caught bodily up to heaven. The Church recognizes very few such occurrences (Enoch, Elijah, Christ, and Mary), but they are more common than the hierarchy is willing to allow.

**Note:** This Charism is the ultimate blessing, but in game terms it is not very powerful. This is a deliberate choice.

### BRUTE SPEECH (CHARISM)

You can speak with and understand all animals.

**Prerequisites:** Gift of Tongues

**Benefit:** Like Speak with Animals, except that it is permanent and an extraordinary ability. In addition, you can speak with any non-human creature, including magical beasts, dragons, and outsiders. You can talk to anything that can think and make sounds or gestures in order to reply.

### BURNING SYNDERESIS (CHARISM)

Your conscience is particularly closely attuned to God's will, and warns you if you are about to sin.

**Prerequisites:** Any seven Charisms, at least one of each type (Prophecy, Healing, Body, Succor, Teaching, and Vengeance).

**Benefit:** If you are about to sin, your conscience speaks out against it. (The synderesis is the spark of conscience.) This means that the GM must warn you if an action would cause you to lose access to your Charisms, and

give you the chance to retract that action. You do not have to retract the action, but if you do go ahead you have sinned.

### DIVINE ILLUMINATION (CHARISM)

From time to time, God blesses you with a fragment of his infinite knowledge.

**Prerequisites:** Any two Prophecy Charisms.

**Benefit:** From time to time, God reveals a useful piece of information to you. You have no control over this, but the information is always something it is extremely useful for you to know. God never lies, and never phrases the information in a deceitful fashion. However, if God has told you something, you can be sure that he expects you to act on that knowledge.

The GM has complete control of the effects of this Charism, and should be careful to make it useful. It is a good way of getting characters involved in adventures, but this should not be its sole use. If the characters have missed an important clue, God might supply it. Alternatively, if they are about to make a seriously wrong decision, God could tell them so. As a rule a character with this Charism should receive divine illumination once or twice per game session, but this is an average, not an absolute rule.

### DIVINE MESSAGE (CHARISM)

You are the bearer of messages from God.

**Prerequisites:** Divine Illumination, any three other Prophecy Charisms, any two non-Prophecy Charisms.

**Benefit:** God has spoken to you in your heart, giving you a message for a person or group of people. This message is almost never something that they want to hear, and is usually a warning that they are sinning, and must repent lest God punish them. Sometimes it is a command to do something difficult, and very occasionally it is glad tidings of great joy for all people.

God will perform showy miracles on your behalf, to confirm that you really do speak for him. This might mean turning your staff into a serpent, and back into a staff, or turning the world dark for an hour at midday. Whatever the miracle, it has no effect beyond being obviously miraculous, and coming at your word.

Once you have delivered your message, God gives you another one.

### GIFT OF TONGUES (CHARISM)

You can speak and understand any human language and, if you are literate, read and write them all as well.

**Prerequisites:** Truth Sense

**Benefit:** This Charism has the same effect as the *tongues* spell, except that it is permanent and an extraordinary ability.



**PASTOR'S INSIGHT (CHARISM)**

You have an unusual level of insight into the hearts and souls of others.

**Benefit:** You get a +3 bonus on all Sense Motive checks. Sense Motive becomes a class skill for you if it is not already.

**PASTOR'S VISION (CHARISM)**

You are unusually aware of events within a community, and of those that impinge upon it. Somehow, you hear almost everything of importance.

**Benefit:** You get a +3 bonus on all Gather Information checks. Gather Information becomes a class skill for you if it is not already.

**SENSE OF SIGNIFICANCE (CHARISM)**

You know whether a piece of information you acquire is important, although you do not always know what it is important for.

**Benefit:** Whenever you learn something important, the GM must tell you so. He need not tell you why it is important, although sometimes this will be obvious. Sometimes, of course, the importance of information is obvious, but the GM should still tell you. It is of great help to know, for example, that the information that an army is approaching is not important. In addition, important information need not be important for the immediate task at hand, but it should be important to you, and not just important to someone.

This Charism applies to information that the character observes, as well as to information that he is told. This means that clues are obvious to the character, as he knows which things in an area are important. Interpreting the clues is still his responsibility, however.

**TRUTH SENSE (CHARISM)**

You can tell whether someone is speaking the truth, even when the speaker does not know that he is lying.

**Prerequisite:** Pastor's Insight

**Benefit:** You can make a Sense Motive check to determine whether a spoken or written statement is true. This Charism allows you to detect honest mistakes as well as lies, so it does not matter whether the speaker believes what he is saying. If the statement is false, this Charism does not let the character determine what the truth is.

Attempts to manipulate this Charism, by having a friend make lots of statements at random, are the sin of presumption, as you are trying to manipulate God. Similarly, using this Charism to enquire into theological mysteries is the sin of pride. As with any Charism, attempting to use it in a sinful manner means that you immediately lose the use of all Charisms, including this one.

**SUCCOR****CLOTHE THE NAKED (CHARISM)**

You can divide your clothes with those who have none, making enough for two.

**Prerequisites:** Character level 5th+

**Benefit:** If you give part of your clothing to someone who has no clothes, or is inadequately dressed, the part that you give becomes sufficient to cover them, and to protect them against the elements. Your own clothes also remain adequate. Thus, if you gave half of your cloak to a naked beggar, the half cloak would become a full tunic, with a cloak to guard against the weather, and your cloak would miraculously be whole again.

If you give away parts of clothing that are not necessary the recipient still gets enough for his needs, but your gift is not replaced. The created clothes are warm, dry, and well-made, but they are not fancy.

**FEED THE HUNGRY (CHARISM)**

You can multiply food to feed the starving.

**Prerequisites:** Character level 5th+

**Benefit:** As long as you have some food, no matter how little, you can divide it between any number of hungry people and ensure that they have enough to eat. This Charism can only be used to relieve genuine hunger, due either to poverty, famine, or being stranded somewhere without supplies. The food is nourishing and tasty, but it is not elaborate. In addition, there is always some left over when people have finished, so that the process can be repeated during a prolonged dearth.

**FREE THE PRISONERS (CHARISM)**

You can free unjustly held prisoners.

**Prerequisites:** Character level 5th+

**Benefit:** If someone is unjustly held, you can walk into their prison and lead them out. All gates and bars open before you, chains fall off at your touch, and guards fail to notice your presence or the prisoner's absence until it is too late to do anything about it. Even magical wards are effortlessly overcome by this Charism.

**TEACHING****COMMANDING SPEAKER (CHARISM)**

As long as you are preaching the Word of God, none can interrupt or gainsay you.

**Benefit:** If you are preaching God's message, people must listen quietly. They may leave before you have finished, but even then they must leave as quietly as possible so as not to disturb others. Anyone at all sympathetic to your message is reluctant to leave.

Animals and birds gather to hear you preach, remaining quiet until you finish, at which point they leave.

It is not possible for anyone, even your allies, to attack your audience, as that would interrupt your preaching.

### GOD'S TRUTH (CHARISM)

When you speak the truth, no one can help believing you.

**Prerequisites:** Any two Teaching Charisms.

**Benefit:** If you speak the truth, everyone who hears and understands what you are saying believes you, fully and sincerely. They thus act on your information. This is not completely predictable, as people can react in strange ways.

This does not apply if you are sincerely mistaken. In addition, people can pretend not to believe you, although this requires a Bluff check to carry off successfully.

### MANY TONGUES (CHARISM)

When you speak, everyone hears you speaking in their own native language.

**Prerequisites:** Any two Teaching Charisms.

**Benefit:** Anyone listening to you hears you speaking in their native language, no matter how many different languages that is. You cannot understand all those languages, and do not know which languages they are. In addition, you sound like a native speaker of the language that people hear.

### PREACHER'S TONGUE (CHARISM)

You are very persuasive when speaking of God's Truth.

**Benefit:** You have a +3 bonus to all Diplomacy checks. Diplomacy becomes a class skill for you if it is not already. Characters should be wary of using this Charism for sinful ends.

### PREACHER'S VOICE (CHARISM)

Your voice is unusually powerful and clear.

**Benefit:** You can be heard clearly over any noise, should you wish to be. Your voice carries no further than it would normally, so a whisper can only be heard by those close to you, but they can hear every word with perfect clarity.

## VENGEANCE

### DIVINE WARNING (CHARISM)

You can send warning dreams to those who are sinning against the Lord.

**Benefit:** You can preach to sinners in their dreams. You actually appear in the sinner's dream, and can preach with all your normal ability, warning him against a particular sin. You know how the sinner reacts in his dream, even if you are awake at the time, but you do

not know how he might react when awake. You can send a warning dream to one person per night, but to a different person every night, and the target of the dream must be notable for a particular sin, or about to undertake a notably sinful course of action.

### EXORCISM (CHARISM)

You can drive out evil spirits in the name of God.

**Benefit:** If you pray to cast out an evil spirit, it must make a Will save against a DC of 10 + the number of Charisms (of any type) you possess. If it fails the save, it must leave the area, and return whence it came. For demons, this means hell, while Earthbound evil spirits go back to their lairs. They cannot simply come back, as the power of God prevents them from doing so, but this power fades with time. A possessed person might be possessed again if he acts so as to invite the demons back.

You can only use this Charism if you have good reason to believe that a particular evil spirit is present, and you must specify the spirit you want to exorcise. You cannot exorcise everyone you meet on the off chance that they are possessed.

It is almost impossible to use this Charism in a sinful way.

### PUNITIVE MALEDICTION (CHARISM)

You can punish sinners with curses from God.

**Prerequisites:** Warning Malediction, character level 10th+



**Benefit:** You can curse a notable sinner as punishment for his sins. These curses include complete paralysis, leprosy, constant bleeding, blindness, deafness, and similar major afflictions. The curse affliction can only be removed if the sinner repents of his sin, confesses, and receives absolution. This Charism cannot kill people, as its purpose is to call them to repentance, not to damn them to hell.

This Charism can never be the first warning issued to a sinner, as that would itself be a sin. Instead, it is a last resort to be used if the sinner refuses to repent when warned more gently.

### SHIELD OF GOD (CHARISM)

You are defended against the attacks of God's enemies by your faith.

**Benefit:** You gain a +1 bonus to AC against the enemies of God. Remember that it is possible for God's servants to fight each other, so that the fact that someone is attacking you does not, in itself, make them an enemy of God.

### SWORD OF GOD (CHARISM)

You are able to strike God's enemies down.

**Benefit:** You gain a +1 bonus to hit the enemies of God. Remember that striking God's servants is a sin, and thus temporarily deprives the character of the use of all Charisms.

### WARDING (CHARISM)

Evil spirits are extremely uncomfortable in your presence.

**Prerequisites:** Exorcism, character level 5th+

**Benefit:** Your presence causes evil spirits pain, giving them a -3 penalty to all actions for as long as they remain near you. Most such spirits will avoid you, rather than seeking confrontation. You do not necessarily know when an evil spirit is near, as most of them are very good at hiding their suffering.

### WARNING MALEDICTION (CHARISM)

You can curse someone to assure them that God's eye is on their sin.

**Prerequisites:** Divine Warning

**Benefit:** You can warn someone that their actions are sinful, and bestow a minor curse to back up your warning. You must speak to the sinner, in a language they can understand, so that they know against which sin they are being warned. The effect of the curse is minor but obvious: a painful sore, a debilitating but minor illness, such as a heavy cold or mild flu, a mark as from a branding, and so on. At worst, it imposes a -1 to rolls which are directly affected. If the sinner repents of his sin, the curse is removed.

It is usually sinful to use this as the first warning to a sinner, but if the sin is particularly serious this Charism may be an appropriate response.

## ◆ New Holy Classes ◆

This section includes three new classes that work with the Charism system, the saint core class, and the hermit and mystic prestige classes.

### ◆ The Saint Core Class ◆

Almost everyone claims to be a good Christian, but a few men and women are truly such. They are God's saints, and because of their holiness they can intercede more effectively with the Godhead. The ignorant claim that God grants them a portion of His power, but the saints know that they are nothing, and that all their wonders come purely from God, and purely at his will. Still, God has promised that he will not abandon his faithful followers, and as long as the saint remains faithful, she finds that her prayers are still answered.

Saints, perhaps surprisingly, often find themselves in conflict with the Church authorities. Many abbots and bishops prefer their saints safely dead, as living saints have a tendency to make uncomfortable pronouncements, and to attract the veneration of the living. In some cases, where the ecclesiastical hierarchy is actually corrupt, this conflict can become serious, but usually it takes the form of well-meaning churchmen trying to direct the saint into a more

conventional, less obvious, path. If the conflict becomes serious, the Church may even excommunicate the saint, but this has no effect on the saint's link with God.

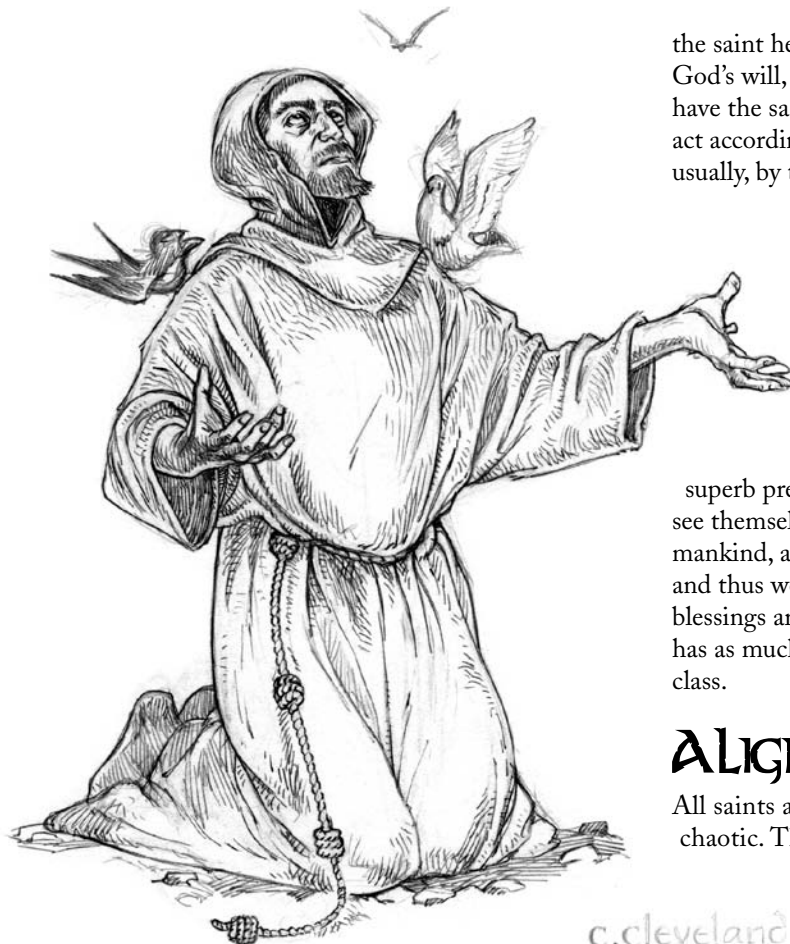
A few saints are declared heretics by the church, and most of these truly do appear heretical. The Church believes that their powers come from Satan, but the Church is wrong. God's view of his doctrine is broader than that of his servants, and not all heresy is wrong in His eyes.

## ADVENTURES

Saints do not go on adventures as such. That kind of activity is too selfish, driven by the character's own needs and desires. Instead, the saint follows God's will, and this can sometimes take her into danger, from which she can trust God to protect her. Some saints have a better insight into God's will than most people, and their activities can be difficult for others to understand. Indeed, sometimes

TABLE 3-5: The SAINT

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	Bonus feat
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	Bonus feat
3	+1	+3	+3	+3	Bonus feat
4	+2	+4	+4	+4	Bonus feat
5	+2	+4	+4	+4	Bonus feat
6	+3	+5	+5	+5	Bonus feat
7	+3	+5	+5	+5	Bonus feat
8	+4	+6	+6	+6	Bonus feat
9	+4	+6	+6	+6	Bonus feat
10	+5	+7	+7	+7	Bonus feat
11	+5	+7	+7	+7	Bonus feat
12	+6/+1	+8	+8	+8	Bonus feat
13	+6/+1	+8	+8	+8	Bonus feat
14	+7/+2	+9	+9	+9	Bonus feat
15	+7/+2	+9	+9	+9	Bonus feat
16	+8/+3	+10	+10	+10	Bonus feat
17	+8/+3	+10	+10	+10	Bonus feat
18	+9/+4	+11	+11	+11	Bonus feat
19	+9/+4	+11	+11	+11	Bonus feat
20	+10/+5	+12	+12	+12	Bonus feat



the saint herself does not understand *why* something is God's will, merely knowing that it is. Other saints, however, have the same limited knowledge as ordinary people, and act according to God's will as expressed in the Bible and, usually, by the Church.

## CHARACTERISTICS

Saints live entirely for the service of God, and He grants their prayers in ways which will enhance that service. This means that saints differ greatly from one another, depending on the role for which God intends them.

One might be a great healer, another a superb preacher, while a third is a prophet. Saints do not see themselves as a single group separate from the rest of mankind, and indeed doing so would be the sin of pride, and thus would cost the saint God's favor. Indeed, God's blessings are available to anyone holy, and such a person has as much claim to the title of saint as any member of the class.

## ALIGNMENT

All saints are good, but they may be lawful, neutral, or chaotic. Those who espouse chaotic good are most likely to find themselves in conflict with the Church, and are also the most likely to appear heretical.

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## OTHER CLASSES

Most saints work well with any other class, as they are tolerant of sinners and understanding of failure. Nevertheless, they condemn sin itself, even as they support the sinner in his quest for repentance and redemption. This can make them uncomfortable companions for some classes, notably rogues and anyone who uses magic, but it is rare for a saint to give up on someone who shows a willingness to at least try to reform.

A few saints are intolerant firebrands, refusing to let any sin, however small, pass unnoticed. Such characters are all but unbearable as companions, and the impossibility of adventuring without sinning makes them a poor choice for player characters. However, their intolerance no more leads to a withdrawal of God's favor than does the heresy of other saints, even when the firebrand condemns the heretic. God's purposes are mysterious, and cannot be truly fathomed by mere human beings.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Saints have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Different saints favor different abilities, depending on the power that God grants them. Wisdom and Charisma are important to most saints, however, as one gives insight into those around you, and thus perception of sin, while the other gives the ability to exhort others to reform their lives.

**Alignment:** Any good.

**Hit Die:** d12

## CLASS SKILLS

The saint's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (Christianity) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Sense Motive (Wis).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (4 + Int modifier) x 4

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 4 + Int modifier

## THE HERMIT PRESTIGE CLASS

Hermits live apart from society, serving God in their own way, with a combination of Charisms and folk charms. All are pious, but most are seen as heretical by the Church hierarchy. Despite this, many local people revere them as saints, and seek them out for help in all the troubles of daily life. Hermits accept that this is their role, and the way that God wants them to serve.

Some hermits have themselves walled up into a small cell, leaving only a window through which food and other necessities can be passed. Others wander the countryside, helping wherever they are. Most, however, live apart, but in a normal enough hut or cell, occasionally traveling to local towns and villages when they are needed.

**Hit Die:** d8

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the saint.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Saints are proficient with simple weapons, but not with any kind of armor, nor with shields.

### BONUS FEATS

The saint gets a bonus feat at every level. This bonus feat must be a Charism. The saint's normal feats need not be Charisms, but they may be if the player desires. In the game, God decides which gifts the saint gets, but the player may choose.

### HOLY LIFE

A saint must lead a holy life, or she loses God's blessings. This requires her to be perfect, and while saints can maintain this for a long time, by the grace of God, most do fall eventually. A saint only sins if the player explicitly says that she does something which violates God's commandments, but this includes comments which indicate that the character is in a sinful state of mind, as well as actual words or actions.

A saint who has sinned has no access to any Charisms she may have, even those gained through her normal feats, and cannot gain levels as a saint until she confesses and does penance. This confession must be made to a properly ordained priest, who imposes the penance, and this requirement can cause some difficulties for saints who have been in conflict with the Church. These problems teach humility, though, and that may be why God allows them.

Once a saint has completed her penance, she regains her Charisms. A saint who is genuinely trying to complete her penance, but who is interrupted by some grave evil, often finds that God restores his blessings at that point. This does not always happen, though, as martyrs are among the greatest of God's saints.

### REQUIREMENTS

**Charisms:** Any four Charisms.

**Folk Charms:** Any four Folk Charms, as long as all have Christian ritual components.

**Alignment:** Any good.

### CLASS SKILLS

The hermit's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (all skills taken individually), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int), Survival (Wis), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

TABLE 3-6: The Hermit

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Free Folk Charms	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	0	Natural Servants
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	1	
3	+1	+3	+3	+3	2	Bonus Charism
4	+2	+4	+4	+4	3	
5	+2	+4	+4	+4	3	Dream Wandering
6	+3	+5	+5	+5	4	Bonus Charism
7	+3	+5	+5	+5	5	
8	+4	+6	+6	+6	6	
9	+4	+6	+6	+6	6	Bonus Charism
10	+5	+7	+7	+7	7	Understanding

Skill Points: 4 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

The hermit gains proficiency with no weapons and no armor.

### FREE FOLK CHARMS

The hermit learns a number of free folk charms at each level. The number listed on the table is the total number at each level, so a hermit going from level four to level five learns no new charms. These free charms are in addition to any the character already knows, or learns through standard feats.

### NATURAL SERVANTS

The animals and plants of the area where the hermit lives serve the hermit, under command from God. The animals bring food and warn him of visitors, while the plants grow nourishing berries and refrain from blocking his path. Even the unliving world cares for him to some extent, so that the weather at his cell is never as bad as elsewhere, and the currents of streams do not carry him away. Over time (and with the GM's approval), the hermit can come to know individual animals, and is able to send them on errands, as if they were animal companions. Wandering hermits do not, however, get this benefit.

### BONUS CHARISMS

At each of third, sixth, and ninth levels the hermit gains a bonus Charism, which may chosen freely from among those for which he meets the prerequisites.

### DREAM WANDERING

From fifth level the hermit has the supernatural ability to observe the area near his hermitage without leaving. When he sleeps, he seems to appear at his hermitage when he last awoke, generally the previous morning. He may then walk around the area and observe what is happening. He is

viewing the past as it happened, and he is completely unable to affect anything, as he was not really there. In addition, he can only see with his normal senses, and cannot travel faster than he can walk or run, as it feels to the hermit as though he is physically present. Despite this, he can walk through walls, but he cannot see in the dark. As a result of this, hermits often know much more about their environment than you would expect. The hermit experiences the full time until he next wakes up, so that he experiences about twenty-four hours every time he sleeps.

Wandering hermits also gain this ability, and appear where they woke up, just like fixed hermits. Hermits who do not normally need to sleep, due to the Watch and Pray Charism,



must sleep to use this ability. When they do, their dream wanderings start when they last woke up, and finish when they wake up again, so such a hermit could experience months of subjective time in a single night.

From seventh level, the hermit can do this twice in a night. When the first dream wandering ends, he finds himself back where he woke up, at the time he woke up. He can now spend the same time traveling around, presumably to a different area. From ninth level, he can do this three times a night.

A hermit may choose to forgo this wandering, and simply wake up. He does not wake up any earlier if he does so. Similarly, if the hermit is wakened in the night, he still completes all his dream wandering before he is awakened.

## UNDERSTANDING

At tenth level the hermit has supernatural insight into any situation that someone describes to him. The hermit

gains memories and knowledge as if he had been present at the incident, in the most advantageous single position, and able to use all his abilities to the full. This applies even if the person is lying about the incident, or is sincerely mistaken about an historical event, as long as he is talking about an event that actually happened. The hermit does not necessarily know the truth; most high-level hermits remember being present at the crucifixion and resurrection, and know what they saw, but what they saw still needs interpretation. This does not apply if the event is completely fictional, so the hermit will know that the story has no basis in reality. It does apply even if the story has become extremely distorted; this can be amusing or confusing, depending on the degree of distortion. Obviously, there are borderline cases between extremely distorted accounts of an event, and accounts of no event. As a rule of thumb, if the GM cannot decide which event a story is about, with the benefit of omniscience, then it is about no event.

# THE MYSTIC PRESTIGE CLASS

The mystic is a holy person who has a very close relationship with God. He spends much of his time rapt away from the mortal world, enjoying something close to the presence of God, and his ultimate aim is to look upon the face of Christ. He hears the voice of God, and carries the message to those who have ears to listen. He may be commanded to act, but he spends most of his time contemplating.

Female mystics are as common as male, although the Church authorities try to put the women under the control of a male priest. They are rarely active, and thus make better NPCs and plot devices than player characters. They are, nevertheless, viable as player characters. .

**Hit Die:** d12

## REQUIREMENTS

**Charisms:** Possess the Divine Message Charism (see page 51).

**Alignment:** Any good.

**Note:** It is possible for a saint to meet these requirements at fourth level.

## CLASS SKILLS

The mystic's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (Christianity) (Int), Perform (Storytelling) (Cha), Profession (Wis), and Sense Motive (Wis).

**Skill Points:** 4 + Int modifier

## CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the mystic prestige class.

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Mystics gain no weapon or armor proficiencies.

### LESSER RAPTURE

When the character meditates, he is taken up, in spirit, to the lowest heaven. Although he does not see God, he



does see the angels and some of the souls of the dead. The character normally remains in rapture for about two hours, although the time varies from a mere moment to a whole day, depending on the will of God. While the character is in rapture, he is completely unaware of what is happening to his body, and cannot be brought back by any means. A character who died in rapture would not notice for quite some time. Normally, God sends the character back if he is attacked.

When a character enters rapture, any enchantments on him are broken, and remain broken when he returns. This applies to beneficial as well as baneful magic, but does not apply to divine gifts. In heaven, a character can see whether he has been deceived, so mundane confusion is also broken.

Sometimes, angels or saints give the character messages to take back to the mortal world, or give him tasks to carry out. This is at the GM's discretion, and is primarily a source of story seeds. They may also give the character some useful information, much like the Divine Illumination Charism.

Entering a meditative state is a full-round action that requires a successful DC 10 Concentration check.

### BONUS CHARISMS

At each of second, fourth, sixth, and eighth levels the mystic gains a bonus Charism, which may be chosen freely from those for which he meets the prerequisites.

### VISIONARY ORATOR

From third level, the mystic is able to express his visions in some form. Most commonly, this is speech, as he preaches the truth of what he has seen. However, it could also be writing, painting, or music. The mystic may use whatever he mode he wishes to convey the experience.

Those who hear the sermon (see the image, read the account, and so forth) can almost see the vision that is described. They know that there is something important about this description, no matter how strange it might seem, and that the mystic has something important to say.

Sometimes, the vision makes perfect sense for a person, as the mystic was intended to convey a message from God. Normally, however, this ability serves merely to make the mystic credible, a matter of no little importance.

No one can truly believe that the mystic is influenced by the powers of darkness, although some might pretend to do so. This means that the mystic is treated with considerable respect, as someone who has a close relationship with the Divine.

### GROUP VISIONS

From fifth level the mystic can lead other characters in meditations that reveal visions of the Divine Will. The other characters must all be of good alignment and currently in a state of grace. They must also be willing participants, and seeking only greater knowledge of and closeness to God; any other motive is sinful, and destroys the state of grace.

A mystic can lead a number of people equal to his Cha modifier, with a minimum of one, at one time. However, each person still has his own vision, even if there is a group. It normally takes an hour for characters to enter the vision, but a successful Wis check against a DC of 15 allows a character to enter a vision in a 2d4 minutes. Once in the vision, the character is only as aware of his surroundings as he would be when asleep.

In the vision, each character sees what God is most pleased and displeased with in his life, and learns what God's plan for him is, at least for the immediate future. The vision always gives the character something concrete to do, but often it is rather cryptic, as God's plan requires that the person come to his own conclusion based on the evidence. The visions are subtle guides towards virtue rather than opportunities for the GM to set out timetables for the characters.

The visions can be used to find out whether God approves of a course of action that the character is considering, or for general advice.

Table 3-7: The Mystic

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	Lesser Rapture
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	Bonus Charism
3	+1	+3	+3	+3	Visionary Orator
4	+2	+4	+4	+4	Bonus Charism
5	+2	+4	+4	+4	Group Visions
6	+3	+5	+5	+5	Bonus Charism
7	+3	+5	+5	+5	Rapture
8	+4	+6	+6	+6	Bonus Charism
9	+4	+6	+6	+6	True Sight
10	+5	+7	+7	+7	Beatific Vision



## Rapture

From seventh level the character may be rapt bodily away to heaven when he meditates. This is under the character's control; he may choose the lesser rapture instead. Rapture has all the characteristics of Lesser Rapture, and a few additional features.

First, the character's body is in heaven, so he disappears completely from earth. Magic is completely unable to say where he has gone. Second, when the character returns from rapture his body, as well as his mind, is healed. All damage, diseases, disabilities, and the like are burned away in the light of heaven. Finally, although the character normally returns to the place from which he left, this is not always the case. This is at God's (the GM's) discretion, although the mystic is warned before he returns from heaven.

Entering a meditative state is a full-round action that requires a successful DC 10 Concentration check.

## True Sight

From ninth level on, the mystic sees things as they truly are. People's personalities are written on their features to him, and disguise and concealment are completely ineffective. This is much the same effect as the divine version of *true seeing*, except that the character cannot see into the Ethereal Plane (because there isn't one, of course), and the perception of personality is more detailed than a simple knowledge of alignment, although it does include that as part of what is seen.

The mystic also knows when someone deliberately lies in his presence, although he cannot, through this ability, spot falsehoods that the speaker believes to be true.

## Beatific Vision

At tenth level the mystic gains the Beatific Vision Charism, even if he does not meet the prerequisites.

# RELIQS

Relics are very important in medieval Christianity, as they are the most important part of the cult of saints, which is one of the most important parts of Church practice. Relics are physical things associated with a particular saint. The most important relics are parts of the saint's body, but other objects, such as items of the saint's clothing or the instruments of his or her martyrdom, are also considered to be relics. Relics of Christ are almost entirely of the latter sort, as His body ascended with him into heaven. Some churches hold vials of Christ's blood, but splinters of the Cross are more common.

The roles of relics and saints are easily misunderstood, and most lay Christians have a slightly confused picture. As noted in the Theology section on page 37, saints do not perform miracles. Rather, they intercede with God on our behalf, and God performs the miracles. Even more, relics do not perform miracles. They are, in one sense, merely physical objects, hallowed by their close association with the saints but not active. As God is everywhere and the saints can see and hear anywhere, one should not need to be near a relic in order to receive a miracle. And, indeed, one does not. Miracles, even those proceeding from the intercession of particular saints, can take place far from the saint's relics, and even happen when the saint has no known relics at all.

Nevertheless, pilgrimage to shrines containing the relics of saints is a major part of Christian piety, and most people try to get as close as possible to the relic, believing that this grants a higher chance of a miracle. What is more, they seem to be right; more miracles do seem to happen around a saint's relics than occur elsewhere. One possibility is that God, who can work however He chooses, chooses to channel some of his power through the physical object, so that contact with the object guarantees miraculous

intervention. Most theologians shy away from this position, however, as it seems to make God too mechanical. Another possibility is that the relics have no power in themselves, but that the pilgrimage, and the desire to touch the relic, makes people's piety concrete, and thus enable people who are not used to thinking in abstract terms to devote themselves to God and His saints. Thus, God rewards the faith of the petitioner, not the contact with the relic, but the existence of the relic gives the petitioner a focus for faith which is more comprehensible than God Himself. The truth of the matter is known only to God and, probably, His saints, but the fact remains that relics work.

## False Relics

A GM must address the issue of false relics. Despite later propaganda, there were not enough splinters of the True Cross around to make a ship, but there were at least two cathedrals which claimed to have the head of the John the Baptist, which, unless the Gospels missed a very salient point, appears unlikely.

In any campaign, there should be some false relics. Some traveling peddlers sold what they claimed to be relics of various saints, and most of these were entirely false. The wares of con artists should not, on the whole, be genuine relics.

Problems arise when two respectable monasteries claim to have a relic that should be unique. One possibility is to say that only one of the places has the true relic, so only one has access to the miraculous powers. However, historically miracles were claimed at both locations, and claimed as evidence for the disposition of the true relic. Another possibility is that the saint miraculously duplicated his

corpse so that both houses could have it. This solution is attested from the Middle Ages, and it is certainly within the power of God to do it. A third possibility is outright fraud by one of the monasteries; rare, but certainly possible.

GMs should, however, avoid having the liturgical landscape littered with false relics, as this will breed a cynicism in the player characters that is wholly inappropriate for the medieval period. Everyone believed that con artists sold false relics to the gullible, but equally everyone believed that most of the relics certified by the Church were genuine.

## The Nature of Miracles

Saintly miracles in the Middle Ages were not exactly as a modern reader might expect. The most common variety, certainly, was healing miracles, but there were others that seem a little odd today.

Saints often released people from prison, and some saints even specialized in it. This was because unjust imprisonment was quite common, and imprisonment was never a punishment for those convicted of a crime (see *Law*, page 113). Saints would, of course, never free the guilty, so miraculous release was an infallible sign of innocence. Since the guards rarely saw anything miraculous, the cynical might wonder how many criminals escaped justice by escaping and then claiming miraculous deliverance. Still, these miracles are best thought of as more akin to freeing kidnap victims than to releasing people from prison in the modern sense.

More problematic is the response of saints to mockery. Anyone who mocked a saint, or made fun of him in any way, was liable to be struck down with a serious illness, often paralysis or a stroke, and quite often would be killed. To modern sensibilities, this seems cruel and petty, and saints should not appear so in medieval campaigns. One possibility is to drop all references to these miracles, but they were quite common. A better alternative is to work on portraying them as enforcing respect for the holy, rather than as petty revenge.

One way to do this is to suppose that the recorded miracles are merely the most spectacular, inflicted on people who displayed long-term and repeated contempt for God and his saints, ignoring many warnings. Lesser disrespect should be punished with lesser miracles: terrifying dreams in which the

saint appears to berate the character; annoying, but minor, sores on body parts used to insult the saint, usually the tongue; or minor accidents while being disrespectful.

These punishments should not be inflicted for all sins, as otherwise it would be hard to explain the prevalence of, for example, avarice and lust. Rather, they should be restricted to specific and public insults or mockery directed at God and his saints. That is, disrespectful behavior in the narrow sense should be punished this way, because it might lead to more widespread contempt for the Divine, and that could damn many people to hell.

The most difficult miracles are those in which saints punish people who refuse to give them the land or money that they feel is their right. There were a number of medieval saints, including St. Cuthbert at Durham and St. Edmund at Bury St. Edmunds, with something of a reputation for punishing anyone who dared to start a law-suit against the abbey.

In this case, quietly ignoring these miracles is a viable idea. Modern sensibilities have trouble with the idea of God essentially intimidating people to make them drop a court case. However, they could, with a little care, be integrated. Most importantly, God should only intervene when the monastery is in the right, and the opposition has enough influence to make the judge decide unjustly. Most lawsuits against abbeys are initiated by the nobility, so the second criterion is normally met. If you believe monastic chroniclers, the first condition is also always met, but it is possible that they were biased.

Divine intervention should then take the form of dreams sent to the litigious noble, warning him of the danger of his path. If the case comes to trial by combat, God may send a champion, who is, of course, unbeatable. Otherwise, the judge may also receive dreams, informing him of the right of the case.

In general, the important thing to realize is that medieval saints behave in many ways like medieval nobles. They care for those who are devoted to them, and defend their dignity and their lands and revenues. The difference is that the saints are not distracted by base urges, and care for their devotees properly, unlike most living nobles. Most saints are neither unworldly nor, in modern terms, purely altruistic.



## GAME RULES

As relics are the remains of saints, their power depends on the saint. They cannot have exactly the same powers as the saint, as many Charisms are only really appropriate for living people, and secondary relics, such as instruments of martyrdom, have less connection to the saint than body parts. Nevertheless, the starting point for a relic is that it has the same Charisms as the saint did at the time of his death.

Saints cannot be raised from the dead. They have joined the Church Triumphant in heaven, and God will not send them back to the world as ordinary people with the potential to sin. Anyone who has left miracle-working relics is a saint, and thus cannot be raised.

## CHARISM MODIFICATIONS

### BODY CHARISMS

Body Charisms are inappropriate for relics, and should be replaced, one for one, with Healing Charisms. If a saint had any Body Charisms, his relics are incorrupt: they do not decay, and smell pleasant even many years after the saint's death.

### DISMEMBERMENT

The bodies of important saints are often dismembered after their deaths, so that many places can have a relic. In this case, each relic, no matter how small, has the same Charisms as the whole body. God grants the saint the power to watch over all his relics and, of course, God Himself has no problem acting wherever necessary.

### HEALING AND VENGEANCE CHARISMS

These Charisms work in the same way for relics as they do for living saints. It is common for some of the ten Charisms granted to a martyr to be Vengeance Charisms.

### MARTYRDOM

A martyr nominally gains ten Charisms immediately after his death, and these Charisms are found in his relics. A martyr is someone who dies for his faith, in a direct way. The clearest cases are people executed for being Christians, but devout crusaders who die in the line of battle are also martyrs, and healers who die of the disease they are trying to cure could also qualify. Note that, even though Muslims serve God just as truly as Christians, and thus both sides in the battle are sinning, those who are fighting, and are killed, for their faith still become martyrs.

Any Christian who is martyred becomes a saint, even if his devotion in life was a little nominal. His willingness to remain faithful unto death earns him paradise as a reward.

### PROPHECY AND TEACHING CHARISMS

Relics do not generally prophesy or teach in their own right, but they do inspire the living to do so. Relics with these

Charisms can grant them to the living. Each Charism can be granted to only one person at a time, but a Charism can be granted without its prerequisites, and different Charisms could be granted to many different people simultaneously. The grant normally lasts for as long as it is needed. A grant of Divine Message (page 51) would last until the message was delivered, while a grant of Preacher's Tongue would normally last for a single sermon or debate.

## SECONDARY RELICS

Relics other than body parts, such as the tools of a saint's martyrdom or an item that was closely associated with him in his life, have fewer Charisms than primary relics. As a rule of thumb, an item which is iconic for the saint has about half of the saint's Charisms, while lesser items have a quarter, and things which had only a minor connection have one Charism, if any.

The types of Charisms depend upon the nature of the relic. Instruments of martyrdom generally have all of the saint's Vengeance Charisms, and a number of Healing Charisms as well. If the saint was imprisoned before being martyred, these relics typically also have the Free the Prisoners Charism (see page 52). A crozier held by a saintly bishop as he preached to his flock would hold his Teaching Charisms, while the satchel used to distribute supplies to the poor would probably hold Succor Charisms.

## SUCCOR CHARISMS

These work in much the same way as for living saints. Normally, a vision of the saint appears and carries out the necessary actions to succor the needy.

## INVOKING RELICS

While relics occasionally manifest miracles spontaneously, they normally do so at the request of a living member of the Church. Any good Christian who makes a sincere and righteous request in the presence of a relic will have that request granted, if it is within the power of the relic. Miracles are not rare; a popular pilgrimage shrine can expect to see at least one, and generally more, every day.

Not all requests are granted, however. A good Christian need not be in a state of grace, but his soul should not be stained with any long-term sin. A habitual adulterer would not be granted a miracle unless he first repented, confessed, and did penance, but a generally pious woman who fancied the monk guarding the relic (thus committing a minor sin of lust) would be granted her request, if it were appropriate. The request must also be sincere and righteous. Sincerity is quite easy; people do not normally go on pilgrimages to get things they do not really want. Righteousness is harder to guarantee, as sometimes afflictions are God's will, sent to test his faithful. This last means that the GM can refuse to grant any miracle. However, this discretion should be used sparingly, because players should have respect for the miraculous powers of relics.

## BUYING RELICS

Despite, or possibly because of, their spiritual importance, there is a significant trade in relics. Fake relics are sold by the bucket-load, for trivial prices to gullible peasants and townsmen. Genuine relics are sold more rarely, and very rarely for cash. It is much more common for churches or lords to send relics as gifts, or to exchange them. Because a part of a saint's body has as much power as the whole body, it is not uncommon for churches to exchange gifts of, say, a finger bone from their respective saints. Similarly, lord who wishes to send a spectacular gift to another might well send an important relic, such as a piece of the True Cross.

If characters do want to buy a relic, a typical price would be 500 gp for a relic containing a single Charism. A second Charism would add 1,000 gp to the price, for a total of 1,500 gp, a third would add 1,500 gp, for a total of 3,000 gp, and so on. Each additional Charism adds 500 gp times the total number of Charisms, including that one. Thus, a relic containing ten Charisms would cost 27,500 gp. This assumes that the character wants to buy a small piece of a large relic held by a church. If the character wants to transfer the whole relic, he will probably need military force, and even then the saint might object. Certainly, no monastery will part with all the relics of their tutelary saint, although they might be happy to share fragments, to spread their saint's reputation and cult.

## CREATING RELICS

The process by which player characters can create relics is extremely simple:

- 1) Be a saint.
- 2) Die.

There is no other way to do so. If a player character who has Charisms dies, his remains become relics, as described above. It is perfectly proper and medieval for the other player characters to cut his body up so that each of them can have a relic to carry around. However, God only answers sincere and righteous prayers; relics cannot be treated like standard magic items. In addition, if you think that the players are abusing this, by playing suicidal saints, you should rein them in.

## SAMPLE RELICS

### The Body of St. Cuthbert

St. Cuthbert was a monk in the seventh century, a hermit on Lindisfarne in Northumbria. He was noted for his asceticism, and at the end of his life he was, much against his will, made bishop. His relics are now the most prized of Durham cathedral, and he is known as a fierce defender of his rights. St. Cuthbert did not die a martyr, and thus his relics have the Charisms he gained during his life as a saint.

**Charisms:** Divine Illumination, Divine Message, Divine Warning, Exorcism, Healing Prayer, Miracle Cure

(burns, falls, fever, paralysis, sword wounds), Pastor's Insight, Punitive Malediction, Raise the Dead, Sense of Significance, Truth Sense, Warning Malediction

### The Body of St. Edmund

St Edmund was a king of the East Angles in the time of the Viking invasions. A Christian, he was captured by the pagan raiders, tied to a tree, and killed with arrows, before having his head cut off. Edmund died a martyr, and a wolf brought his head back to his body, where it miraculously re-attached. St Edmund's body is in one piece, and held at the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, in Suffolk. The abbey is extremely wealthy, and rules the entire western half of the county, as well as holding manors elsewhere.

**Charisms:** Divine Illumination, Divine Warning, Free the Prisoners, Miracle Cure (arrow wounds, sword wounds, the king's evil), Pastor's Insight, Punitive Malediction, Truth Sense, Warning Malediction

### A FRAGMENT OF THE TRUE CROSS

Around 1116 Alexius I Comnenus, emperor of Constantinople, sent Henry I some pieces of the True Cross on which Christ died. The whole relic is kept in Constantinople, as the holiest relic of all Christendom.

As secondary relics of God Himself, fragments of the True Cross have all Charisms. No monastery would sell such a treasure.





# ANGELS AND DEMONS

Angels and demons are important and active in the medieval world. However, they are not well-represented by the standard d20 statistics for celestial and fiendish outsiders, as medieval angels and demons tend to be rather more subtle. More suitable angels and demons can be found in *Testament: Roleplaying in the Biblical Era*, though they are more representative of the Old Testament.

## ANGELS

Angels are divine messengers. Indeed, the word 'angel' means 'messenger'. Thus, angels appear to convey a message from God or to carry out some task on His behalf. Such intervention is quite rare, and most people never experience it. On the other hand, most people know someone who has, even if not very well.

Angels normally appear as men clothed in shining white, sometimes bearing a trumpet, if they are serving as heralds, or a sword, if they are enforcing God's will. They may or may not have wings, but they rarely carry harps. Sometimes the angel is visible and audible to all who are present, but somewhat more often only the recipient of his message knows he is there. Angels also appear in disguise, seeming like an ordinary person. For example, an angel might be sent in the form of a knight to compete on his behalf in a tournament, if the knight has missed it due to his piety.

## SERVANTS OF GOD

Angels cannot fail at their assigned tasks, so there is no need to give them game statistics. This means that the GM should exercise great restraint in using them, as players might well feel that they are losing control if angels pop up every adventure to get them out of trouble. On the other hand, if the characters have got into serious trouble by acting in a pious manner, God might well send his angels to catch them up out of danger.

Deliberately getting into trouble to make God send an angel to save you is tempting God, and a serious sin. Thus, a character that tries this gets no help.

## DEMONS

Demons are fallen angels, and as such they are far from guaranteed success. Thus, on those occasions when they do manifest physically to wreak destruction, it is reasonable to use the standard statistics. However, this is not a common activity for demons; they are interested in getting people to damn themselves, not in simple wanton destruction.

## TEMPTATION

All demons have the supernatural ability to place a temptation in a person's mind. They can do this at will,

and there is no saving throw nor does spell resistance apply. However, the temptation has no power to compel compliance; it is not a *suggestion*, as the spell. The person tempted must decide whether or not to act on the temptation. Demons can also manipulate the physical world to make their temptations more effective. For example, a demon might open a window to reveal money lying on a shelf, and then tempt people to take it.

## FALSE MESSENGERS

Demons can also send dreams, take human form to spread rumors, and lie without any possibility of detection. They can even take on the form of angels from God, and deliver false messages. It is possible to tell demons and angels apart, because demons send messages which will lead to sin, while angels do not. If part of a demon's message can be followed without sin, there is no sin in doing so, as long as the character stops before he does sin.

## DEMONIC POSSESSION

Finally, demons can possess people. A person can resist possession by making a Will save against a DC of 10 plus half the demon's Challenge Rating. A demon can try to possess a person once per day, but cannot possess anyone who is in a state of grace. A person knows when a demon tries to possess him, and thus can take precautions, and seek an exorcist to drive the demon off.

Once a demon has possessed someone, it can only be driven out by God's power. In the meantime, it has complete control over the person's body. Possessing demons rarely go on murder sprees or commit similar flagrant sins, because the person does not sin merely because the demon is controlling his body. Rather, they prefer to get the person deeply involved in situations where it will be very tempting to sin, or to continue sinning. A demon might start an affair, borrow lots of money from a dubious character, or steal and hide the stolen goods under the character's bed. When the demon leaves, the character can choose to give up the sins, but he still has to deal with the consequences.

Demon possession should be used extremely sparingly against player characters. It works much better as a plot element in which NPCs are possessed, and the player characters must work against them. Taking control of a player's character in this way is generally a bad idea, and should only be done with the player's consent.

## REAPERS OF SOULS

Some people sell their souls to demons for temporal power. For an example of how to handle this in game terms, see *The Black Monks of Glastonbury*, a Coriolis Ars Magica/d20 book from Atlas Games.

# CHAPTER FOUR: PRELATES, PAINTERS, AND PHILOSOPHERS

This chapter deals with politics, scholarship, and art; areas of life that were very important in the Middle Ages, but do not normally play a large role in d20 games. It falls into four parts. The first three parts deal with politics, scholarship, and art in turn, providing rules and classes for using these activities in your games. The final section provides suggestions on how to structure a campaign around these kinds of activities, rather than around fighting monsters.

## ☞ Church Politics ☞

The Church is the body of Christ's faithful. The Church Militant is the Church on Earth, as opposed to the Church Triumphant, which is composed of the saints in heaven. The Church Militant, then, is also a human institution, with all the politics that entails.

It is, on the whole, a good institution. The men in positions of power have the interests of their inferiors at heart far more often than the nobility do, and the Church often acts to defend the poor and weak. It is not perfect, however, and is capable of misjudging the best thing to do in a situation. In addition, there are a few selfish or positively malicious individuals who manage to rise through the ranks. God does look after his faithful, however, and no one truly evil has ever risen to the highest offices.

### Parishes

Everyone in Western Christendom is a member of a parish. A parish is centered on a single church, in which a priest, called the rector, is supposed to serve. People are supposed to confess to their parish priest, and receive all the sacraments from him. The parish church is one of the main meeting places, and often the largest and highest quality building in the area. As a result, it sometimes gets used for storing furniture or supplies, a practice on which the Church frowns.

All laymen (Christians who are not clergy) are expected to go to their parish priest with any religious problems. Wealthy and powerful individuals may get permission to have a personal confessor, or chaplain, and people who are traveling are allowed to go to the local church, but otherwise people are not allowed to choose their priests.

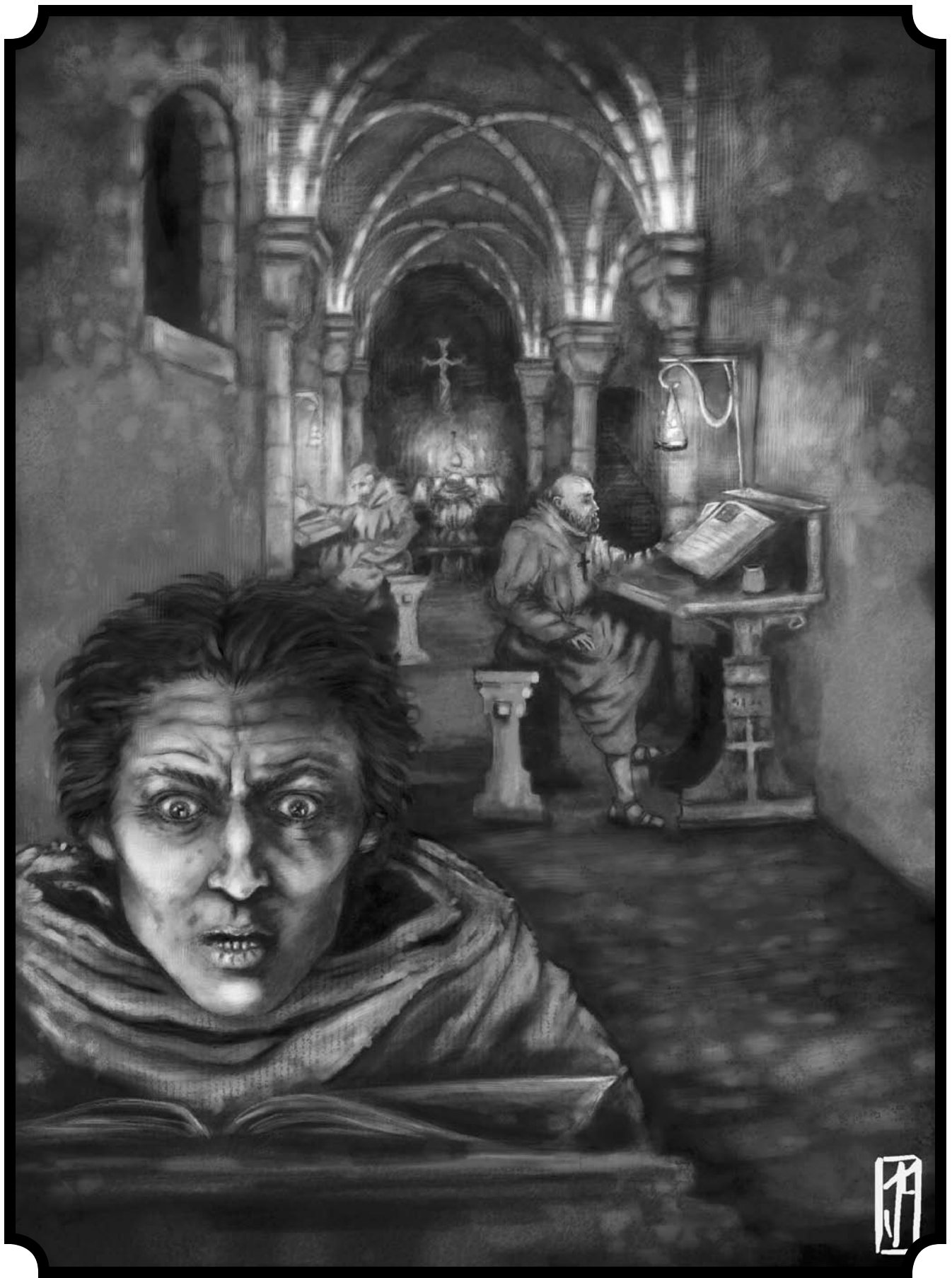
Parishes vary considerably in size, from a block or two in London to large parishes covering substantial areas of Yorkshire. They are still being organized in the early twelfth century, and in some parts of England the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon style of a large church, with multiple priests, serving a large area survives. These areas are slowly being broken up into smaller parishes.

Many different people appoint rectors. The default position is that they are appointed by the bishop of the diocese, and he must approve any appointment made by someone else. Many parishes are under the control of monasteries, and in that case the abbot appoints the rector. In other parishes, local lay lords have the right to appoint whomever they wish, subject to the bishop's agreement. This is often seen as a good career for younger sons, who will not inherit the lay position.

A rector need not oversee the parish by himself. He should reside there, although not all do, but he may appoint a curate, another priest to assist him, out of his income. The rector may choose his curate freely, as long as he has been ordained a priest. In addition, the rector may pay deacons and subdeacons to assist him with those parts of the role that do not involve administering the sacraments.

### Bishops AND The Diocese

The bishops are, in many ways, the highest authority in the Church. Even the Pope is primarily the Bishop of Rome. They have authority over an area, called their diocese, which varies enormously in size. Dioceses in England and Wales are very large by European standards; those in northern France



are more typical. In the course of the late eleventh and early twelfth century, some reorganization of dioceses, and creation of new ones, takes place, removing some of the very largest.

In principle, the bishop is responsible for investigating the behavior of all Christians in the diocese. In practice, the bishop concentrates on the clergy, relying on parish priests to keep an eye on the laity. Bishops investigate their dioceses through *visitations*, when they visit a parish church or monastery, and make sure that everything is in order. Often there are minor problems, and occasionally the bishop finds things in such disarray that he has to take radical action, including suppressing a monastery and sending its monks elsewhere.

Bishops are supported by archdeacons, who are their main deputies. In the largest dioceses, such as Lincoln and York, there are many archdeacons, who achieve almost the authority of the bishop within their area.

Archbishops (Canterbury and York in England) are responsible for coordinating the bishops in a particular area, called a *province*. Each archbishop has a diocese for which he is the bishop, but outside that area he does not usually have the authority to perform visitations.

This picture is complicated by many exemptions and privileges. There are a number of monasteries which are exempt from all ecclesiastical authority other than the Pope's. There are others which are exempt from the authority of the local bishop, but which are under the archbishop. The same applies to some parish churches. A few monasteries, such as Glastonbury in the west of England, are even exempt from the authority of the King, in particular, limited respects and areas. For the most part, these exemptions are respected, but they can lead to lengthy court cases when people disagree about the details.

Bishops are nominally chosen by the members of their diocese. In practice, this means that they are elected by the chapter of their cathedral. About half of the English cathedral chapters are made up of monks, the other half of secular canons (see next section). The King must approve the elected bishop, because he is a powerful noble of the realm, but the King is not supposed to impose bishops on reluctant chapters. This does, of course, happen.

## REGULARS AND SECULARS

The clergy is divided into two groups, the regulars and the seculars. The secular clergy, which includes all parish priests and most bishops, is responsible for dealing with the world, helping laymen and women to live holy lives and ministering to the sick and needy. The regular clergy are supposed to follow rules that restrict their contact with the world, helping primarily through their prayers.

Regular clergy typically take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They swear to own no personal property, abstain

from sex, and obey the head of their monastery. Most regular clergy also promise stability, agreeing to remain in one monastery. They move, or leave the monastery grounds, only if the head of the monastery commands it.

Secular clergy are generally required to be chaste, but they do not take vows of poverty, and they are expected to spend much of their time involved in the world. This leads to a split in attitudes towards the regulars. On the one hand, the regulars take more severe vows, and are thus holier than the seculars. In addition, most people have little contact with regular clergy, so they do not see their faults and foibles. This tends to create a picture of monks and nuns as superior to seculars. On the other hand, many monasteries are extremely rich, and tales of monastic corruption are far from uncommon. In addition, monasteries are often harsh landlords, showing little compassion for their tenants. Thus, it is quite common for people to think that monks in general are good, while thinking that the local monks they have actually met are all corrupt.

## The Tithe

The Church is entitled to one tenth of everything of which God gives the increase. This, essentially, means agricultural products, and as the economy is overwhelmingly agricultural, this means that the Church gets about a tenth of the wealth. The tithe is not a voluntary donation, and many churchmen are harsh in collecting it. In theory it always goes to the rector of the parish, who is supposed to give a third to his bishop, a third to the poor, and keep a third for himself.

In practice, many factors interfere with this. First, some rectors do not live in their parishes, instead putting a curate into the position and paying him out of the tithe. This means that the person in the parish gets much less than one third of the tithe, while an absentee gets most of the benefit. Some absentee rectors hold more than one parish, which makes them quite wealthy. This is called *pluralism*, and is not popular with Church reformers.

Second, many parishes are controlled by monasteries. The monastery is the rector, and gets the tithe. The monks pay a curate to look after the parish, and thus act much like an absentee rector. Many monasteries hold many parishes, but this practice is not as unpopular with the reformers as is pluralism.

Third, the poor rarely get their full third of the tithe. In some cases, this is because the parish is too poor to support a rector, let alone give alms. This often happens with urban parishes, because the tithe covers few urban activities. In other cases, it is because the rector simply refuses to pass it on. In still others, it is because the resources are nominally passed to the poor, but actually go to a wealthy monastery.

This is not to say that the poor usually get nothing. Most parishes do support the destitute, just not to the full extent that they should.



The money that goes to the bishop normally disappears into diocesan administration and supporting the bishop's household; the poor rarely see much of it.

These factors mean that most people resent paying the tithe, and indeed much of the tension between the Church and the people can be traced back to this.

## ECCLESIASTICAL WEALTH

The tithe is not the only source of ecclesiastical wealth. Many monasteries and bishoprics also own manors, and collect the income from those just as mundane nobles do. Wealthy churchmen risk becoming corrupted and falling from their high calling. Many abbots, in particular, fail to live up to the standards expected of monks. While they do not, technically, own anything, they have complete control over the use of very large amounts of money.

Many radical priests preach against the extreme wealth of the higher clergy, and a few believe that all clergy should be truly poor, just as Christ was. This is not, however, a common view at this time. Most reformers simply want greater simplicity, enough wealth to support the clergy and give them time to carry out their spiritual duties, but not enough to pay for fine clothes, feasts, and great retinues of servants.

## CANON LAW

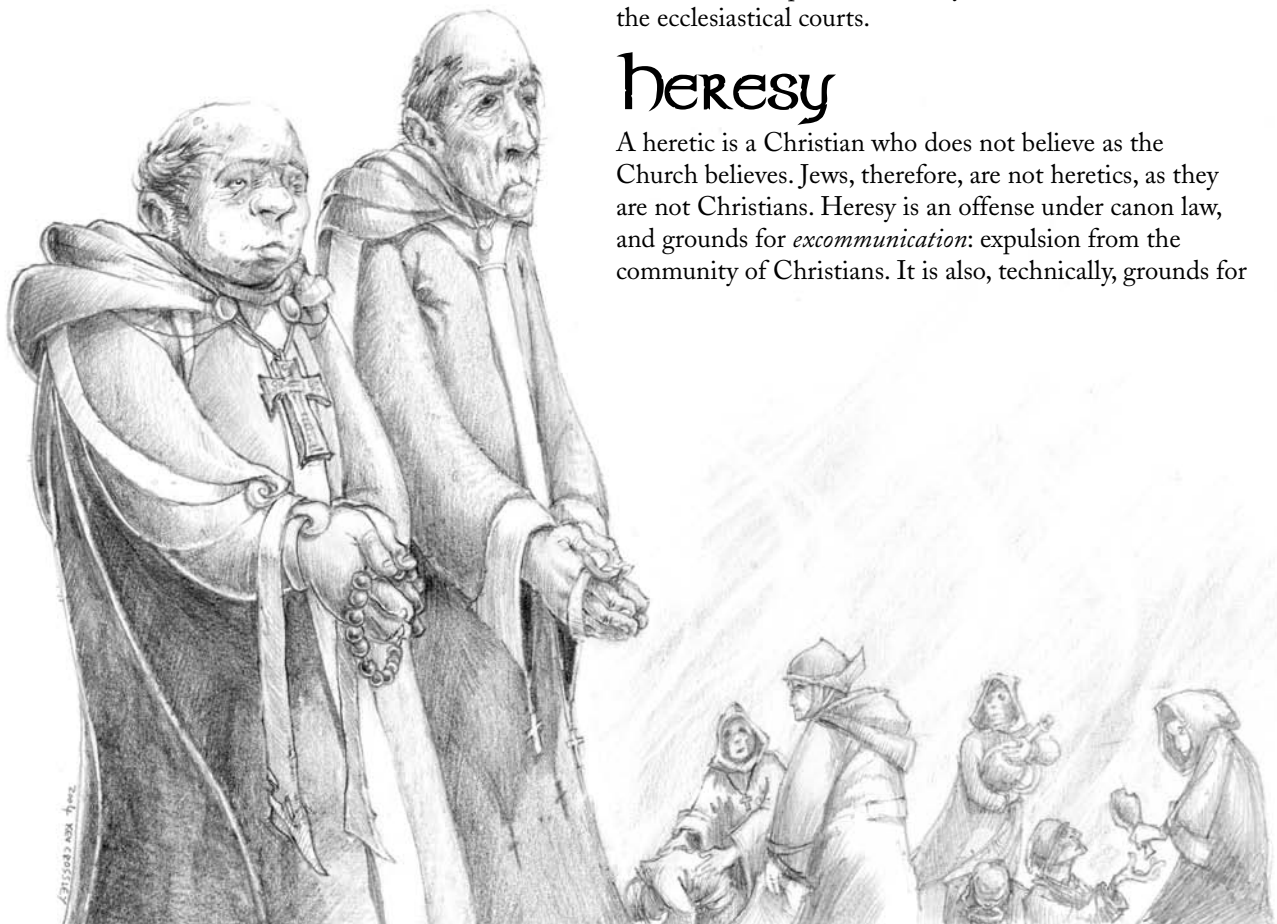
The Church has its own law, *canon law*, and members of the clergy are, in theory, immune from prosecution under the law of the state. Any ordained man is a member of the clergy; nuns fall under the jurisdiction of canon law as well. Many scholars are in minor orders, and a certain degree of learning is supposed to be a precondition for ordination. Thus, it is not uncommon to check for *benefit of clergy* by seeing whether someone can read.

Canon law is set by Papal pronouncements, and interpreted by canon lawyers. In theory canon law cases are judged by bishops, but most bishops appoint deputies to hear cases for them. Canon law procedures are complex and not entirely clear, and a case can be spun out for a very long time. In addition, canon law does not hand out physical punishment, as the Church should not shed blood, and does not allow ordeals or torture. A common punishment is to strip someone of their clerical status, but this is much less serious than being hanged. As a result, people accused of crimes often try to get clerical status, if they can, and kings try to restrict the application of these privileges, to stop people literally getting away with murder.

Non-clergy also fall under canon law, but for more restricted offenses. Most sexual offenses are tried by canon law, including adultery and fornication, and disputed wills come before the bishop's court. Heresy is also within the remit of the ecclesiastical courts.

## HERESY

A heretic is a Christian who does not believe as the Church believes. Jews, therefore, are not heretics, as they are not Christians. Heresy is an offense under canon law, and grounds for *excommunication*: expulsion from the community of Christians. It is also, technically, grounds for



execution, but that penalty is rarely applied. In addition, only *contumacious* heretics are punished. A contumacious heretic is one who refuses to admit his error when confronted with it by the Church. Any heretic who admits that he was wrong and swears that he rejects his former errors is forgiven, and escapes punishment. The Church does not punish mistakes, only refusal to correct mistakes.

As noted in **Chapter 2: The Power of God**, God seems to be less concerned about a number of heresies than the Church is. A few members of the Church have noticed it, but no one is sure what to do, as God also seems to back up those priests who excommunicate people for heresy. The will of God is a mystery to those in the Church just as to those outside it.

## ❖ New Church Classes ❖

This section introduces two new classes, the canonist core class and the prelate prestige class.

### ❖ The Canonist Core Class ❖

As already discussed, the Church is not just a spiritually oriented organization. Great temporal power is wielded by its leaders as well. Canonists are the lawyers and politicians of the Church. The overwhelming majority are male, but a few nuns also take this path. While most male canonists are in holy orders, and some are ordained as priests, they are not primarily concerned with care of souls. Most, instead, concentrate on reinforcing the position of the Church within society, and on enforcing its laws.

### ADVENTURES

Canonists rarely go out to fight monsters and win treasure. Their adventures all take place with the corridors of power, where there are few knives, but much backstabbing. Treasure often does flow to the successful canonist, and sometimes his enemies die, but he almost never dirties his own hands with blood or cash. See the section on running political campaigns on page 93 for further advice.

### CHARACTERISTICS

Canonists are good with people, highly learned, and wise in the ways of the world. Some seek to be leaders, while others seek to be the power behind the throne, but all involve themselves in the doings of men. They are weak in combat, and do all that they can to avoid battle. This does not mean that they are cowards; many canonists will risk a great deal for causes they believe in, but they do not fight with swords or axes.

### ALIGNMENT

Canonists may be of any alignment, but as they are all members of the Church they tend towards good alignments. Evil canonists are very rare, but neutral members of the class are more common than the Church would like. As canonists are closely involved with canon law, they have a tendency to lawful alignment. Nevertheless, there are chaotic canonists who delight in finding ways around the rules without actually breaking them.

### OTHER CLASSES

Canonists are happy to work with other classes, and might even want to support the political aspirations of a knight. However, they do not fit very well into standard adventures, being far more powerful safely ensconced in the monasteries and abbeys that are their homes, far away from the risk of physical conflict.

### GAME RULE INFORMATION

Canonists have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Canonists rely on their learning, insight into the hearts of others, and persuasive powers. Thus, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are all important to them. They rarely get involved in combat, and thus many have low Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution.

**Alignment:** Any.

**Hit Die:** d4

### CLASS SKILLS

The canonist's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Speak Language (Int).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (8 + Int modifier) x 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 8 + Int modifier.

### CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the canonist.

#### ARMOR AND WEAPONS PROFICIENCY

Canonists are proficient with the club, dagger, and quarterstaff. They are not proficient with any type of armor, nor with shields.



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## Skill Focus

The canonist gains the Skill Focus feat for one of his class

skills at levels one, seven, thirteen, and nineteen. The player must choose a different skill each time the canonist gains this ability.

## CONTACTS

By the time he reaches second level, the canonist knows a lot of people, spread over a certain area. These contacts have two effects, which apply as long as the canonist is within the relevant area.

*Information:* The canonist gets a circumstance bonus to all Gather Information checks. This bonus is +1 at 2nd level, and increases by one every three levels thereafter, reaching +7 at 20th level.

*Favors:* The canonist can ask his contacts for a favor. This requires a Diplomacy check against a DC depending on the difficulty of the favor: 5 for something trivial for the person asked, such as a small loan from a bishop, up to 30 for something major, with potentially bad consequences, such as asking a bishop to release a contumacious heretic. If the check succeeds, the favor is done as efficiently as possible.

Getting a favor takes a variable amount of time. A small loan might take less than a minute to conclude,

while getting a heretic released could take several days. A canonist can ask as many favors as he likes (but see below), so the GM should take care not to allow this ability to overshadow the player characters.

The canonist must return every favor he is granted. In general, the returned favor is less effort for the canonist than the one for which he asked, but he must grant it when asked. If he refuses, he loses the ability to ask for favors in this way until he makes the situation good. In general, the canonist cannot use favors from other people to repay favors owed. This is an excellent source of story hooks for the GM.

*Areas:* The area over which a canonist's contacts are spread increases every three levels, as noted on **Table 4-1: The Canonist**.

*Parish:* The area under the authority of a single parish church. As a rule, this covers a village or part of a town, but there are unusually large and small parishes in existence.

*Diocese:* The area under the authority of a single bishop. These vary considerably in size.

*Province:* The area under the authority of a single archbishop. In England, the two provinces are Canterbury and York.

*Western Christendom:* The area that acknowledges the authority of the Pope. (Canonists from eastern lands should take Eastern Christendom instead.)

TABLE 4-1: THE CANONIST

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Skill Focus
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Contacts (parish, +1)
3	+1	+3	+1	+3	Assess Person
4	+2	+4	+1	+4	Skill Mastery
5	+2	+4	+1	+4	Contacts (diocese, +2)
6	+3	+5	+2	+5	King's Favor
7	+3	+5	+2	+5	Skill Focus
8	+4	+6	+2	+6	Contacts (province, +3)
9	+4	+6	+3	+6	Scheme Linking
10	+5	+7	+3	+7	Skill Mastery
11	+5	+7	+3	+7	Contacts (Western Christendom, +4)
12	+6/+1	+8	+4	+8	Required Negotiation
13	+6/+1	+8	+4	+8	Skill Focus
14	+7/+2	+9	+4	+9	Contacts (Christendom, +5)
15	+7/+2	+9	+5	+9	Good Timing
16	+8/+3	+10	+5	+10	Skill Mastery
17	+8/+3	+10	+5	+10	Contacts (Two Religions, +6)
18	+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	Web of Knowledge
19	+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	Skill Focus
20	+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	Contacts (Three Religions, +7)

*Christendom:* All Christians, wherever they may be and whomever they may take as their leader.

*Two Religions:* Christendom, and either Jews or Muslims.

*Three Religions:* Christendom, Jews, and Muslims, which includes all of Europe, North Africa, and the Levant, and significant chunks of Asia.

## ASSESS PERSON

Starting at third level, the canonist can assess a person's most pressing desires and fears, and then use this knowledge to help in dealing with him. To use this ability, the canonist must spend at least half an hour talking with the person and make a Sense Motive check against a DC of 25. If the check succeeds, the canonist gets a +5 circumstance bonus to all uses of Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate against that person, until the target's circumstances change significantly.

For example, a canonist might discover that someone is in desperate need of money. This will give him the circumstance bonus until the target gets enough money to be less worried. If the canonist learns that someone is a heretic, the bonus applies until and unless the target returns to the bosom of the Church.

This is an extraordinary ability, and the target need not talk about his desires and fears during the conversation. The canonist may also use this ability on people he has known well for at least a week, even if he has not had a long conversation with them.

## SKILL MASTERY

The canonist's use of his skills becomes more assured. Each time the canonist gets this ability (at fourth, tenth, and sixteenth levels) it applies to 3 + Intelligence modifier class skills. The skills chosen at each level must all be different, but the same skill may be chosen at different levels.

The first time a skill is chosen, the canonist gains the ability to take 10 when using that skill, even if circumstances would not normally permit it.

The second time a skill is chosen, any rolls of less than five for a check with that skill are treated as five. The character may still take 10 under any conditions.

The third time a skill is chosen, any rolls of less than ten are treated as ten when that skill is being checked. Taking ten is thus redundant.

## KING'S FAVOR

This ability allows the canonist to determine where the favor of a king currently lies, and why, and what factors might influence it to move elsewhere. It also works on other powerful individuals at the center of a court, including bishops and powerful nobles. The canonist must be in the court, and spend at least a week interacting with its members, including at least one audience with the king. At the end of this time he makes a Gather Information check against a DC of 25. If it succeeds, he knows the current attitudes of the king, and also knows what people think those attitudes are. As long as he is in the court he may



make further Gather Information checks, against a DC of 20, to know when the king's favor is shifting. The player may call for such a check, but if a major shift is in the offing the GM should make a roll on the character's behalf, and warn the player if it succeeds.

This ability does not give the canonist any special talents for using the information it provides, but insight into the hearts of kings is very useful in a court society.

This is an extraordinary ability, gained at sixth level.

## Scheme Linking

From ninth level, the canonist can convince people that getting what the canonist wants is vital to getting what they want. The canonist makes a Bluff check against a DC determined by the relationship between the two goals:

### Scheme Linking

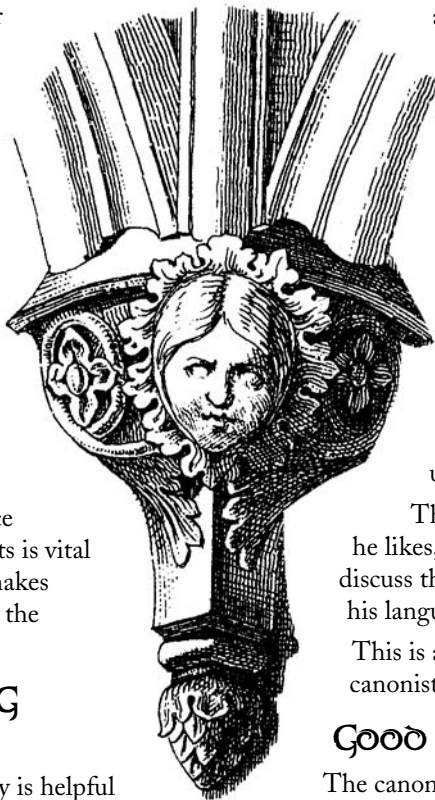
DC	Relationship
5	The canonist's goal really is helpful or necessary for the other person's goal.
10	The canonist's goal is not related to the other person's, but pursuing it does not hinder the other person either.
15	The canonist's goal is consistent with the other person's, but pursuing it would be a slight distraction.
20	The canonist's goal is completely independent of the other person's, so pursuing it is a major distraction.
25	The canonist's goal is in conflict with the other person's goal.
30	The canonist's goal is inconsistent with the other person's goal.

If the check succeeds, the other person has been convinced that pursuing the canonist's goal is the best way to advance his own project.

This is an extraordinary ability.

## Required Negotiation

From twelfth level the canonist can force people to negotiate over any decision, even over the decision to attack in combat. He must be able to speak a language that the others can understand, but to invoke this ability he need only ask them to talk about the issue; no particular form of words is required.



The target may make a Will save against a DC of the canonist's Diplomacy skill modifier (skill rank plus Cha modifier). The canonist does not get to make a Diplomacy check. The negotiation proceeds as normal, so the canonist may have to talk quite fast to talk somebody out of an attack. The ability does, however, guarantee that the other person will at least start listening to reason.

If the canonist uses the ability more than once on the same topic, the target's Will save gets a +2 bonus for every use after the first: +2 on the second use, +4 on the third, and so on.

The canonist may target as many people as he likes, as long as it makes sense for them all to discuss the same issue, and they can all understand his language,

This is a supernatural ability, although most canonists would vehemently deny that.

## Good Timing

The canonist repeatedly manages to be in the best place for advancing his plans. Nobles are thrown from their horses outside his manor, he happens to stop in the tavern where his enemy's lackeys are discussing their plans a little too loudly, and so on. Essentially, coincidence works in his favor at all times. This means that he can develop very elaborate plans, since nothing that could go wrong, will.

Two canonists with this ability can oppose one another. In this case, both sets of plans have lots of luck, so the contest comes down to who can make the best plans.

This is a supernatural ability. Many canonists do not even realize that they have it, simply believing that they have become supreme politicians.

## Web of Knowledge

Starting at eighteenth level the canonist knows anything he needs to know to advance his plans. Things that would be useful simply occur to him, and while he knows he heard them from somewhere reliable, he doesn't usually know where. This includes immediate knowledge, like the presence of poison in his food, and in those cases he will believe that he sensed it somehow.

The canonist must still act on the knowledge and, in some cases, convince others that he knows what he is talking about.

He does not know things that do not immediately impinge on his plans, so Gather Information is not redundant; it can tell him what sorts of new plans it would be useful to have.

This is a supernatural ability.

# ❖ The Prelate Prestige Class ❖

Prelates are the high officials of the Church, including the bishops, abbots, and many priors. Most are members of this prestige class, having reached and retained their position through politics and legal maneuvering. Not all are, however, as some are priests or saints who have simply impressed the Church with their sanctity.

The members of this class are the most tenacious in their grip on office, and have the greatest authority over their flock. Few prelates are higher than fourth level, and a high-level prelate in the post of archbishop can shape a nation. Popes who are members of this class are among the most powerful individuals in Europe.

**Hit Die:** d4

## REQUIREMENTS

**Diplomacy:** 10 ranks

**Knowledge (Christianity):** 10 ranks

**Sense Motive:** 10 ranks

**Feats:** Skill Focus in one of the required skills, Negotiator.

**Special:** Hold high office in the Church (for example, a bishop, abbot, or abbess).

## CLASS SKILLS

The prelate's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int, exclusive skill), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Speak Language (Int).

**Skill Points:** 8 + Int modifier.

## CLASS

### FEATURES

#### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

The prelate gains proficiency with no armor and no weapons.

#### CONTACTS

This ability works in the same way as for the canonist class ability described on page 70, and stacks with that ability. The bonuses simply add, and

the area covered is the area covered by the ability at that bonus. Thus, a character with Contacts (diocese, +2) from each class would have Contacts (Western Christendom, +4).

## COMMAND

Starting at second level, if the prelate gives a direct order to someone under his authority, that person must make a Will save against a DC of 10 + prelate class level + prelate Cha modifier to disobey. The order must be for something that can be completed in under a month, and for something that is within the target's capabilities. In addition, the target must receive the order, and must be able to understand it.

The target may not be happy about obeying the order, but cannot summon the courage to disobey.

This is an extraordinary ability.

## SKILL FOCUS

The prelate gets the Skill Focus feat for one of his class skills at third level.

## RESPECT

Once he achieves fifth level, everyone under the prelate's authority has a great deal of respect for him. Anyone who wishes to act against the prelate must make a Will save against a DC of 10 + prelate character level + prelate Cha modifier. If the save succeeds, the character may take one action against the prelate, but he must save again if he wants to take a second action. If the save fails, the character cannot take that action against the prelate. He may try to act against him in another way, and attempt to make another saving throw.

This is an extraordinary ability.

## SENSE OF THREATS

Starting at sixth level the prelate gains a supernatural awareness of potential threats to his position. If such a threat arises, the GM must make a Sense Motive check against a DC of 20 on



TABLE 4-2: THE PRELATE

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Contacts (parish, +1)
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Command
3	+1	+3	+1	+3	Skill Focus
4	+2	+4	+1	+4	Contacts (diocese, +2)
5	+2	+4	+1	+4	Respect
6	+3	+5	+2	+5	Sense of Threats
7	+3	+5	+2	+5	Contacts (province, +3)
8	+4	+6	+2	+6	Health of the Realm
9	+4	+6	+3	+6	Authority
10	+5	+7	+3	+7	Contacts (Western Christendom, +4)

the character's behalf. If the check succeeds, the character knows the broad outlines of the threat, including the identities of conspirators, if there are any. This makes it very hard to unseat such a prelate.

This is a supernatural ability. As such, magic that protects against magical detections can foil the ability. Treat the ability as a seventh level spell cast with a spell caster level of the prelate's character level.

### Health of the Realm

Starting at eighth level the prelate always knows of the greatest threat to the well being of the people in his charge. This threat may be physical or spiritual, but the prelate only knows of the greatest single threat. This ability provides enough information for the prelate to take some action, but not so much as to make further investigation irrelevant, in most cases. Thus, it might tell the prelate that the greatest threat was the violence planned by a certain lord, but the prelate would have to undertake further investigation to find out exactly what the lord had planned, and how to stop him.

It is possible for this ability to tell the prelate that he is the greatest threat to his people. If he is evil, this is normal.

This is a supernatural ability.

### Authority

At ninth level the prelate can now give general orders, and have them obeyed as for the Command ability, above. Instead of having to give direct orders to individuals, he can set standing orders, and they will also be obeyed. However, this is less perfect; characters get additional Will saves every time someone tries to stop them from obeying the order, and if they succeed they can give in to temptation.

Once a character has disobeyed the order, he is not bound by the ability until the prelate reiterates the command. A prelate who issued an order against adultery would reduce the amount of adultery in his diocese quite significantly. The order must be publicized, as only those who have heard the order are bound by it.

This is an extraordinary ability.

## Philosophy

Medieval philosophy and scholarship is just beginning to flower again in the west, after a long arid period following the fall of the Roman Empire. There have always been isolated individuals who maintained the light of learning, such as the Venerable Bede in the eighth century, but around the beginning of the twelfth century organized schools begin to grow in importance once more.

This makes it an exciting period in which to be a scholar. There is no scholarly orthodoxy to speak of, and people are trying out new approaches to every subject. Some, such as Adelard of Bath, travel to Muslim lands, where scholarship is at a far higher level. Others, such as Peter Abaelard, apply new tools of logic to old problems in theology and ethics. Still others, such as Hugh of St. Victor, devote themselves

to formalizing and encouraging what was best in the old learning, and trying to spread it beyond isolated redoubts.

There is equally little agreement when it comes to content. Everyone agrees that the Christian faith is true, and that it is important to hold orthodox beliefs. However, there is very little formalized agreement on what, exactly, is orthodox, so almost any position can be held, as long as the scholar can argue that it is consistent with the Bible. Explanations of the natural world vary wildly, as does the assessment of the relative importance of various areas of study.

Most scholars agree that the seven liberal arts are an essential foundation for true scholarship. The liberal arts are divided into the *trivium*, grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and the *quadrivium*, astronomy, arithmetic, geometry, and music.

Grammar is essentially the study of Latin, the language in which all academic discourse is conducted, and so everyone studies it. Logic is the study of forms of argument which guarantee the truth of their conclusions, while rhetoric is the study of forms that persuade those who hear. Each has its champions, although logic is winning out, as a commitment to truth seems nobler than a commitment to persuasion.

The quadrivial arts are all mathematical, and thus tend to be taken together. It is not possible to properly study astronomy without some knowledge of arithmetic and geometry, and music draws equally strongly on arithmetic. Quadrivial music and astronomy are concerned with theory rather than practice; a musician, in this sense, need never touch an instrument, and an astronomer need never look at the stars. Some scholars, including Adelard, believe that the quadrivium is more important than the trivium, but they are losing out, as logic and rhetoric seem to be more broadly applicable to other topics.

After the liberal arts comes the study of philosophy, which covers almost all other realms of study. Philosophy is the study of the world by means of the natural abilities given to all humans -- the senses and, most of all, reason. Philosophy does not cover theology, because theology draws on divine revelation, and so goes beyond the natural abilities of humans. It also excludes law, because that requires the study of the specific decisions of human rulers. The general study of possible forms of law, politics, does fall under philosophy, however. Finally, medicine has a tendency to move away from philosophy because of its practical orientation.

Philosophy is generally divided into three areas. Metaphysics is concerned with the fundamental nature of the world; what it is to exist, whether natural reason can prove that there is a God, and so on. Natural philosophy is concerned with the behavior of physical things, including the bodies of human beings. It also has something to say about the human mind, because the mind relies on a physical organ, the brain, for much of its work. Finally, moral philosophy deals with the activities of the human soul, and thus covers ethics and politics, insofar as they can be addressed without reference to divine revelation.

There is some tension between philosophers and theologians, as they cover many of the same topics. Very few philosophers would go so far as to claim that theology was wrong about a topic, but they might claim that, going purely by reason, one would reach a different conclusion. Many, on the other hand, think that natural reason and philosophy will always agree, but that divine revelation goes beyond what humanity could learn for itself; indeed, they may claim that that is why we have divine revelation at all. Still others claim that natural reason can show everything that divine revelation has revealed, and they disturb theologians almost as much as the first group, as that sounds a lot like hubris.

In the early twelfth century the three philosophies are about equal in popularity, although there is some pressure for

philosophers to move away from natural philosophy and into more useful subjects like metaphysics (which can cast light on theology) and moral philosophy (which can cast light on law).

Many scholars see the philosophies as worth studying in their own right. More conservative scholars, like Hugh of St. Victor, see them as valuable only as preparation for studying the Bible. Because the Bible is a complex document, even the conservatives admit that a wide knowledge is useful for those who will study it in detail, mainly the higher clergy and monks, but they warn against becoming so puffed up with your own knowledge that you forget to be humble before God.

## Philosophy Rules

Medieval scholarship is covered by five Knowledge skills. They are Knowledge (liberal arts), Knowledge (natural philosophy), Knowledge (metaphysics), Knowledge (moral philosophy), and Knowledge (theology). The study of law and medicine do not, in the early twelfth century, form academic disciplines of their own. These skills do provide knowledge, like any other Knowledge skill, but their main use is in disputation and authorship, the main business of academic life.

## TRAINED MEMORY

Medieval scholars do not have access to cheap, durable writing materials, and thus train their memories so that they can recall any detail they might need. The standard technique is known as the memory palace. The scholar builds a palace in his mind, and then places the things he needs to remember in various rooms. When he needs to recall them, he walks around the palace, in his imagination, and as he enters each room he recalls the information associated with that place. The palace can be any sort of structure, and scholars might use Noah's Ark, the Tabernacle, or Solomon's Temple for particularly religious information. A common choice, however, is the scholar's home, because he then does not need to separately learn the building. For scholar-monks, this is entirely adequate, because monasteries are large and have plenty of locations in which they can place facts.

In game terms, this training is represented by a feat, Trained Memory.

### TRAINED MEMORY (GENERAL)

You have been trained in the techniques of the memory palace,

**Prerequisite:** Int 13+

**Benefits:** If you take the time to memorize something, you can recite it perfectly at any later date. The time taken depends on the thing to be memorized, but as a rule of thumb it takes three times as long to memorize a piece of text as it takes to simply look over it.



## DISPUTATION

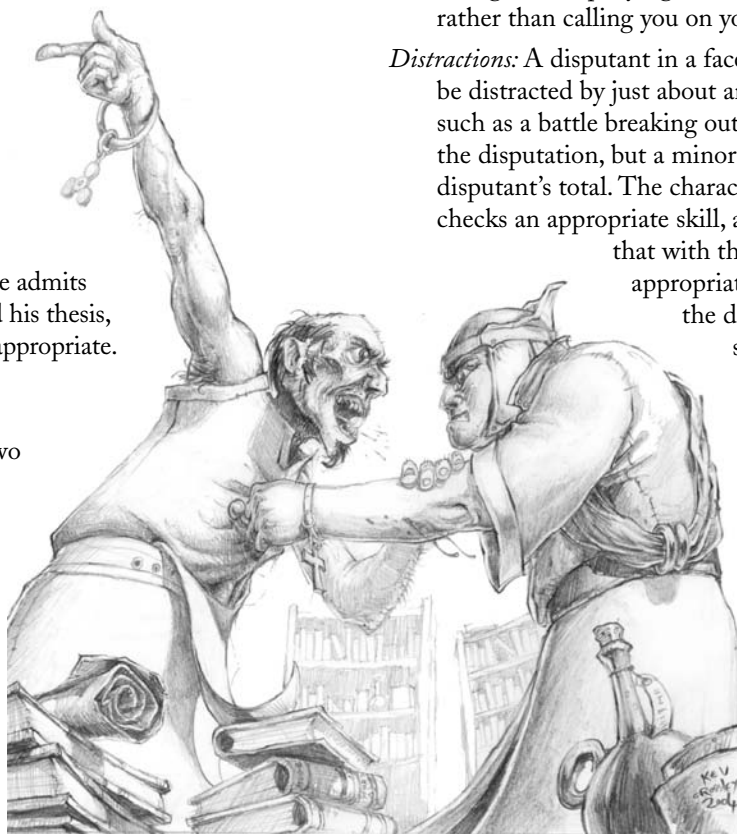
*Disputation* is a philosophical contest between two scholars. It is normally carried out face to face, but it can be carried out by correspondence. The necessary statistics are Knowledge Points (KP), Objection Bonus (OB), and Reply Bonus (RB). These all have a base value equal to the disputant's skill modifier in the Knowledge concerned (that is, his skill ranks plus Int modifier, but without a die roll).

A disputation begins when one of the disputants proposes a thesis. This determines the Knowledge that will be used for the disputation, and both disputants must use this Knowledge until the contest is concluded, unless either or both has a feat which allows them to do otherwise. The other disputant makes the first objection.

A character makes an objection by rolling a d20 and adding his Objection Bonus, generating an Objection Total. It is not possible to take ten or twenty on the rolls resolving a disputation, even if the disputation is being carried on by correspondence. The other character replies to the objection by rolling a d20 and adding his Reply Bonus, generating a Reply Total. If the Objection Total exceeds the Reply Total, the objector rolls 1d4 to determine the number of Knowledge Points that the responder loses. The responder may then make an objection of his own, and the process repeats. The reply and return objection would normally be contained in a single letter if the disputation were being carried on by correspondence.

The disputation ends when one of the disputants is reduced to zero or fewer Knowledge Points. That disputant has lost, and the other has carried his point. A character may, if he wishes, concede before losing all his Knowledge Points; this has exactly the same effects as losing all his KPs, because he admits either that he cannot defend his thesis, or that the thesis is true, as appropriate.

The wider significance of a disputation depends on the context, but one between two theologians in front of a General Council could determine whether or not Western and Eastern Christendom reunite. Winning a disputation does count as overcoming an opponent and thus merits an experience point award.



## COMPLICATIONS

The basic disputation is enough if they are an infrequent feature of the campaign, but in a scholarly campaign disputations may be main form of conflict, and thus more detail is needed. The following rules are all optional, but books and theories, detailed below, do integrate with them.

*Ad Hominem:* A disputant may choose to attack his opponent rather than the thesis or objections. This is known as an *ad hominem* attack, and is resolved differently. Instead of generation an Objection Total, the disputant makes a Bluff check. His opponent may make a Knowledge check, but it automatically fails, as the attack is not related to the merits of the argument. A character must make a Diplomacy check to block an *ad hominem* attack. If the check succeeds, the character has exposed his opponent's underhand tactics. He takes no damage from the attack, and his opponent suffers a -2 penalty to all Objection and Reply Totals for the rest of the disputation, as he has been unsettled. If the character tries and fails to block the *ad hominem* attack he suffers a -1 penalty to future Objection and Reply Totals, as he is mentally off-balance.

The first *ad hominem* attack of a disputation is made without penalty. Subsequent attacks suffer a cumulative -1 penalty, so that the second is at -1, the third at -2, and so on.

It is possible to win a disputation by means of *ad hominem* attacks, but only if your opponent is silly enough to keep trying to respond with real arguments rather than calling you on your practices.

*Distractions:* A disputant in a face-to-face disputation may be distracted by just about anything. Major distractions, such as a battle breaking out, will obviously suspend the disputation, but a minor distraction can reduce the disputant's total. The character creating the distraction checks an appropriate skill, and the disputant opposes that with the Knowledge check appropriate to the disputation. If the distraction check is higher, subtract the number of points by which it exceeds the disputant's Knowledge check from the disputants next Objection and Reply Totals.

Disputants may not try to distract one another without giving up the ability to reply and make their own objections, so this is a bad strategy for a scholar.

*Multiple Disputants:* There may be more than one disputant on a side. In this case, one side propounds a thesis, and the other side attacks it. A single character may only raise one objection at a time, but he may reply to as many objections as he wishes, rolling separately for each reply. Many characters may reply to the same objection; any character who attempts to reply and fails takes damage, as above. Characters who simply stay out of the disputation do not take damage. A character reduced to zero or fewer Knowledge Points must drop out of the disputation, and the disputation ends when everyone on one side has dropped out.

*Telling Objections:* If a disputant rolls a natural twenty on his objection roll, he may have made a particularly telling objection. Roll again, and if both rolls beat the opponent's Reply Total, the damage inflicted against his Knowledge Points is doubled. The second roll does not also have to be a natural twenty; it merely needs to beat the Reply Total.

## AN EXAMPLE DISPUTE

Adeliza of Wallingford is a scholar who has been drawn into a dispute with the local priest, Father Richard, over whether women have the use of reason. Richard proposes the thesis that women do not have reason but, like beasts, are driven purely by their appetites. This sets the Knowledge as natural philosophy. Adeliza has eight ranks in the Knowledge, and a +3 Intelligence modifier, for a total of 11. She has no book feats, so this is her Objection Bonus, Reply Bonus, and Knowledge Point total. Richard has six ranks in Knowledge (natural philosophy) and a +2 Intelligence modifier, but he has read the *Timaeus* (see page 78), and thus gets a +10 bonus to his Knowledge Points. He has Objection and Reply bonuses of +8, and 18 Knowledge Points.

Adeliza objects that men and women were both made in the image of God, and thus both have the use of reason. Her player rolls a one, for an objection total of twelve. Richard replies that woman was created from man, but the GM rolls a three, for a reply total of eleven. Adeliza wins the first round, and does two points of intellectual damage, reducing Richard's Knowledge Points to 16.

Richard then objects that Aristotle clearly shows that women's complexion is inappropriate for rational thought. Adeliza replies that all human beings have an appropriate complexion; the female complexion merely affects the kinds of thoughts, not their nature. The GM rolls a seven, so Richard has a total of 15, while Adeliza's player generates a total of 29, easily fending off the objection. She wins the next round as well, reducing Richard's Knowledge Points to 13.

Seeing that he is losing the argument, Richard resorts to an *ad hominem* attack. His Bluff total is seven, and he announces that, as Adeliza is a woman, her arguments are clearly specious, and she should yield to her betters. The GM generates a total of 26, and the attack appears effective.

Adeliza has a Diplomacy skill modifier of +10, and her player rolls a 15. Close, but not good enough. Her attempts to rebut the accusation fail, and she suffers -1 to her Objection and Reply totals for the rest of the disputation.

Despite that, she still manages to win, as she has a significant advantage in her Knowledge skills, and Richard slinks off, embarrassed.

## Books

Books are very rare and precious in medieval Europe. In game terms, access to and thorough study of a book is represented by a feat. Wealthy characters may own more books, but unless a character has taken the relevant feat he does not understand the book's contents. On the other hand, possession of a book feat does indicate that the character possesses a copy of the book, in a language that he can read. He need not pay any money for this copy; he has copied it for himself, or been given it by an admirer, or something similar.

Each book feat represents a particular book. The following example feats all represent real books, but many books have been lost so you should feel free to make up your own examples. Each book listed below also has a date, which is a rough date of composition. Obviously, a character cannot have access to a book before it was written. Knowledge of a particular book gives certain advantages in disputation, and these advantages can, in some cases, be extremely large. Note that, unlike most kinds of bonus, book bonuses stack with each other, as well as with different kinds of bonus.

*Example:* After the debate with Richard, Adeliza decides to study natural philosophy a bit more. The next time she gains a feat, she takes the book feat *Questiones Naturales*, giving her a +4 bonus to her Knowledge score.

Many books have a Knowledge skill modifier as a prerequisite. This means the sum of the character's ranks in that Knowledge skill and his Int modifier must meet or exceed the prerequisite to take the feat.

### THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY (BOOK)

This text on moral philosophy was written by Boethius while he was in prison awaiting execution on trumped-up charges. It argues that the philosopher should be content with virtue, and not be concerned with the vicissitudes of life on earth. It finishes with an uplifting statement of hope in God and of the supreme importance of virtue, which tradition holds was written immediately before Boethius's execution.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (moral philosophy) skill modifier +10, Speak Latin, After 525.

**Benefits:** You gain a +2 book bonus to Knowledge (moral philosophy) for the purposes of Objections and Replies, and a +15 book bonus to Knowledge Points

based on Knowledge (moral philosophy). You may use Knowledge (moral philosophy) to respond to a thesis based on Knowledge (metaphysics).

### ETYMOLOGIAE (BOOK)

This text, by Isidore of Seville, is an encyclopedia, cast in the form of a discussion of the origins of words. It covers no subjects in depth, but it has something to say about almost everything.

**Prerequisites:** Speak Latin, after 650.

**Benefits:** You gain a +10 book bonus to Knowledge Points based on any Knowledge.

### ISAGOGE (BOOK)

This introductory text on logic was written in late antiquity by Porphyry, a follower of the neo-Platonist Plotinus. It was translated into Latin and was a common introduction to logic.

**Prerequisites:** Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 300.

**Benefits:** You gain a +2 book bonus to Knowledge (liberal arts) for the purposes of Objections and Replies, but not to Knowledge Points.

### LOGICA VETUS (BOOK)

This is a collection of several of Aristotle's works on logic, translated into Latin in late antiquity. Most of the translations were by Boethius, and are very good. These books give a more profound insight into logic than anything else generally available at the end of the eleventh century.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (liberal arts) skill modifier +10, Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 300 BC.

**Benefits:** You gain a +4 book bonus to Knowledge (liberal arts) for the purposes of Objections and Replies. You gain a +10 book bonus to Knowledge (liberal arts) for the purposes of Knowledge Points.

### OPUSCULA SACRA (BOOK)

These are Boethius's theological works, concerning the nature of Christ and the Trinity. They were originally written in Latin, and are more easily available than most such texts.

**Prerequisites:** Speak Latin, after 520.

**Benefits:** You gain a +4 book bonus to Knowledge (theology) for all purposes of disputation.

### POSTERIOR ANALYTICS (BOOK)

This is Aristotle's deepest discussion of the problems of logic, in their philosophical as well as their purely technical aspects. Boethius translated it into Latin, but that translation was lost and the book did not become generally available in the west until the late twelfth century. A character who managed to obtain a copy would have a substantial advantage.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (liberal arts) skill modifier +15, Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 300 BC.

**Benefits:** You do 2d6 damage with a successful objection.

**Normal:** A successful objection does 1d4 damage.

**Special:** A character in the West must gain access to the text through an adventure to take this feat before 1175.

### QANUN (BOOK)

This text by Avicenna is an extremely wide-ranging discussion of medicine. It is the ultimate medical authority in the Arabic world, but it is very little known in the West.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (natural philosophy) skill modifier +15, Speak Arabic, after 950.

**Benefits:** You gain the skill Knowledge (medicine) at a rank equal to your rank in Knowledge (natural philosophy), and skill points spent on either skill raise both. You may start disputations in Knowledge (medicine), which most western philosophers will be completely unable to answer. You may also teach academic medicine. You also gain a +2 book bonus to Healing.

**Special:** A Western character must come across a copy of the book in an adventure before he can take the feat.

### QUESTIONES NATURALES (BOOK)

This collection of questions and answers on topics of natural philosophy is by Adelard of Bath, and is notable for drawing heavily on Arabic knowledge.

**Prerequisites:** Speak Latin, after 1130.

**Benefits:** You gain a +4 book bonus to Knowledge (natural philosophy) for the purposes of Objections and Replies.

### THEOLOGIA SUMMI BONI (BOOK)

Peter Abaelard wrote this book of theology, and it was condemned as heretical at the Council of Soissons in 1121. Abaelard cast a copy into the flames with his own hands, but this was not the only copy of the book in existence.

**Prerequisites:** Speak Latin, after 1120.

**Benefits:** You may use Knowledge (liberal arts) to respond to theses posed in Knowledge (theology). You also gain a +4 book bonus to Knowledge (liberal arts) for the purposes of Objections and Replies, and a +5 book bonus to Knowledge Points based on Knowledge (theology).

### TIMAEUS (BOOK)

One of Plato's dialogs and the only one translated into Latin by the middle of the twelfth century, this text deals with the nature of the world.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (natural philosophy) skill modifier +8, Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 350 BC.

**Benefits:** You gain a +10 book bonus to Knowledge Points based on Knowledge (natural philosophy).

## THEORIES

Scholars may develop their own theories of the various areas of study, and these theories also grant bonuses in disputation. In addition, a new theory can bring fame and, occasionally, fortune, or, alternatively, condemnation for heresy and the mortifying experience of burning your own books.

The creation of a new theory takes time, background knowledge (represented by a certain rank in Knowledge skills), and experience points. Only the creator of a theory can use it to gain bonuses, although he can teach it to others, and possibly write a book which would itself give bonuses (see page 80).

Any character who meets the prerequisites may develop a theory; no special feats are needed. The time and experience cost are determined by the bonuses that the theory will give, not by its content. It is good if you can sketch the content of the theory, but that requires a little more familiarity with medieval philosophy than this book can give. It is important to remember, when describing your character's theory, that it need not sound at all reasonable. It might not, after all, be at all reasonable.

It takes a lot of time to develop a theory, as noted under each bonus, but for most of this time the scholar may be doing something else. He is considering the problems of the theory as he goes about his daily business, and every so often he must take some time to write his latest ideas down, or at least put them into some sort of order. Thus, the character must spend one tenth of the time taken in peace and quiet, where he can study, but this tenth may be spread out over the time period as desired, except that the development of the theory must be finished by at least one day of uninterrupted study.

A single theory only grants bonuses to a single Knowledge, but a character may elaborate a theory over time, adding further bonuses to it. The cost and time for doing this equals the difference between the cost of the new bonus and the cost of the old bonus. Bonuses granted

by theories are theory bonuses, and do not stack with one another. They do stack with book bonuses, and all other kinds of bonus.

## OBJECTION AND Reply BONUS

The theory gives the same bonus to both objections and replies. These two are always that closely linked, as they are essentially the same activity.

*Prerequisite:* Knowledge ranks equal to three plus three times the bonus; *Time:* Three months per +1 of bonus; *Experience cost:* 50 XP per +1 of bonus.

## KNOWLEDGE POINTS BONUS

The theory gives a bonus number of Knowledge points.

*Prerequisite:* Knowledge ranks equal to the bonus; *Time:* One month per +1 of bonus; *Experience cost:* 10 XP per +1 of bonus.

## DAMAGE BONUS

The theory gives a bonus to the damage done by a successful objection.

*Prerequisite:* Knowledge ranks equal to four plus four times the bonus; *Time:* Six months per +1 of bonus; *Experience cost:* 150 XP per +1 of bonus.

## DAMAGE DICE

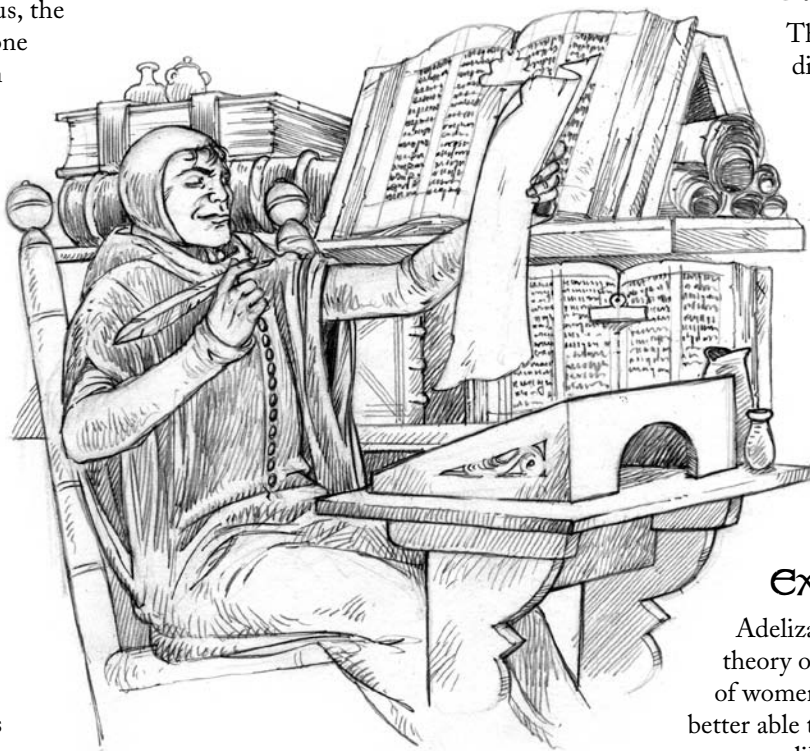
The theory improves the dice rolled for damage after a successful objection.

*Prerequisite:*

Knowledge ranks:  
d6: 8, d8: 12, d10:  
18, d12: 24; *Time:*  
d6: six months, d8:  
twelve months, d10:  
two years, d12: four  
years; *Experience cost:*  
d6: 150 XP, d8: 400  
XP, d10: 750 XP,  
d12: 1,000 XP.

## THEORY Example

Adeliza decides to develop a theory of the intellectual capacity of women, so that she will be better able to rebut misogynists like Richard. This is Knowledge (natural philosophy), and



c.cleveland



Adeliza's player decides that the theory states that women were refined from men, including less that was directly earthy, and that the increase of fiery and airy substances in them makes them more intellectual.

Adeliza has eight ranks in Knowledge (natural philosophy), so she decides that the theory will grant a +1 bonus to objections and replies. She spends three months thinking about it, and pays 50 XP to develop the theory. She now has a +1 bonus to Objections and Replies on any disputation concerning natural philosophy. Soon afterwards she goes up a level and gains the *Questiones Naturales* book feat, which grants a +4 bonus. This bonus stacks with the bonus from Adeliza's own theory, for a total bonus of +5.

At the same time, her rank in Knowledge (natural philosophy) has increased to nine, so she can now devise a theory that grants a +2 bonus. This takes her another three months, and another 50 XP, and after that her theory grants a +2 bonus. She still only has one theory, however.

## WRITING A BOOK

Authorship is a grave responsibility, as it puts the scholar's theory forward in a form that anyone with a smattering of learning can study and, most likely, misunderstand. Most scholars want to take the risk, however, as authorship is the best way to gain lasting fame as a philosopher.

A character who wishes to write a book must have created a theory, as described above, and possess the Author feat, described below.

### AUTHOR (GENERAL)

You have the knack for clarity necessary to explain your own theories in writing.

**Benefit:** You may write books about your theories.

A character who meets the prerequisites may write a book. Each book takes one year of full-time work, but this work may be interrupted without penalty, as long as the scholar does not lose his notes. Writing a book does not cost money or experience points.

Writing a book creates a new Book feat, representing knowledge of the character's opus. The author may choose the book's language from among those he speaks, and, obviously, no one can have the feat until the book has been written. If the author's rank in the applicable Knowledge is ten or less, there is no prerequisite Knowledge rank; if his rank is eleven or higher, the prerequisite Knowledge skill modifier is half the author's rank.

The new feat gives, by default, bonuses equal to those given by the theory that is being recorded. However, a scholar may choose to hold back some aspects of his theory, so that the Book feat gives a lower bonus. This is entirely up to the author.

Once the book has been written, anyone who has read it may take the new Book feat, with the exception of the author. The author retains the theory bonuses from his theory, but cannot learn the feat corresponding to the book. In general, authors cannot learn Book feats representing books they themselves have written.

An author may write multiple books on the same theory, and if he improves the theory over time, he may want to do so. Other characters may not learn multiple feats based on the same theory. However, if someone has learned the Book feat based on an early version, he may, if he gains access to a later, improved version, and meets the prerequisites, swap the old feat for the new, improved one. Superseded feats should be noted in the "Special" section of the feat description.

*Example:* Adeliza decides to write her theory of female cognition down in a book. Her Knowledge rank is nine, so there is no prerequisite Knowledge rank for the feat. The book grants a +2 bonus to Knowledge (natural philosophy) for the purposes of objections and replies, and Adeliza entitles it *Intellectio Mulierum*, 'The Thought of Women'.

It takes Adeliza a year to write the book, and she herself cannot take the feat. She sends copies to a number of female scholars of her acquaintance, and it becomes quite popular with them.

A few years later, Adeliza has developed her theory substantially, and her Knowledge rank has reached 20. She decides that she should write another book. This takes a year, again, and creates another feat. She decides to call this book *Stulti Sunt Vires*, "Men Are Stupid".

## EXAMPLE BOOKS

### INTELLECTIO MULIERUM (BOOK)

A book written by Adeliza of Wallingford to argue for the intelligence of women.

**Prerequisites:** Read Latin, after 1140.

**Benefit:** You gain +2 to Knowledge (natural philosophy) for the purposes of objections and replies.

### STULTI SUNT VIRES (BOOK)

A book written by Adeliza of Wallingford, arguing at length, with extensive examples, that women are much more intelligent than men and would do a far superior job of running the world.

**Prerequisites:** Knowledge (natural philosophy) skill modifier +10, Read Latin, after 1150.

**Benefits:** You gain +5 to Knowledge (natural philosophy) for the purposes of objections and replies, +20 Knowledge Points in that skill, and do 1d8 damage with a successful objection.

**Special:** This feat supercedes *Intellectio Mulierum*.

# NEW LEARNED CLASSES

All these rules for philosophy and learning are not without practical application for player characters. This section introduces one new class, the scholar core class.

## THE SCHOLAR CORE CLASS

Scholars study the nature of the world, the mysteries of theology, and the nuances of the law. They are most at home among books, or disputing with one another over obscure points of philosophical interpretation, but their knowledge sometimes has a wider application, and they find themselves involved in great affairs of state.

While all characters can, in theory, study, none match the scholar for depth and breadth of knowledge. The scholar is always learning, and forgets little of what he knows.

### ADVENTURES

Most scholars avoid physical adventures, preferring to ask others to gather their information, and communicating with distant colleagues by letter. If they do find themselves in a dangerous situation, most, quite sensibly, find something to hide behind.

Intellectual adventures are another matter entirely. Many scholars are willing to defy the whole Church if they believe that they know the truth, and the Church is wrong. Sometimes the Church even comes to agree with them, but even when it does not they can effect change far greater than most warriors.

A debate before a council or Pope is one of the few lures that can reliably drag a scholar out of his study, and those who do disagree with the Church normally find themselves accused of heresy and dragged into conflict that way.

### CHARACTERISTICS

Scholars are bookish and often lacking in people skills, physical skills, and artistic skills. These lacks are not universal, but the scholar needs none of these abilities, so those without them prosper almost as much as those with. People skills are useful for scholars who seek good positions, but many are content with support and access to books and writing materials.

Most scholars are rather indifferent to money, once they have enough to avoid starvation while studying. However, almost all are extremely jealous of their reputations, and are careful to claim credit for their own work. In the Middle Ages they do not claim originality, but rather claim to have correctly interpreted the ancient authorities where others have failed, or to have successfully applied ancient insights in a new field. Disputes over priority and plagiarism spark the bitterest academic conflicts.

TABLE 4-3: THE SCHOLAR

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bonus Book Feat, Trained Memory
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Alchemy or Astrology Feat, Lore
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Skill Focus (Knowledge)
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus Book Feat
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Alchemy or Astrology Feat
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Skill Focus (Knowledge)
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus Book Feat
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	Alchemy or Astrology Feat
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Skill Focus (Knowledge)
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Bonus Book Feat
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	Clear Explanation
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	Deep Knowledge
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	Bonus Book Feat
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9	Memory Palace
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	Deep Knowledge
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	Bonus Book Feat
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	Instant Understanding
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Deep Knowledge
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Bonus Book Feat
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Full Understanding

## ALIGNMENT

Scholars can be of any alignment. There is a slight tendency towards law, as study requires discipline, but challenging established opinions is a chaotic trait, and one that many scholars have in abundance.

## OTHER CLASSES

Most scholars look down upon other classes as poorly educated ignoramuses. As they rarely leave the safety of their schools, they have little need for their support. Player character scholars, however, are likely to be the exceptions, getting involved in politics and thus needing the support of people with a different range of skills.

## LOCATIONS

Almost all scholars are attached to a monastery or cathedral, or at least to a wealthy church. A select few are found at the courts of the nobility, and one or two are nobles themselves, but these are the exceptions. Scholars require the ability to live without working at anything other than scholarship, so they are very rare. Most scholars are men, and female scholars are looked at somewhat askance, but there are no rigid social barriers to female scholarship at this time.

## GAME RULE INFORMATION

Scholars have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Intelligence is by far the most important ability for scholars; the others pale into insignificance.

**Alignment:** Any.

**Hit Die:** d4

## CLASS SKILLS

The scholar's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Speak Language (Int).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (8 + Int modifier) x 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 8 + Int modifier.

## CLASS FEATURES

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCIES

The scholar is proficient with the club and the dagger, but gains no proficiency with armor or shields.

### BONUS BOOK FEATS

At first, fourth, seventh, tenth, thirteenth, sixteenth, and nineteenth level the scholar gets a bonus Book feat. The scholar must meet the prerequisites for the feat, including any special conditions.

### TRAINED MEMORY

The scholar gets the Trained Memory feat (page 75) free at first level, even if he does not meet the prerequisite.

### ALCHEMY OR ASTROLOGY FEAT

At second, fifth, and eighth levels the scholar gains one of the following feats free: Purify Earths, Purify Waters, Purify Metals, Natal Astrology, Political Astrology, Election Astrology. The scholar must meet the prerequisites as normal.

### LORE

Scholars pick up a lot of bits of information in the course of their studies. They may make any Knowledge check with a bonus equal to one half of their class level, rounded down, plus their Int modifier, instead of using their normal ranks in the skill. They may not take ten or twenty on these checks, as this knowledge is in bits, completely unformalized. They may only use Lore to substitute for individual skill checks; it does not fulfill prerequisites, nor can it be used as the basis for disputations, or any other extended uses of Knowledge skills.

### SKILL FOCUS

At third, sixth, and ninth level the scholar gains a free Skill Focus feat. This feat must be used with a Knowledge skill, but may be taken with any specific Knowledge skill the scholar knows. The scholar may not take Skill Focus twice for the same skill.

### CLEAR EXPLANATION

From eleventh level a scholar can explain what he knows with such clarity and enthusiasm that even the ignorant can follow it and make use of the ability.

In game terms, the scholar may explain any of his skills (not just his Knowledge skills) to someone with whom he shares a language, and that person may use the skill as if he had it at the same level as the scholar. This only lasts for as long as the scholar is there and explaining, but a scholar may explain to one person as a free action. Explaining to two characters is a full-round action, and usually redundant, as it means that the scholar cannot act. Exclusive skills may be shared in this manner, and skills which cannot be used untrained can be used by characters with no ranks in the skill, as long as the scholar is explaining things.

This is an extraordinary ability.

### DEEP KNOWLEDGE

At twelfth, fifteenth, and eighteenth levels the scholar gains deep knowledge of a single Knowledge skill. This skill must be one in which the scholar has the Skill Focus feat. Deep Knowledge gives a bonus of +6 to the skill, which overlaps (does not stack) with the bonus from Skill Focus.

### MEMORY PALACE

From fourteenth level the scholar's memory is so well trained that he forgets nothing, even if he only encountered

it once, and briefly. The GM must remind the player if he appears to have forgotten something important, because the character has not. In addition, the character may take twenty on any Knowledge check concerned with recalling pieces of information. Note that disputation checks, checks to make astrological predictions, and checks to perform alchemical procedures are not concerned with recalling facts, and other checks may not be. This is an extraordinary ability.

### INSTANT UNDERSTANDING

From seventeenth level the scholar can understand situations and writings instantly. Skill checks to analyze a situation may be made as a free action, and the scholar need not spend any time studying the situation first; merely observing it is enough. This also applies if he is told about the situation, although inaccuracies in the description will often cause inaccuracies in his understanding.

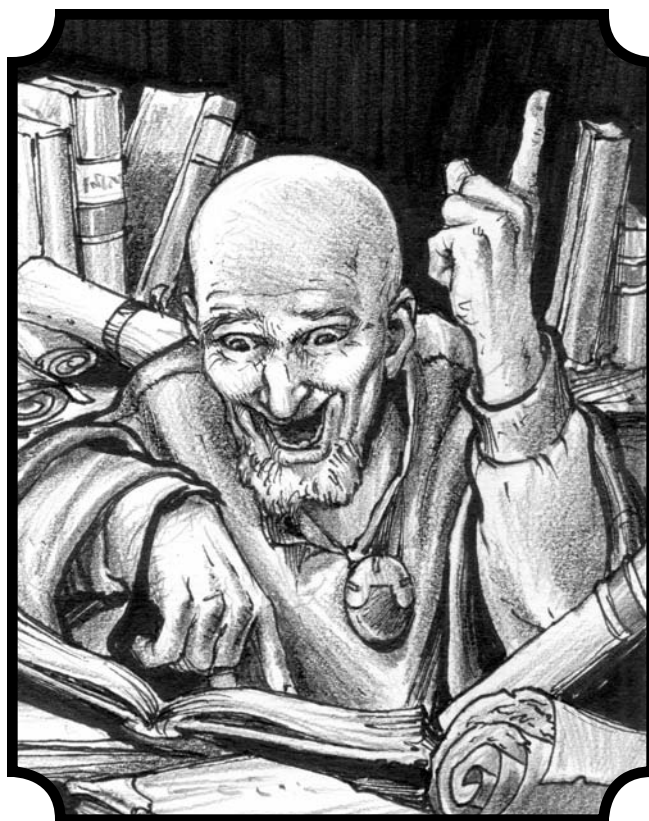
On a good roll, one which beats the DC to understand a situation at all by five or more, the scholar gains insight into aspects of the situation or theory which would normally be hidden. His understanding goes beyond what the evidence seems to support. This includes spotting inaccuracies in a report, even if he has no other knowledge of the situation, or being able to fill in gaps in the report from his own knowledge.

Instant understanding is an extraordinary ability.

### FULL UNDERSTANDING

At twentieth level the scholar gains an extraordinary insight into the world around him. When presented with a situation or theory he instantly, without the need for a die roll, fully understands everything that is going on, including secrets. This does not necessarily let him do anything about it, but knowledge often is power.

This understanding cannot be easily communicated to others, as it is an inner understanding for which the scholar does not necessarily have words in his language. It also only applies to things that the scholar has directly experienced. Thus, if he sees a stone fall, he knows exactly



how it is seeking its natural place, and how the air is moving around it, where it will hit, and when, but if he reads an account of something that happened in a distant country, he knows only what that account would entail, not whether it is correct. Of course, if the account entails something impossible, then the scholar can know that it is false.

Full understanding is, to a certain extent, a special Charism, a gift of God. Thus, it is an extraordinary ability. If the scholar is in a state of grace, his understanding can see through any magic which seeks to hide the truth, but this ability is lost if he sins. His ability to see through mundane deceptions, on the other hand, remains independent of the state of his soul.

## ◆ The ARTS ◆

The arts are as important in medieval Europe as in any other civilized society, and around the beginning of the twelfth century they begin to flourish once again in the west. This section concentrates on those arts that produce durable works, such as painting or poetry, rather than performance arts, such as musicianship, which produce ephemeral works. The performance arts are important in this society, as in any other, but little detail has been preserved about them, and the standard rules are adequate.

### The VISUAL ARTS

The visual arts include not only painting, sculpture, and architecture, but also tapestries, metalwork, and fine

clothing. Their products are primarily for display; they give pleasure by being looked at. In some cases (architecture and fine clothing, for example), the products also have a practical use, but the emphasis on display is what distinguishes art objects from purely utilitarian ones.

The lay nobility patronize the visual arts in order to display their wealth and power, and, sometimes, to show that they are cultured or to display a particular cultural allegiance. An English noble in the late eleventh century who commissions Anglo-Saxon style art is making a very definite, and very dangerous, political statement.

The Church patronizes the visual arts to bring glory to God. Fine churches, with altars encrusted with gold and gems,



display the glory of God on earth, and inspire people with a better understanding of His majesty. A church in the midst of poverty is still likely to have a valuable silver chalice for the Eucharist, and selling it, even to help the poor, is likely to get a priest in serious trouble.

The artistic style prevalent at the end of the eleventh century is known as the Romanesque, while towards the middle of the twelfth century the Gothic style begins to develop. These names are post-medieval, but people at the time knew that a new and different style of art was becoming popular.

## PAINTING

Painting comes in two forms: mural painting, and miniature painting. Mural paintings are painted onto walls to decorate rooms, and are common in the houses of the nobility and churches. Murals are the cheapest way to decorate a wall, being much cheaper than tapestries, and thus they are popular with the lesser nobility. It is not uncommon for a wall to be painted to look as though it has a tapestry on it, although medieval painting does not, on the whole, create convincing illusions. The nobility normally choose scenes from history and myth, or generic scenes of hunting, feasting, or battle, as these fit with the activities carried out in the rooms. Churches, naturally, are decorated with religious scenes. Scenes from the life of the saint to which the church is dedicated are popular, but by far the most popular single scene is the Doom, or painting of the Day of Judgment. It is conventional to show princes and bishops among the damned as well as among the saved, but putting recognizable people into a Doom can be very dangerous.

Stained glass windows are essentially a form of mural painting, because the glass is usually painted, rather than being colored itself. Glass is very expensive, and stained glass even more so, so only the richest buildings have this form of decoration. It is generally restricted to cathedrals, wealthy monasteries, and royal residences, although a wealthy patron might pay for a single stained glass panel in his parish church.

Miniature painting decorates books, and is also known as illumination. Most of these paintings

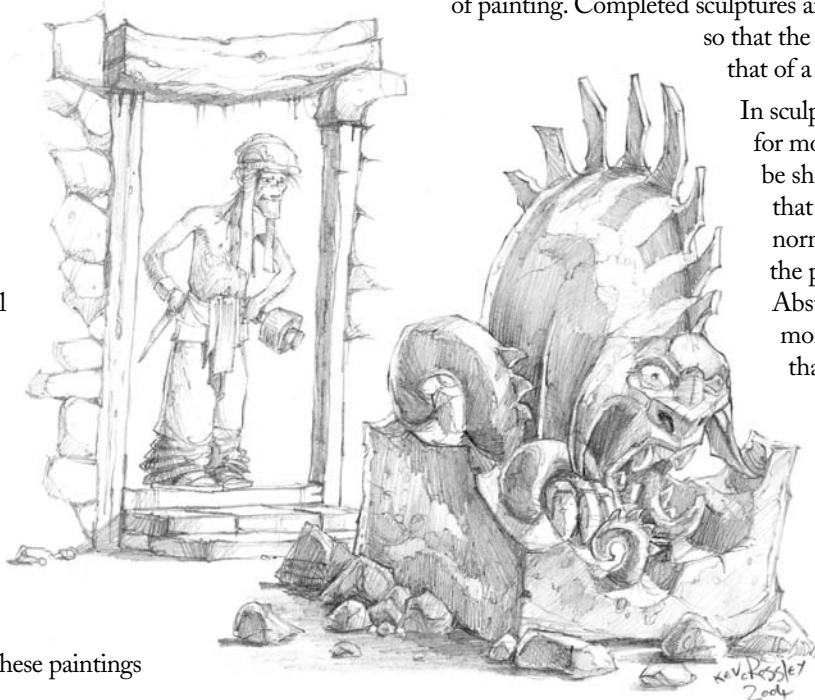
are small, but a full-page painting in a large book could be a foot on a side. Most miniatures illustrate the book in some way. Most obviously, the pictures can show scenes from the text. Other popular illustrations show the author of the book, particularly common for texts by saints, and for the Gospels, or the person for whom the book was made. Other types of miniatures include *historiated initials* and *marginalia*. Historiated initials are decorated letters at the beginning of a text, or major section. The decoration often illustrates the text, but equally often it is purely decorative, involving grotesque monsters, twisted foliage, and abstract patterns. Marginalia are small pictures drawn in the margins of a work, and they may have no relationship to the work's contents at all, having been drawn purely for the artist's amusement. Most of the time, however, they are portraits of characters or sketches of locations mentioned in the text.

Neither Romanesque nor Gothic art employs perspective, and the depth of a figure is often indicated by the height of their feet over the baseline of the painting. In addition, the size of figures or other elements is normally determined by the figure's importance, rather than its actual size or location within the picture. Saints are normally depicted quite large, and almost invariably with a halo, a disc of light around the head. Christ is depicted with a halo containing a cross, although it is not uncommon for the lower arm of the cross to be hidden behind His body.

## SCULPTURE

Most sculpture serves to decorate buildings, rather than being an independent work of art, and thus reliefs, rather than statues in the round, are more common. However, it is not uncommon for the decorative scheme for a building to include statues in the round, generally in a niche decorated in relief. Both stone and wood are carved, and the visual style is very similar to that of painting. Completed sculptures are almost invariably painted, so that the final effect is very similar to that of a large painting.

In sculpture there is some tendency for more important figures to be shown in fuller relief, so that statues in the round are normally of saints or kings, or of the patron of a particular work. Abstract decoration is even more common in sculpture than in painting, and faces of monsters peering out from wreaths of foliage are a common sight in churches, as well as in secular buildings. The capitals of pillars are usually decorated, as are the stones making an arch.



## ARCHITECTURE

Romanesque architecture is solid, with the weight of a barrel-vaulted roof supported by the walls. It makes extensive use of semi-circular arches, and internal pillars are normally round. The interior of a Romanesque building is usually quite dark, as only small windows can pierce the walls.

Gothic architecture makes much more use of load-bearing pillars, and thus opens up the possibility of larger windows. The vaulting of the roof is also more elaborate, as a barrel vault relies on continuous support on each side. Gothic structures tend to be, relatively speaking, high and light. They seem to reach for heaven, and let God's light in.

In either case, churches tend to be built in a cross shape. The short arms of the cross are called transepts, and normally hold a number of chapels. The top is the choir, reserved for the priest, while the long arm is the nave, where the congregation gathers. Churches are almost invariably oriented east-west, with the choir in the east. The graveyard is often on the north side, in the shadow of the church. Monasteries are built to the south of their churches, and normally include a cloister, a courtyard surrounded by a covered walkway, the roof of the walkway supported on arches. Indeed, these are so common that 'the cloister' is a standard way of referring to the monastic environment.

The normal design of noble dwellings is described on page 111.

## TEXTILES

Bright dyes that do not fade or run are very expensive and difficult to obtain, and thus bright colors are popular in opulent textiles. Dyeing patterns is even harder, and thus patterned garments indicate wealth. Rare materials, such as silk from the east or fine fur, are also used. Finally, the richest clothes are embroidered, in a very similar style to miniature paintings. The designs are often abstract, but not always.

Tapestries, of which the best example is the Bayeux Tapestry, are a very expensive form of decoration, and thus are very popular with those who can afford them. Most are not true tapestries, rather having their scenes embroidered onto a plain backcloth. Tapestries are sometimes called 'carpets', but they are not normal floor coverings. They may be used for certain sacred functions, such as to cover the altar in church or as a prayer mat, but, on the whole, they are more expensive than anything they could cover.

## METALWORK AND JEWELS

Metalwork tends to be heavy, emphasizing the amount of precious material used. Jewels are not cut, but simply polished and large stones are common. These are normally semi-precious by modern standards, but a one carat diamond would be completely lost in most medieval settings. The

actual design is similar to painting, and enamel panels carrying images are common.

This applies to jewelry as well as to goblets and plates; rings tend to have very large jewels, for example. Subtle jewelry is simply not the medieval style.

## THE LITERARY ARTS

Literature is increasing in importance in this period as literacy becomes more widely spread. However, the vast majority of people, including virtually all peasants, are illiterate, and only know of literary works through performance of poems and paintings of scenes from histories. Some of the nobility can read, and since most do not speak Latin this has produced the beginnings of a vernacular literature. (The vernacular language is the one spoken natively in an area.) There are a number of different genres of literature, each with its own conventions. This section only considers artistic works; scholarly works are covered in the section on philosophy.

## HAGIOGRAPHY

The most important literary genre is *hagiography*, lives of the saints. Hagiographies are not primarily accurate biographies of the saint in question. Rather, they serve to illustrate the saint's virtues, particular concerns, and the power of God. They can also bolster the reputation of a church or abbey, by showing that it is associated with a particularly splendid saint.

Hagiographies never intentionally lie; their authors believe that the saint in question did everything recorded therein, and often the authors are correct. However, the saint's miracles are recounted in standard forms, and thus some of the details may be inaccurate. Similarly, ancient martyrs face standardized accusations and tortures, apart from the torture that distinguishes a particular martyr. This leads to remarkable similarities between hagiographies, as if nothing but the names had been changed. Nevertheless, the foundation of truth is very important, and if the story of a saint were found to be entirely concocted, his cult would quickly wither.

Hagiographies are most often written in Latin, and read by the clergy as sources for sermons, but vernacular hagiography is not uncommon. The lives of pious and obedient female saints are considered to be particularly suitable reading for noble women, the main lay group with time for reading, and so translations and new compositions are becoming more common. Hagiographies are most commonly written in prose, although verse hagiography is far from unknown.

## ROMANCE

Romances are avowedly fictional tales, set in some historical period or distant land, telling of the deeds of idealized



knights and ladies. The Arthurian romances first become popular around 1130, but tales of Charlemagne and Alexander the Great are also important.

Romances are distinguished from other genres in two ways. First, only the most naive believe that these events actually happened. Second, their primary purpose is to entertain, rather than to teach or inform. As a consequence of this, romances are normally written in the vernacular, and most commonly in verse.

Almost all romances concern the deeds of a knight, and love is a common theme. The knight might overcome obstacles keeping him from his lady, or fall from grace and lose his love. Some romances, however, are concerned entirely with brave deeds and quests, and love plays a minor role at best.

## HISTORY

Histories are on the boundary between scholarship and art. They purport, and often try, to be accurate accounts of the course of events, but they serve broader purposes. Often, they illustrate the consequences of certain forms of behavior, or emphasize the legitimate origin of a particular ruling dynasty, or sing the praises of an illustrious ancestor of the king.

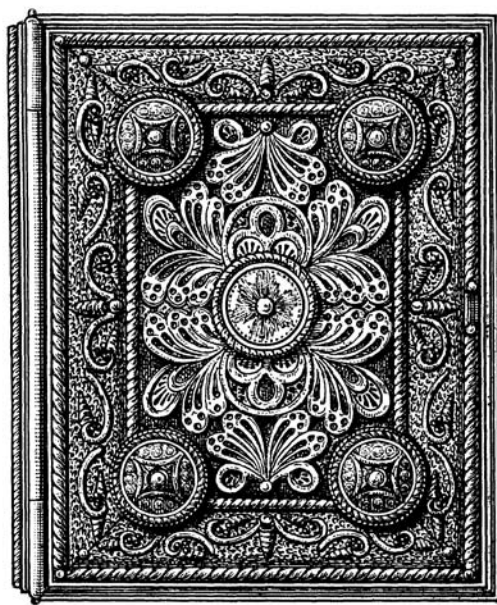
Thus, historians are happy to make up speeches and put them into the mouths of historical characters. There may be no evidence that that person actually said those words, but as long as they are the sort of thing that such a person should have said under those conditions, the requirements of history are satisfied. Similarly, filling in the details of great deeds, particularly in an account of a hero, is entirely legitimate. The fact is that the hero did it; giving more detail than is known merely makes the history readable and more convincing.

Histories are normally written in Latin, in line with their pretensions to scholarship. It is not uncommon for writers to pen histories of their own time, and keep them up to date throughout their lives. These tend to be more accurate than accounts of the past, as witnesses are still alive and capable of making corrections.

## FABLES

Fables, finally, are tales of the supernatural. These tend to be short ghost stories, rather than involved epics, and rely for their impact on the shock of their content. Sometimes they are worked into romances, histories, or even hagiographies, and sometimes they are written down by an author who finds them interesting. These are popular tales with no

redeeming features, according to the arbiters of taste, and thus those who do write them down often feel the need to apologize for recording such trivia. Despite this, Latin and vernacular versions are about equally common, as the clergy find these tales as fascinating as everyone else.



## ARTISTIC RULES

Each art is covered by a particular Craft skill, for example Craft (painting), Craft (hagiography) or Craft (Fable). The standard craft rules can be used for producing simple hackwork without any significant artistic inspiration. This is what most professional artists, including those in monastic scriptoria, spend most of their time doing, because it is reliable and relatively easy.

Genuine art is rather harder to produce, and the process is not so reliable. First, the character must have the Artistic Inspiration feat. Without this, he lacks the spark of creativity that is essential for true art, although he can still churn out hackwork. If the character does have the feat, even his hackwork will have signs of artistic merit.

## ARTISTIC INSPIRATION (GENERAL)

You are a true artist, and the fire of creativity burns in your soul.

**Benefit:** You can produce true works of art, using the following rules.

## CREATION

It is helpful for an artist to have some ranks in the relevant Craft skill, but it is not essential; the necessary checks can be made untrained. There are two stages to producing a work of art: Inspiration and Perspiration.

## INSPIRATION

Inspiration is the idea that animates the art and gives it the potential to move beyond hackwork. It is possible to get inspiration about the most constrained jobs; a painter asked to paint a full page miniature of St. Luke writing his gospel with his symbol in the background has as much room for inspiration as a painter able to paint whatever he likes.

An Inspiration check is a standard Craft check against a DC of 25. Normally, a character may make one Inspiration check per day (total, not one per Craft skill), and his activities make no difference. The initial inspiration

cannot be forced, but also cannot be hindered. If the check succeeds, the character has an idea for his current project. If he has a particular commission, the inspiration is for that commission, but otherwise it is an idea for a whole project. The result of the check is important for the Perspiration stage, so keep track what was rolled. You may keep making checks for a particular project until you get a result you are happy with.

Some artists get more ideas than others, and this is represented by the Frequent Inspiration feat.

### FREQUENT INSPIRATION (GENERAL)

Inspiration strikes you more often than most people.

**Benefit:** You may make Inspiration checks twice as often as most people.

**Special:** You may take this feat more than once. Its effects stack, and the number of Inspiration checks you can make doubles every time. For example, someone who took this feat once could make two Inspiration checks per day while someone who took it three times could make eight.

*Example:* Adeliza of Wallingford has the Artistic Inspiration feat, and twenty ranks in Craft (miniatures). Her Intelligence score is now 19. She decides to devise and execute an elaborate scheme of illumination for *Stulti Sunt Homines*. She gets an idea every day, as she has a +24 bonus to her Craft check, but she waits ten days, until she gets a total of 42. She wants the illuminations to be breathtaking.

### PERSPIRATION

Perspiration is the process of realizing the idea; actually creating the artwork. This requires a series of Craft checks, against a DC equal to the result of the Inspiration check, minus ten. The character may not take 10 or 20 on these checks, regardless of conditions. Playing things safe in that manner can only produce hackwork. In most cases, the

artist may make one check per day, as long as he has the necessary materials. An architect would be working out ideas rather than actually constructing a building, but other artists produce the artwork as they go.

The artist keeps a running total, called the Perspiration Total. If the Craft check succeeds, the amount by which it succeeds is added to the Perspiration Total. If it fails, the amount by which it fails is subtracted from that total. The artwork is completed when the Perspiration Total is equal to the result of the Inspiration check, squared. For example, if the Inspiration result was 32, the DC for the Craft checks would be 22, and the artwork would be completed when the Perspiration Total reached 1024.

*Example:* Adeliza must now create the illuminations. The DC is 32, ten less than the result of the Craft check for inspiration. The work is completed when the perspiration total reaches 1764. On the first day, her check result is 42, so she gains ten points. 1754 to go! After three days she has accumulated 23 points, but then her player rolls a five, and her result is only 29. She loses three points from the Perspiration Total, which drops back to 20. In all, the work takes her nearly three years.

### FINISHED QUALITY

The quality of the finished artwork depends on the quality of the initial inspiration, as successfully reaching the target Perspiration Total means that the idea has been properly realized.

*Example:* When Adeliza has finished her book it is a masterpiece, and its satirical illustrations of men doing stupid things influence preachers for centuries to come. The first girls' school in England is founded in 1362, and women enter the universities before the Reformation. Unfortunately, Adeliza is long dead by that point, but she does get to watch the influence of her work from heaven.

TABLE 4-4: QUALITY OF ART

Inspiration Result	Quality
25-29	Interesting but minor. Connoisseurs are aware of it, but would expect to have at least one artwork of this quality in their collection.
30-34	Important work. Many artists in the field are aware of it. New artistic movements can be started by half a dozen works of this quality, if they have closely connected themes.
35-39	Major work. All artists and many ordinary people know of the work. It could start a new artistic movement, or crown an old one, discouraging people from attempting art on the same theme again.
40+	Breathtaking work. Something like the Lindisfarne Gospels or Geoffrey of Monmouth's <i>Historia Regum Britanniae</i> , which will have an enduring impact on art for centuries to come.



# ◆ New Aesthetic Classes ◆

Now that the rules for creating art have been presented, here is a brand new core class that puts them to use: the artist core class.

## ◆ The ARTIST CORE CLASS ◆

Artists dedicate their lives to the production of works of art, but their motivations vary greatly. Some do it to win fame and fortune, vying for the attention of wealthy patrons. Others create purely for the greater glory of God, concentrating on adorning cathedrals and monasteries. Still others create because they have a vision that demands to be made concrete, and these artists can find themselves in trouble if their vision conflicts with what is thought acceptable by the Church and nobility. The authorities are less than tolerant of “subversive” art.

### ADVENTURES

Like scholars, artists tend to avoid physical adventures, concentrating on perfecting their art and creating their masterpieces—as well as just making enough through their skills to live on. The search for patronage, and the response of people to their art, can easily get them involved in political adventures. Many people in power seek to use artists to consolidate their positions, and not all the artists used in this way are happy with the arrangement. On the other hand, some artists want to push their own agenda, and this draws them into politics on their own account.



### CHARACTERISTICS

Artists are disciplined craftsmen, producing work as they are told by their patrons, and occasionally rising above the banal and everyday to produce something great. They are rarely well known, as only written art carries the author's name with any frequency, and are generally much less forward than scholars. They mostly prefer a quiet life, out of the limelight, which gives them ample opportunity to create.

### OTHER CLASSES

Artists tend to get along well with other classes, as almost everyone appreciates art. They are usually also happy to work with them; scholars can explain complex ideas, which give new inspiration, canonists can arrange for secure working conditions, priests can bless their endeavors, fighters defend them, and magicians make good subjects for art.

### LOCATIONS

Artists are commonly found at the courts of nobles and royalty, and also around the major figures in the Church. Most monasteries have a scriptorium devoted to the production of books, and both visual and verbal artists are commonly found there.

### GAME RULE INFORMATION

Artists have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Intelligence is by far the most important ability for artists, as Craft checks are based on it. Wisdom and Charisma are also useful, but the physical abilities can be neglected.

**Alignment:** Any.

**Hit Die:** d4

### CLASS SKILLS

The artist's class skills (and key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Speak Language (Int).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:** (8 + Int modifier) x 4.

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:** 8 + Int modifier.

TABLE 4-5: THE ARTIST

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Talented
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Inspiration
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Skill Focus (Craft)
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Enduring Art
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Moving Art
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Skill Focus (Craft)
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Imitation
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	Materials
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Skill Focus (Craft)
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Moving Art
11	+5	+3	+3	+7	Enlightening Art
12	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	Master Hand
13	+6/+1	+4	+4	+8	Mind Crafting
14	+7/+2	+4	+4	+9	Moving Art
15	+7/+2	+5	+5	+9	Master Hand
16	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	Exemplary Art (People)
17	+8/+3	+5	+5	+10	Exemplary Art (World)
18	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Master Hand
19	+9/+4	+6	+6	+11	Moving Art
20	+10/+5	+6	+6	+12	Real Art

## CLASS FEATURES

### WEAPON AND ARMOR PROFICIENCY

The artist is proficient with the club and the dagger, but not with any other weapons, armor, or shields.

### TALENTED

The artist gets the Artistic Inspiration feat (page 86) for free at first level.

### INSPIRATION

Starting at second level the artist may make a number of additional Inspiration checks equal to half his class level, rounded down, every day. If he has the Frequent Inspiration feat (page 87), these additional checks are also doubled. High-level artists generally have more ideas than they can possibly use.

### SKILL FOCUS (CRAFT)

At third, sixth, and ninth level the artist gains a free Skill Focus feat, which must be taken in a Craft skill. It is not possible to take the feat twice for the same skill.

### ENDURING ART

From fourth level on, the artist's works are resistant to accidental damage and normal wear and tear. This does not protect against deliberate attempts to destroy the work, but accidental spills just miss it, the works somehow survives fires, and grime never builds up on its surface. For written

works of art, this protection applies to copies of the work, and also means that scribes who are copying the work do not make any major errors. This is a supernatural ability.

### MOVING ART

From fifth level the artist can create art which inspires a particular emotion or attitude in those who see, read, or here it. At fifth level the artist chooses a single emotion, such as ambition, piety, loyalty, or lust, and can create artworks that inspire that emotion. Anyone experiencing the art must make a Will save against a DC of 5 + artist's class level + artist's Cha modifier or be overwhelmed by the corresponding emotion. The result of the Inspiration check for the artwork must at least equal the save DC. If it does not, the save DC is reduced to the result of the Inspiration check. Even those who make the save feel the emotion, but they can easily control it should they wish to do so. The artist has no control over what people do in response to these emotions.

At tenth level the artist chooses another two emotions to inspire. The save DC for those works is equal to the artist's class level + the artist's Cha modifier. At fourteenth level, the artist chooses another three emotions, with a DC of artist's class level + artist's Cha modifier -5, and at nineteenth level he chooses another four, with a DC of artist's class level + artist's Cha modifier -10.

This is a supernatural ability, and the effect of the art is also supernatural, and is thus suppressed by *dispel magic* or anti-magic effects. Serious damage to the artwork also removes

this effect, but anyone attempting to deliberately vandalize such an artwork must succeed at a Will save against the normal DC for the artwork.

## IMITATION

From seventh level the artist can copy another artist's style flawlessly. The artist must have a substantial sample of the other's work available for imitation, generally at least one large artwork or two smaller ones, and must spend at least a day studying the other artist before attempting the imitation. The result of the Craft check determines the quality of the artist's production, but the imitation is always perfect; a poor check produces something that looks like a poor work by the other artist.

This extraordinary ability also allows the artist to forge seals and handwriting perfectly. However, medieval culture does not place much reliance on such evidence, preferring the testimony of witnesses, so this is of limited use.

## MATERIALS

From eighth level, the artist can substitute cheap materials for expensive ones without reducing the quality of the final artwork. He knows how to burnish and treat copper so that it looks like gold, use pebbles or glass in place of gems, and use local products to make copies of expensive foreign dyes. The cheap materials do not become expensive, and an appropriate DC 10 skill check reveals the imposture. However, the substitution does not affect the artistic quality.

## ENLIGHTENING ART

At eleventh level the artist gains the extraordinary ability to create works of art that make some theory, historical situation, or theological fact clear. The artist himself must understand the matter in question, which means that artworks explaining the Trinity cannot be created, and must specifically search for inspiration to make that thing clear. Once the artwork has been successfully created, anyone experiencing it fully understands what is going on. Thus, a poem about the Norman conquest of England could, while entertaining, convey a perfect understanding of the political tensions and personal rivalries behind the invasion, the various factors influencing the battles, and so on.

It is up to the GM to decide what the artist understands, but as a rule of thumb he should understand anything he has personally experienced and other situations if he has 10 or more ranks in the appropriate Knowledge. Particularly complex events or theories may require a higher skill rank, and no human being can understand theological mysteries in this life. This ability can be used with completely abstract theories; *De rerum natura*, by the Roman poet Lucretius, is an example of a poem that explains an abstract theory in natural philosophy.

## MASTER HAND

At twelfth, fifteenth, and eighteenth level the artist gains the master hand ability with one Craft skill, a different skill

at each level. This must be a Craft skill for which the artist already has the Skill Focus feat. The master hand ability grants a +6 bonus to the skill, which overlaps (does not stack) with the bonus from Skill Focus.

## MIND CRAFTING

From thirteenth level, the artist no longer needs any materials in order to create his works of art. As he works, the necessary materials are created and incorporated into the item. This ability only applies to genuine art, which is being crafted to realize the result of a successful Inspiration check, and the materials are those demanded by the inspiration. While this ability does allow the artist to create gold from nothing, he cannot *simply* do that. This is a supernatural ability.

## EXEMPLARY ART

At sixteenth level the artist can create works of art that people want to imitate, and at seventeenth level he can also create works that the world tries to make real. This supernatural ability works in two ways, affecting people in a different way from the world.

A work of exemplary art that is aimed at people must either praise or condemn some condition or behavior. This can be anything that people could do, so the art could condemn kings, or a bridge over a river, or wearing red clothes, and similarly could praise the same sorts of things. Anyone who experiences the art must make a Will save against a DC of artist's character level + artist's Cha modifier, or fall into enthusiastic agreement with the attitude expressed in the artwork. Characters under the influence of the artwork may make another Will save every day that they are away from the art, with a cumulative +1 bonus for every day on which they fail. People who escape the artwork's influence realize the source of the influence, but do not necessarily realize that it was supernatural.

A work of exemplary art aimed at the world simply depicts the world in a state that is within its normal range. This might be an exceptionally fertile harvest, or a very cold winter, or a flood, or packs of wolves attacking villages. Circumstances then conspire to make this vision come about. Only the region depicted in the art is affected, so it must be recognizable, and cannot be too large, or the depiction ceases to be specific. There is no saving throw, but other magic can interfere and stop the art exerting its influence for a time. A work of art causing cold winters continues to do so every year until it is destroyed, and similarly for other goals. A scene of rain would not make it rain constantly, as that is clearly unnatural, but would make it rain far more often than in nearby regions.

## REAL ART

This supernatural ability, gained at twentieth level, makes the artworks that the artist crafts real, in that the things that they represent really exist. This only works for genuinely inspired art and the extent of the reality depends on the quality of the inspiration and execution.

For interesting but minor works, the things depicted have more reality than the medium would normally allow, but close inspection 'reveals' that they are nothing more than the picture or words that they appear to be. Thus, a statue of a person appears to breathe, and he has a scent and makes small sounds as he appears to shift in place, but close inspection of the statue shows that it is stone. Similarly, a character reading a description of a battle can hear the shouts of the combatants and the clash of arms, smell the blood, and feel the weather, although looking up from his reading shows that he is still where he was, and that there is no battle around him.

An important work has more life, and close inspection reveals that there is more than just a painting present. The statue could speak and move, although it could not get down from its place, and the characters in a story might respond directly to the reader's thoughts, changing the words written on the page. These artworks only live for one person at a time, and if another person looks, or if the first person goes away and returns, they return to their original state. The characters in an artwork do not normally have any knowledge that goes beyond the content of the artwork and the knowledge of the observer, however. The main exception is that God and his saints sometimes choose to speak through religious artwork.

A major work is a gateway to a small world, where the events depicted can be experienced. An observer can choose to enter the artwork, in which case a depiction of the observer appears in the artwork, and remains there until he leaves. Within the

artwork, everything it depicts is entirely real, but the world does not go beyond the story. There is nothing behind the background of a painting, and the world of a single statue is populated solely by the statue. A visitor can leave simply by willing to do so, which makes these artworks a good place to hide, but the inhabitants cannot learn; they are bound by their role in the story or picture. Again, God and his saints sometimes choose to speak through such works, in which case their advice and miracles are entirely real.

A breathtaking work creates an entire world, of which the artwork only shows a small part. People may enter these artworks, and live their entire lives in the worlds so created. This may lead to them appearing in the story, and even to a story changing. Visual arts are less prone to this, as the image tends to show the point at which the observer enters the world, and thus while he will appear in the image, that will be the only change. Leaving these worlds is more difficult, as the intruder must find a way to return to his point of entry. This is always possible, generally by doing so in a symbolic fashion, as long as the original artwork still exists. If it does not, the only way to leave the small world is to die and pass on to Judgment.

This is, obviously, a supernatural ability. Twentieth level artists are *extremely* rare, and no more than a handful of such artworks exist, so theologians are not aware of them. If a player character theologian or philosopher does encounter one, it raises substantial questions, as at the higher levels a human being appears to be creating a world.

## CAMPAIGN GUIDANCE

The information in this chapter is not of great use in a conventional d20 campaign. None of the character classes given are any use in combat, and most work best when allowed to stay in one place and get on with study, administration, or art. Thus, the best way to use them is to set up a campaign where they can do exactly that. This section gives some general advice on running such campaigns, and then considers two particularly appropriate types, the abbey campaign and the court campaign.

The first step is to make sure that all your players are interested in such a campaign, as it will be very different from most d20 campaigns. Combat will be extremely rare, and the characters will see hardly any monsters. Fighters



will be almost completely useless, and should not be played, and priests would be much more use than clerics. Magicians are still appropriate, as they can use their magic perfectly well in the changed context.

These campaigns also tend to have the spotlight rotating among the characters, rather than involving everyone simultaneously. Thus, while the scholar is debating a subtle point of theology the other characters are, most likely, simply watching, although they may be able to offer some help. The artist has to present his work alone, and the canonist may offer counsel when he is alone with his lord. This is not a large problem, provided that everyone is happy with it, and provided that the spotlight really does rotate. There are also ways to involve more characters. For example, while a scholar will be best in disputations, anyone with a decent score in the relevant



Knowledge can assist, and multiple characters can sing the praises of an artist's work.

Adventure design for these campaigns is very different, as wandering around a complex and interacting with people as you find them is completely inappropriate. Instead, it is best to set up schemes that NPCs aim to carry out, which will impinge on the characters, and then allow the characters to respond. In addition, you should encourage the players to come up with their own plans, to which your NPCs can then respond.

Player-driven schemes are generally best, as the players want to get involved in them, and thus are enthusiastic about the stories. NPC-driven schemes need two features: a reason for the characters to get involved, and a way for them to get involved. Motivation is relatively easy to provide: have the NPCs threaten something the PCs value, or have them compete for something that the PCs want.

Providing a way for the PCs to get involved is a little harder, and easy to get wrong. The player characters must be able to find out about the NPCs' schemes without obvious GM prodding, and at a sufficiently early stage for them to be able to intervene successfully. This means that the GM has to work out clues which are obvious, but whose meaning is a little obscure. Thus, the players will realize that they should follow up on something, but won't immediately know what they should do. There must be some obvious lines of investigation, however, if the GM wants to avoid having them flounder around helplessly. This depends on the players to a greater extent than one might expect; different groups have different approaches to problems.

Challenges cannot take the usual forms, as monsters and traps are completely inappropriate to this sort of campaign. Instead, the GM should use the rules given in this chapter to construct different challenges. A disputation can substitute for a combat, a commission for a work of art for a trap, and involved politics can provide an overall setting for the individual challenges.

Human characters, with levels, can be assigned challenge ratings in the usual way; although the challenges are different, higher level characters still provide more challenge. When setting challenge ratings for other challenges, such as creating a work of art, remember that an obstacle that a lone character has a 50% chance of overcoming should have a challenge rating equal to that character's level.

In these campaigns the GM can use more difficult challenges more freely, as the penalty for failure is very rarely death. The characters are still likely to fail at them, however, so difficult challenges should not be the only possible route to success. Instead, a difficult challenge might provide a fast route to a good result, while easier challenges provide a slower route to a merely acceptable result. Ideally, the player characters should be able to try the difficult route and fall back to the easy route if they fail, so this works best if they are not too pushed for time.

## The Abbey Campaign

In an abbey campaign, all the player characters are monks or nuns at the same abbey. This normally requires all the player characters to be of the same sex, but the Gilbertine Order, founded in England around 1140, had houses including both nuns and regular canons, so both male and female player characters would be possible. In theory the nuns and canons were kept strictly separate, to avoid the possibility of sex, but in practice there was quite a lot of contact, occasionally including sex.

There are two aspects to an abbey campaign: maneuvering for position within the abbey, and trying to enhance the abbey's position within the Church and the wider world. As the player characters rise in level and, presumably, in the abbey's hierarchy, wider politics become more important, but both should always exist. The tension can be used in two ways, either by forcing the player characters to work together with internal rivals to see off a threat to the abbey, or by having internal crises distract the characters' attention from what would otherwise be an easy external problem.

### Inside The Abbey

Within the abbey, the characters would seek the positions of responsibility, or obedientiaris. The head of the abbey is the abbot or abbess, chosen by election from among the monks or nuns on the death of the previous incumbent. This election must be confirmed by the king, and in a powerful abbey this confirmation may be surrounded by politics. The other positions are appointed by the abbot, usually in consultation with the monks. The prior is the abbot's second in command, and responsible for much of the daily administration within the abbey. The sacristan is responsible for the care of the church, the cellarer for purchasing and managing food supplies and other mundane goods, the precentor for the choir and music in general, and the librarian for the monastery's books. A typical abbey has about forty monks or nuns, so it is quite possible for the GM to describe all the other inhabitants of the characters' home.

### The Outside World

The status of the abbey in the wider world depends primarily on two things. The first is its wealth, measured primarily in terms of the land it controls. Defending the abbey's rights and acquiring more land are constant preoccupations for most abbots. The second is its status as a pilgrimage site. All abbeys are the resting place of at least one saint, and the importance of that saint determines how many people visit as pilgrims. The status of the saint is strongly influenced by the propaganda that the abbey produces on his behalf, and this is an area where scholars and artists have a major role. One way to undermine an abbey's pilgrimage status is to suggestion that the

relics held there are false, and that the saint actually rests elsewhere, a dispute that did take place between Glastonbury and Christ Church Canterbury over the relics of St. Dunstan. Alternatively, someone might suggest that the purported saint is not really a saint, although that kind of attack is only possible in the early stages of a cult. In general, abbeys produce propaganda suggesting that their saint is better than those of other abbeys, able to cure afflictions that have resisted the powers of the others, for example. This is true even if the two abbeys hold relics of the same saint; each abbey tends to claim that the saint is more powerful there.

The major advantage of this sort of campaign is that there is no problem explaining why the player characters choose to remain together; they have all taken vows of stability, so they have no choice. This is also a disadvantage, however, as almost all the action will take place within the monastery, and possibly at the court of the local bishop. Legal troubles provoke occasional journeys, to the king or even to Rome to appeal to the Pope, but most of the time the characters will be in the abbey. A virtue can be made of this necessity, as the abbey can really be brought to life, but some players may want to range more widely. A court campaign is better suited to them.

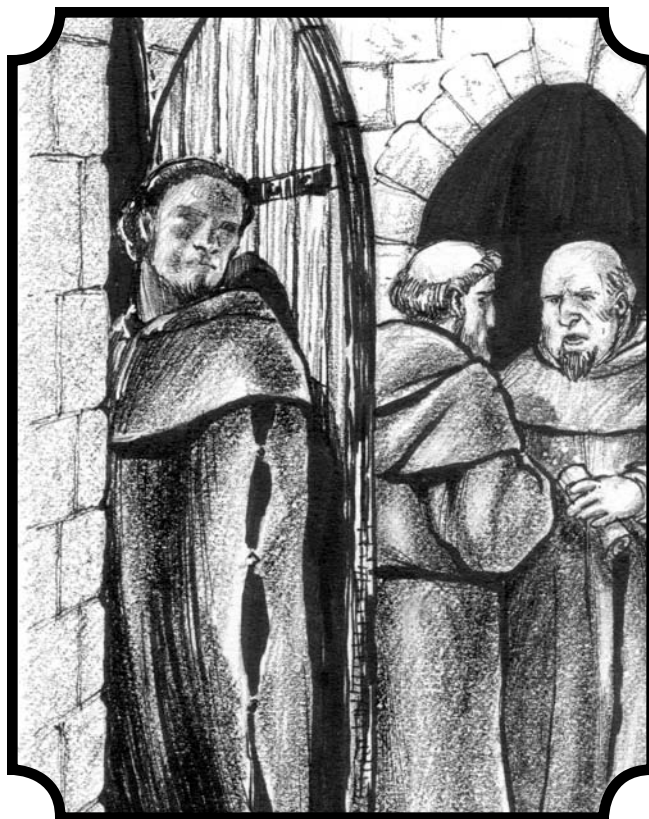
## The Court Campaign

A court campaign revolves around a powerful noble, most likely the king. The player characters jockey for position within the court, seeking important appointments, advantageous marriages, and valuable gifts. This tends to be a more selfish sort of campaign than the abbey campaign, as there is no equivalent to the greater good of the abbey; the player characters are out for their own advantage.

In a court, everything ultimately depends on the will of the lord. However, low-level characters, of little importance in the grand scheme of things, need to curry favor with lesser officials, so that they can, eventually, gain access to the person of the king and start subtly lobbying for their own goals. Politics is essential, but artists and scholars can impress with their erudition or talent, and a pose of being above petty political maneuvers. Churchmen can claim to be above the world, while seeking advancement in the hierarchy. Nobles provide a role for fighters, although they would be well advised to multi-class, probably as rogues, in order to gain access to more political abilities.

## Friends and Enemies

A court naturally sets all against all, so the players must find some way to bind the characters together. This is easiest if the characters all have consistent goals, so a noble, canonist, scholar, and artist could ally with one another, as they all want different things out of the court. Other courtiers, naturally, try to set them against one another.



Medieval courts are peripatetic, traveling around the lord's domains, so these campaigns give the characters the chance to see more of the world, particularly if the lord decides to undertake military campaigns far from home. This also allows the GM to introduce characters briefly, as the court moves into a new area.

Court campaigns involve rumors, flattery, and verbal backstabbing. Literal backstabbing is very rare, as civilized medieval lords look very dimly upon murder. Even lawsuits are rare, because they indicate that one of the participants has found himself in a very weak position. As a rule, lawsuits consolidate victories that have already been won, although a courtier might be able to fight back if he was very skilled.

## Power Corrupts

The main problem with a court campaign is that it does not usually have a very noble goal; the player characters are rarely heroes. In an abbey campaign, the player characters are working for the good of a community greater than themselves, but in a court campaign they are not, usually. This can be avoided by having the characters seek power in order to correct some great injustice, or for some similar noble aim, but it is all too easy to lose track of the end in the web of innuendo spun around a monarch. Another potential problem is that it is very easy for the player characters to turn against one another. This is best dealt with outside the game; the players should simply decide whether intra-party treachery will be a part of the game or not.



# CHAPTER FIVE: KINGS, DUKES, AND PRINCES

This chapter describes the history of England and northern France in the years after the death of William the Conqueror, what we call the “Kin of the Conqueror” period. These years were characterized by constant struggles between the Conqueror’s heirs over his legacy. While actual history provides many opportunities for adventure, this chapter also considers other possibilities, both changes in the outcome of events and changes in the personalities and backgrounds of important people in the period.

The chapter falls into two parts. The first provides a narrative account of the history of the period, along with suggestions for what could happen differently, while the second describes a number of important characters, with suggestions for how they could be handled in a game.

## ❖ HISTORY ❖

This section outlines the political history of the period, as it happened in our world. It also includes many suggestions, in paragraphs starting “What if?”, for how things could have gone differently, and the possible consequences thereof. These paragraphs are great plot hooks and ideas for the *Kin of the Conqueror* campaign.

### THE CONQUEST

In 1066 William the Bastard, Duke of Normandy, crossed the channel to England and, depending on whose account you believe, either claimed his rightful throne or brutally usurped it, after defeating Harold, King of the English, at the Battle of Hastings. Rebellions were common in the early years of his reign, but by the end they had been pacified, and the Anglo-Saxon higher nobility was no more, entirely replaced by Normans. In 1086, just before his death, William, now the Conqueror, was able to command the survey known as Domesday Book, in which all the lands of the country were surveyed and their value recorded. He died on the ninth of September 1087, at the Norman capital of Rouen.

### WILLIAM RUFUS 1087–1100

William had three surviving sons, Robert Curthose, the eldest, William Rufus, and Henry, the youngest. He divided his lands and wealth between them, leaving the Duchy of

Normandy to Robert, the kingdom of England to William, and a large sum of money to Henry. William Rufus was crowned King at Westminster on September 26th, but he was not left at peace for long. The Norman Conquest had produced a cross-channel nobility, with powerful lords holding many lands both in England and in France. Now, they owed fealty for their English lands to William and for their French to Robert. Many felt that this was not, ultimately, a sustainable position, and in the spring of 1088 they rebelled against William, aiming to put Robert on the English throne. The rebellion included six of the ten greatest landholders in England, notably Bishop Odo of Bayeux, William the Conqueror’s half-brother, and Roger de Montgomery, and they expected that Robert Curthose would invade from Normandy to support them.

Rufus moved quickly in response. He first split Roger de Montgomery off from the rebel cause by reminding him that William the Conqueror had given Montgomery his position just as much as Rufus, and warning him against upsetting such judgments. Next, he appealed to the English, promising good law, and raising troops from the countryside. Finally, and most importantly, he campaigned against the rebels, capturing Odo in Pevensey, and then again in Rochester. Rufus himself had taken Odo to Rochester on the understanding that he would secure the surrender of the castle, but instead the Bishop chose to continue his defiance.

After the rebellion Rufus was shrewd in his punishments. Some magnates, like Odo, lost all of their English lands, and



had to withdraw to Normandy. Others were scarcely punished at all, and became loyal vassals of the King once more.

### WHAT IF?

*The rebellion could have succeeded, particularly if Robert of Normandy was persuaded to invade. This would have resulted in even stronger cross-channel links than were actually present after Henry reunited the Duchy and Kingdom, and Odo of Bayeux would still have been a great English magnate. Most importantly, Robert went on the First Crusade, and almost certainly would have done so even had he been King of England at the time. This would have made him the only King on the Crusade, and thus a very important figure. It would also have given England a regency, probably under Prince Henry. Robert was a brave and pious warrior, Henry a violent-tempered man. The English are but recently conquered. Robin Hood one hundred years early, anyone?*

### WHAT IF?

*Another possibility is for the rebellion to drag on, particularly if William failed to detach Roger from the rebels. Infighting among the Norman overlords might give the oppressed English a chance to assert themselves, and even throw off the French yoke. This is the last chance the English get to be an oppressed people for at least nine hundred years, so they might as well make the most of it. An English rebellion was unlikely to succeed, but more improbable things have happened. Even if it did succeed, it is very unlikely that all the Norman lords would be driven out. Feudal politics make that very difficult, and even the Conqueror started with Anglo-Saxon lords. An English King might join the Crusade, and leave a Norman regent, possibly even Prince Henry. Robin Hood can then defend the English against the French oppressor while waiting for the true English King to return from Crusade.*

With the rebellion defeated, Rufus turned his attention to conquering Normandy from his elder brother. Rufus proceeded as much by bribery as by force, and Prince Henry meddled extensively, sometimes fighting for one brother, sometimes for the other, always trying to build up his own power. Whatever Robert's virtues, Rufus was a far more efficient ruler. By 1091 Robert and William had allied to deal with Henry, and then the entire family had been reconciled. It didn't last; the struggle for Normandy soon resumed.

In 1095 the Norman barons of England rebelled again, and again William crushed them. This time he was much less merciful, and the leaders were imprisoned, or blinded and castrated, or at least deprived of all their lands.

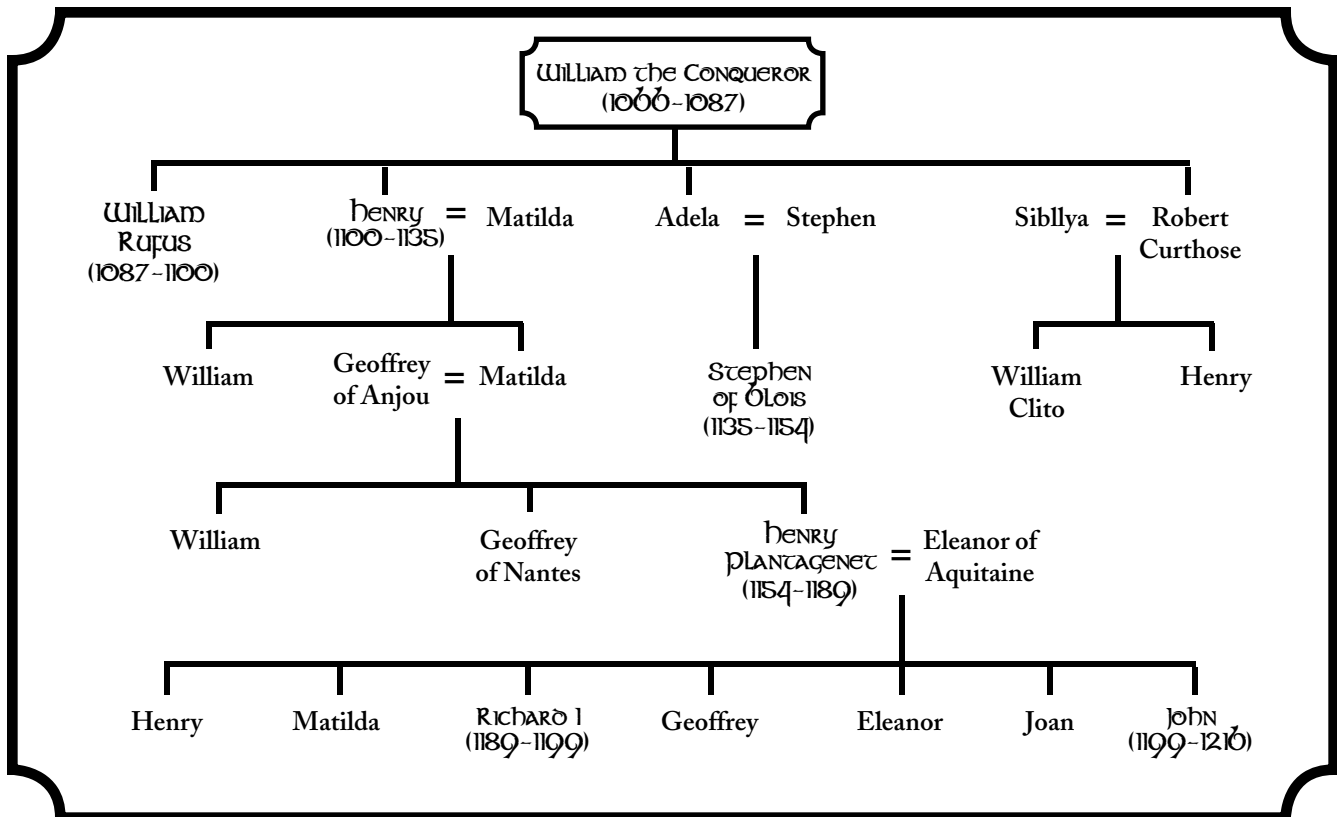
In 1096 William was presented with a surprising opportunity to acquire Normandy. Robert Curthose wished to go on Crusade, and for that he needed a great deal of money. After negotiation, a deal was struck, and Robert granted Normandy to William for three years, in return for 10,000 marks of silver. William raised the money by imposing a heavy tax, and took power in Normandy. While ruling there, he brought the private wars that had flourished under Robert firmly under control, and French observers believed that he had designs on the throne of France. This is not unlikely. However, on August 2nd 1100 William Rufus was shot while hunting in the New Forest. Henry immediately rode to nearby Winchester to secure the royal treasury, and then on to London, where he was crowned at Westminster on the 5th.

### WHAT IF?

*What if Rufus's death was no accident? In fact, this is a real possibility; Henry seems to have been a little bit too fast in his reactions, almost as if he was expecting it. Hunting accidents were real enough, but Rufus may have been the victim of a plot, in which case player characters might uncover it. A rather more outlandish theory is that Rufus was a pagan, and that his death after fourteen (twice seven) years on the throne was a sacrifice meant to ensure the fertility of the realm. Historically, this is certainly false, but in a role-playing game there might be more to it. At the very least, pagan priests might believe that William should be sacrificed.*

### WHAT IF?

*What if Rufus had survived? He was far from old at his death, and had demonstrated great skill as a political operator. It seems that he was negotiating to get control of the great French duchy of Aquitaine, again as compensation for funding its lord to go on crusade. If he had succeeded at this, he would almost certainly have turned his attention to taking the throne of France. The Capetian monarchs of this period were not, in all honesty, up to much, so he might well have succeeded. Since the French kings were limited mostly by their great lords, notably Normandy and Aquitaine, a man who was King of France, King of England, Duke of Normandy, and Duke of Aquitaine would be one of the most powerful figures in Europe. One notable issue is that Rufus never married, and showed no inclination to do so. It is possible that he was homosexual, although there are few contemporary references supporting this. Whatever the reason, it seems likely that he would leave no legitimate sons. When the king of a realm stretching from Carlisle to Marseilles dies without a clear heir, there is serious trouble in store, along with many opportunities for adventure.*



## HENRY 1100-1135

By 1101 Robert was back from the Holy Land, and pressing his claim to the throne of England. Many Norman nobles joined a rebellion in his favor, and this time Robert actually invaded England. Unfortunately for his supporters, the first thing he did on meeting Henry was to arrange a peace treaty and return to Normandy.

In 1105 Henry returned the favor, and invaded Normandy. Unlike his brother, he was not content to negotiate a treaty, and pushed his conquest forward. In September 1106 the campaign opened in earnest, with Henry laying siege to the castle of Tinchebrai. Robert drew up with his army, and decided to engage his brother in a pitched battle. Henry won, and Robert spent the next twenty-eight years, until his death in 1134, as a prisoner. Henry was now King of England and Duke of Normandy, and none of his brothers remained to oppose him.

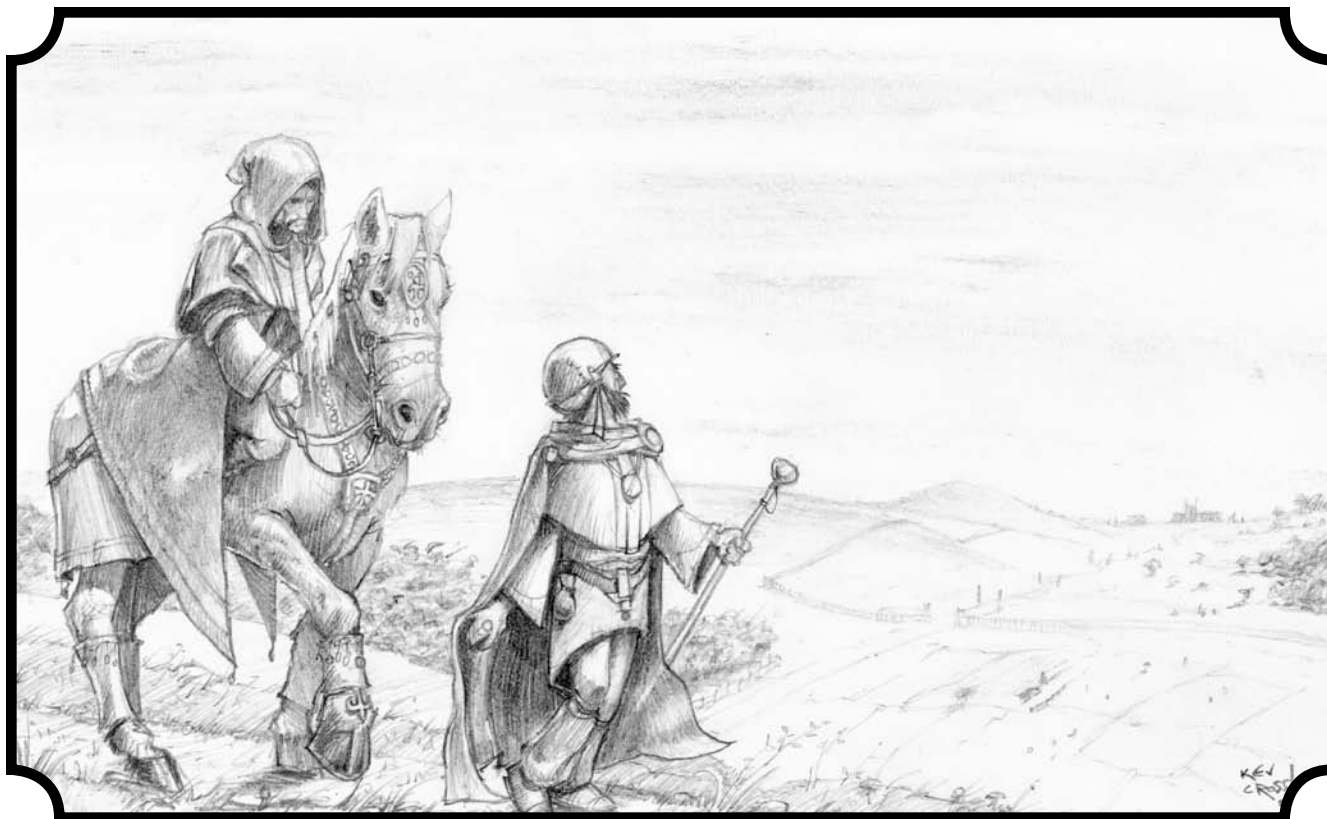
### WHAT IF?

*What if Henry had lost at Tinchebrai? He outnumbered Robert's forces, but battle is notoriously fickle. If he had lost and survived, Robert would, on past record, most likely have drawn up a treaty, which Henry would have violated quickly, and the war would have continued. If Henry had died, things would be much more interesting. Robert would have immediately*

*claimed the throne of England. Henry's son, William, was no older than five at the time, and thus not a realistic candidate for king. However, Robert had proved himself woefully incapable of ruling Normandy effectively, let alone a sprawling cross-Channel realm. William would serve as a useful focus for rebellion, or the English might have another go at throwing off the Norman yoke, although by 1106 there are few who can remember an English King, and the aristocracy has been thoroughly ground down.*

Robert had a son, William Clito, who was left free when his father was imprisoned. This boy formed a focus for opposition to Henry, keeping the English King in Normandy, defending his position. In 1108 Louis VI became King of France, determined to raise the power of the French monarchy, which was at a seriously low ebb. His most important task was clipping Henry's wings, and he quickly gathered allies for the task. The Counts of Flanders and Anjou had reason to worry about the English King, and joined Louis's alliance. The first war, from 1111 to 1113, favored Henry. The French alliance was defeated, and Louis had to agree to a treaty granting yet more power to Henry.

In 1116 the alliance re-formed, this time with the professed aim of "restoring" William Clito to the Duchy of Normandy. At first, things went against Henry, but once again things turned in his favor, and by 1119 Louis stood against him alone. The



Norman and French armies met at Brémule on August 20th, and Henry's armies routed those of the French King. Louis tried appealing to the Pope, but the supreme pontiff ruled in Henry's favor. In 1120, Henry seemed to have won.

On November 25th the White Ship, carrying William, Henry's only son and heir, sank. There was one survivor. It was not William.

### WHAT IF?

*What if the White Ship had not sunk? This is perhaps the biggest what if of the period, as the accident could easily have been avoided; the crew was all drunk, and should never have been at sea. Equally, the ship could have sunk, and William survived. Either way, there would have been no dispute over the succession to the throne of England, so the Anarchy (see page 99) would never have happened, at least not in that form. If the ship sank and William was the sole survivor, this would be seen as evidence of divine favor. Player characters that saved William's life would be in high favor with two Kings of England. Very little is known about William's character, which gives the GM great leeway in plotting his alternate history. Another possibility is to have William and some of his allies all be player characters, in which case the sinking of the White Ship would have to be part of a plot. If the players can survive that, they know that history is in their hands.*

Henry was a widower, and while he had many illegitimate children, his only remaining legitimate child was his daughter, Matilda. She had married the Holy Roman Emperor in 1114, and thus could not be considered Henry's heir; there was too much risk that England would simply be absorbed by the Holy Roman Empire. Instead, Henry pursued closer links with the Germans by marrying Adeliza of Louvain, in the hope of fathering a new male heir.

In the meantime, William Clito was the presumptive heir to England and Normandy, being the only other free survivor of the male line of William the Conqueror. Fulk of Anjou returned from Crusade, and immediately began supporting the Clito in political and military maneuvers aimed at restoring him to Normandy. Louis of France was a willing participant in the attempts to weaken Henry, and helped Fulk to stir up a rebellion in Normandy in 1123. Henry drew on his German connections, and a threatened German invasion drew Louis's attention east and allowed Henry to restore order in his Duchy.

Louis did not give up, and the Clito was still the pawn of choice. In 1127 he was married to a half-sister of Louis's queen and nominally invested with a number of castles on the border between France and Normandy. However, on March 1st fate intervened, and Charles the Good, Count of Flanders, was murdered. Louis bestowed the title on William Clito, and Clito headed to Flanders to assert his claim against the opposition of most Flemish nobles. In 1128 he was killed at the siege of Alost.

**WHAT IF?**

*What if William Clito had not died? He had a much better claim to England and Normandy than Stephen, and was neither female nor entangled with the traditional enemies of the Normans, like Matilda. It is virtually certain that, had he been alive, someone would have pushed his claim to the throne of England, as well as the Duchy of Normandy. Unfortunately, his career suggests neither military nor political genius, so such a claim would likely have amounted to little more than a distraction in the turbulent politics of the Anarchy. However, in such disordered times any distraction can be important.*

In 1125 the Holy Roman Emperor died, changing the political situation substantially. As his wife, Matilda was completely unsuitable as a successor to Henry. As his widow, the Empress Matilda was a real possibility for queen. She returned to England in 1126, and on January 1st 1127 the barons were convinced to accept her as Henry's heir. This acceptance was somewhat grudging, in part because she was a woman, but in part because they feared the entanglements that her marriage might create. The barons specified that she should not marry outside England without their consent, but Henry ignored this. In 1128 she was married to Geoffrey, heir of the Count of Anjou.

The marriage was not an immediate success. Matilda, at twenty-five, was eleven years older than her new husband, and both were arrogant, quarrelsome, and autocratic. Friction between them was almost pre-ordained. Within a year, Geoffrey had all but repudiated her, sending her back to her father at Rouen. A reconciliation was arranged, and the pair spent the next few years in comparative amity. In 1133, Matilda gave birth to her first son, Henry Plantagenet, thus providing a further heir beyond her. Henry's problems seemed to be settled.

But King Henry was not allowed to end his days in peace. A rebellion in Normandy, encouraged by his daughter, kept him busy until, on December 1st 1135, he died of a fever caused by eating too many lampreys.

## STEPHEN AND THE ANARCHY, 1135-1154

Stephen of Blois was King Henry's nephew, and thus a grandson of William the Conqueror, the son of William's daughter Adela. As soon as he heard that Henry was dead, he hurried to England, was welcomed in London, and secured the royal treasury at Winchester with the help of the Bishop of Winchester, his brother Henry. On

December 22nd Stephen was crowned in Westminster, and early in 1136 Pope Innocent II recognized his election as King, thus absolving the barons from their oath to support Matilda.

England had a new king almost before the other potential candidates knew about it.

**WHAT IF?**

*What if Matilda had become queen? Here, the greatest potential for adventure lies in making it happen. Her marriage to Geoffrey was a distinct liability, because the Angevins were not popular with the Norman lords. However, as noted above Geoffrey all but repudiated her in the early days of their marriage. If there were no reconciliation, the Pope could have been persuaded to annul the marriage, and Matilda could have been married to an English noble. Matilda was brave and energetic, as revealed by her actions during the Anarchy, but prone to alienate potential supporters by arrogant behavior. Counselors able to moderate her arrogance, and ready to act quickly to secure her on the throne, might be able to reach a situation in which Matilda is crowned in late 1135 instead of Stephen. Once she has the throne, no one really has a good enough claim to push her off. Rebellions are inevitable, as every other monarch in the period faced them, but England might have its first Queen regnant in the twelfth, rather than the sixteenth, century.*

By the end of 1136 Stephen had secured his position in England. The magnates of the country, including the powerful Earl Robert of Gloucester, Matilda's half-brother, had accepted him as King, and he had put down two rebellions, in Norfolk and Devon. By early 1137 he was ready to cross back to Normandy in an attempt to assert his authority there.

Matilda had not been idle, and had made a concerted attempt to claim at least Normandy. Her efforts were, however, undermined by her Angevin husband, who seized the opportunity to vent the traditional hatred between Norman and Angevin. By the time Stephen landed, therefore, the Norman barons were hostile to Matilda and Geoffrey, the King of France and the Norman bishops were on his side, and it should have been easy for him to take control.

But Stephen had lost his touch. His use of Flemish mercenaries annoyed the Norman nobility, and led to brawls between them. An expedition against Geoffrey broke down completely from the same cause, and Stephen was forced to conclude a treaty with the Angevin in July. Frustrated and defeated, he returned to England, and never set foot on the continent again.



## WHAT IF?

*What if Stephen had managed to secure Normandy? As noted, the conditions were good, and avoiding the use of Flemish mercenaries might have been sufficient. This success would have undermined Matilda and given Stephen a larger power base, but it probably would not have been enough to prevent the civil war. In the long run, it would probably have made little difference.*

In 1138 Matilda appealed to the Pope, seeking recognition as the rightful Queen of England. At the same time, her brother Robert of Gloucester renounced his allegiance to Stephen, and entered upon open war. It was a good moment: England was being raided from both Wales and Scotland, and Stephen was having trouble with many nominally loyal nobles. Nevertheless, Stephen responded well, and with considerable success. He captured several enemy strongholds, and was welcomed into Gloucester itself. The Scots were defeated at the battle of the Standard in August. Furthermore, in spring 1139, the Pope reaffirmed his support for Stephen.

At midsummer 1139, he made a serious mistake. Bishop Roger of Salisbury was the justiciar, and had effectively controlled the administration of the country for many years. His son, Roger le Poer, was chancellor, one nephew, Nigel, Bishop of Ely and treasurer, and another nephew, Alexander,



Bishop of Lincoln was an important courtier. The family had recently been building castles and gathering armed men, and some lay nobles had suggested that they were a threat to the King.

A brawl, provoked by a dispute over lodgings and involving the Bishop of Salisbury's men, gave the King an excuse to act, and he arrested the whole family. Nigel escaped to Devizes, but the King pursued him and, within days, he had been surrendered into royal custody. The castles and properties of the family were seized, restoring the royal coffers. But the church was outraged at this treatment of clerics, and Stephen lost its support. One month later Matilda and Robert landed in England, ready to pursue their claim once more.

## WHAT IF?

*What if Stephen had dealt with Roger of Salisbury more tactfully? This really depends on the Bishop's goals. If he planned to remain loyal to Stephen, then leaving him alone might give Stephen enough support to ensure his victory in the battles of the civil war. In that case, there would be no Anarchy, just persistent rebellions until Stephen could convince himself to do something final about Matilda. On the other hand, Bishop Roger might have been planning rebellion himself. In that case, any subtle move would give the family time to prepare their castles and defy Stephen from a position of strength. With that strength on her side, Matilda would have had a much greater advantage, and could well have been in possession of the kingdom for most of the war. This is a good crisis to include in a campaign because it isn't obvious, even to players who know the history, what the best outcome for any side is.*

In late 1139 the civil war truly began. It proceeded mainly through the raiding and burning of towns and villages, and many armed men took the opportunity afforded by the breakdown of central authority to set themselves up as tyrants over some small area, torturing the residents to extort money from them, and burning when there was nothing left to steal. It was a time when many helpless people had great need of defenders, but in most areas there were none to help.

In February 1141 the course of the war brought Stephen to Lincoln. An army led by Rannulf, Earl of Chester, and a supporter of the Empress, found him there, and Stephen foolishly left the city to fight on the plains below. His army fled, leaving him to be captured and imprisoned by the Earl. It seemed that Matilda had triumphed.

The Empress made her way to Winchester, and on April 8th she was elected *domina Anglorum*, the normal title held between election and coronation. The coronation, by tradition, had to take place at Westminster, so Matilda

headed for London. The Londoners had been supporters of Stephen from the start, and now, instead of behaving diplomatically, the Empress demanded their loyalty and a tallage, a tax on every adult in the city. Roused to resistance, the Londoners drove her from the city, denying her a coronation.

Stephen's queen, also named Matilda, took advantage of the Empress's discomfiture to detach some of her allies, including the Bishop of Winchester, who had organized the Empress's election as queen. At the end of July the Empress led her forces to besiege Queen Matilda and Bishop Henry in Winchester. The bishop responded by burning the city, and summoning reinforcements, so that the attackers were themselves besieged. In September, they decided to withdraw, but their retreat became a rout, and although Matilda escaped to safety, her brother, Robert, was captured.

At the beginning of November the two sides reached agreement on an exchange of prisoners, and both Robert and Stephen regained their freedom. Stephen was now in far stronger position, as his treatment at the hands of the Angevins had won him sympathy and Matilda's high-handed behavior had convinced many nobles that they certainly did not want her as Queen. In early December his restoration as King was formally recognized at a council at Winchester, and at Christmas he formally wore his crown in the court, marking his resumption of his regal position.

Over the following few years Stephen restricted the control of the Angevin party to the West Country, Devon and Cornwall. He was unable to finally defeat Earl Robert, and faced rebellion from earls elsewhere, most notable Geoffrey de Mandeville in East Anglia. By 1148 many of Stephen's opponents were dead, others had left the country to join the Second Crusade, and Stephen had, to some extent, brought the fractious nobility under control. Things were not as peaceful as they had been under William Rufus and Henry, but Stephen was not so strong a King as they had been.

Meanwhile, on the continent, the Angevins had secured their position. Geoffrey of Anjou had learned his lesson from his earlier raids into Normandy and, in 1141, he tried again. This time, instead of indiscriminate pillage, he pursued a systematic program of conquest. By March 1144 he controlled the whole Duchy, but he was careful to associate his son, Henry, with his rule. The Normans might be reluctant to accept an Angevin lord, but Henry Plantagenet was also the great-grandson of William the Conqueror. In 1150 Geoffrey transferred the Duchy to his son, who was then seventeen years old.

Henry immediately found himself at war with King Louis VII of France, who was supported by Eustace, Stephen's son. This war was only settled in 1151, when Henry did homage for Normandy and agreed to surrender some important lands and castles to the king. On 7 September, Geoffrey died, and Henry became Count of Anjou. A few months

later, he married Eleanor of Aquitaine, and thus became lord of all of Western France.

Eleanor was the heiress of the rich duchy of Aquitaine, and had married Louis VII in 1137. The two had not got on, their personalities clashing as Eleanor was lively, fond of poets and war, while Louis was strictly pious. Rumors about Eleanor's behavior while accompanying her husband on crusade spread around Europe, and on their return the Pope made a determined effort to reconcile them. It failed, and in March 1152 Eleanor and Louis were declared to be too closely related for marriage, and their union was annulled. Eleanor married Henry in May, making him a more powerful lord than Louis.

In 1153 Henry returned to England. Stephen's military position was relatively strong, but he had completely lost the support of the church, and his attempts to establish Eustace as his heir had failed with the Pope forbidding the Archbishop to crown him. Henry was also by far the better warrior, and his campaign was an almost total success. He swept across the country, taking castles and winning the allegiance of important nobles. Perhaps more important to his ultimate success was the death, in August, of Eustace, Stephen's eldest son. Stephen then despaired of establishing his family on the throne, and in November he signed a treaty with Henry in which he recognized the Angevin as his heir. Stephen's second son, William, was guaranteed extensive lands, and seems to have had no designs on the throne.

On October 25th 1154 Stephen died, and Henry Plantagenet became King of England, and lord of an Angevin realm that was possibly the mightiest in the west.

## WHAT IF?

*What if the civil war had gone differently? Determined player characters supporting either side, or merely trying to keep order in one part of the country, could have a substantial effect on the course of events. If Stephen was able to retain the confidence of the church, Eustace might be crowned King and recognized as his heir, thus making the actual compromise almost impossible. On the other hand, good advice to Matilda might have led to the Londoners welcoming her, and to Stephen losing his throne much earlier. Characters including a powerful noble who manage to maintain order in their dominions would have to build many castles, without royal consent. When Henry became King, he demanded that all such castles be destroyed; the player characters might resent this, and thus Henry might start his reign faced by a rebellion. The player characters might even be Anglo-Saxons who have succeeded in defending their lands from the depredations of Norman barons, and have established themselves as de facto lords.*

# CHARACTERS

This section describes a number of the most important political characters in this period. Some have game statistics, but most do not, as player characters should not be interacting with them through combat. Many have a **Possibilities** section at the end of their description, suggesting different ways of interpreting the character, ways which are, just barely, consistent with the historical evidence.

## Geoffrey de Mandeville

### EARL OF ESSEX, TYRANT

Geoffrey de Mandeville was a Norman noble who attached himself to Stephen's cause at the beginning of the reign, and was rewarded in 1140 with the Earldom of Essex. In 1141, after Stephen's capture at Lincoln, he changed sides to support Matilda, but after her flight from London he changed back, supporting Stephen. Every time he changed sides he was granted more privileges by the rival claimants, each desperate for his support, so that by 1143 he was Earl of Essex, Sheriff of Middlesex, Essex, and Hertfordshire, and Constable of the Tower of London. This last position gave him effective control of the city, and made him very important indeed.

He was a cruel and dominating man, and turned all those he ruled against him. In 1142 he signed a secret treaty with Matilda, promising to support her as long as she made no treaty with the people of London, as they were his enemies. This treaty was not as secret as Geoffrey might have liked, and in 1143 Stephen arrested him for treason. The Earl was given the choice of hanging, or giving up the Tower and all his castles in Essex. Unsurprisingly, he chose the latter option, and withdrew to the fens of Cambridgeshire in a rage.

The fens were a large area of swamps, with a few islands of solid ground, almost all occupied by monasteries. Geoffrey began by seizing two of them, Ely and Ramsey, driving the monks out and establishing his armed followers in their place. Then he began raiding the surrounding country,

killing indiscriminately, burning villages, and torturing anyone he thought might be hiding treasure from him. Stephen tried to stop him, but every time the king approached, Geoffrey simply withdrew into the fens, where the swamps were his greatest protection. As no one could work the fields, famine soon added to the death toll inflicted by the raiders, and it seemed that the battle would go on forever. Fortunately, Geoffrey was struck by a chance arrow while besieging a fortification at Burwell, and died of the wound on 16 September 1144.

## POSSIBILITIES

The statistics given below assume that Geoffrey was simply an evil warrior, interested in what he could gain through might. However, he was evil and notorious enough that he might actually have sold his soul to the devil, and gained diabolical powers.

Geoffrey makes a good opponent for player characters, and his level can be altered as necessary. In this case, he should only be defeated through the player characters' efforts, rather than dying from a random arrow shot.

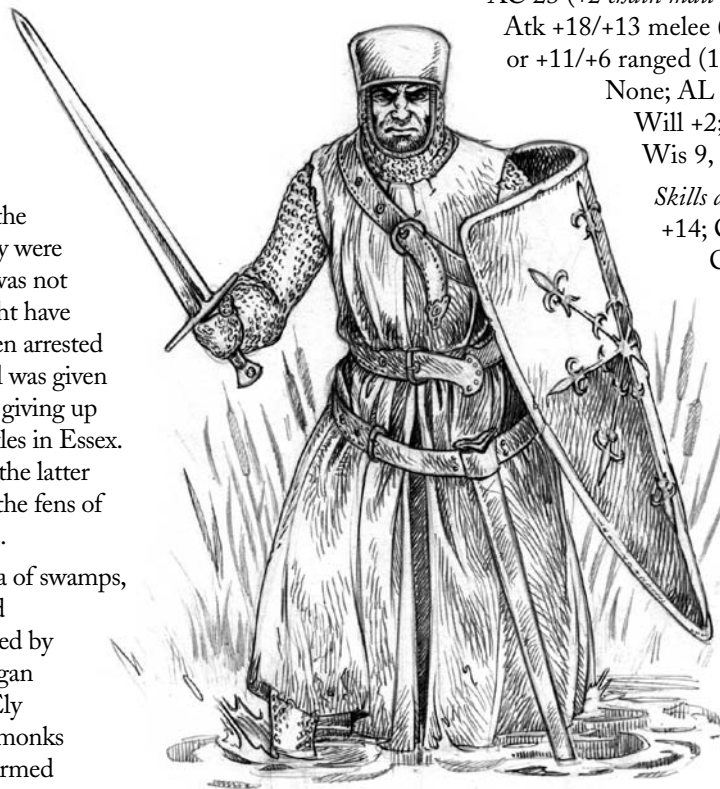
### Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl and Tyrant

**Human male Fighter 10:** CR 10; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 10d10 + 20; hp 72; Init +1 (Dex); Speed 20 ft; AC 23 (+2 *chain mail* +7, +3 *large shield* +5, Dex +1); Atk +18/+13 melee (1d8+9/17-20/x2 +3 *longsword*) or +11/+6 ranged (1d6, shortbow); SA None; SQ None; AL Chaotic evil; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11.

**Skills and Feats:** Intimidate +13, Ride +14; Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (longsword), Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Trample, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

**Possessions:** +3 *longsword* (*theurgic*), +2 *chain mail* (*theurgic*), +3 *large shield* (*theurgic*), extensive mundane possessions, possibly effectively including London, if he is still constable of the Tower.

Note that his magic items are all *theurgic*, and thus using them is sinful in itself (see page 22).



c.cleveland

# HENRY

## KING OF ENGLAND

Henry seized the throne of England in 1100 at the age of 32, after William's highly suspicious death. In many ways he took after his brother, being both ambitious and autocratic. In other ways, he was very different, being married twice, the father of numerous acknowledged bastards, and as parsimonious as William was lavish. The political events of his reign are described starting on page 97.

Henry is driven by the desire for power. He wants his power to be unquestioned and over as wide a realm as possible, and he wants to found a dynasty that will control that realm down through the ages. He is a capable politician, and a skilled general and military leader. His morality is determined entirely by his drive for authority, and he has little inherent respect for the Church or its teachings. However, since the support of the Church is essential to anyone seeking secure power, Henry is careful not to outrage ecclesiastical opinion, and his first wife, Matilda of Scotland, who died in 1118, was noted for her piety.

# HENRY PLANTAGENET

## CLAIMANT TO THE CROWN OF ENGLAND, FUTURE KING OF ENGLAND

Henry Plantagenet was born on March 5th 1133, while his grandfather Henry was still King of England. At the time, he was seen as the successor to Matilda as monarch, but Stephen's seizure of the throne intervened. Nevertheless, Henry claimed his throne, and became King of England in 1154, at the age of twenty-one.

Henry was raised as the rightful heir to both England and Normandy, and confirmed a charter in this style as early as 1142, during his first visit to England. At the age of nine he could not, however, offer much concrete assistance to his mother's claim to the crown. He was educated for his position, not only in military tasks but also in book learning. His education started in Anjou, under Peter of Saintes, a noted poet. While he was in England, from 1142 to 1144, his education continued at Bristol, under Adelard of Bath (see page 115). After his return to France the task was picked up by William of Conches (see page 122). Henry enjoyed his education, and in later life he was sympathetic to men of learning. He was also the first king of England since 1066 who was definitely able to read and write.

This learning was all directed to claiming his position, and his military training was even more important. In 1147, at the age of fourteen, he was sent to England by his father, with a few men, and fought against Stephen. He was badly beaten, and in the end Stephen had to pay for Henry's



return to Normandy. It is characteristic of the King that he did this, rather than imprisoning a dangerous rival. His next sally was in 1149, when he counted as an adult, and this was a much more serious affair. He was knighted at Carlisle by the King of Scotland, and, with the Earl of Chester, prepared to attack York. Stephen hurried north with a large force, and the Angevins dispersed. Henry remained in England, harried by Stephen's son Eustace, until the end of the year, but he was unable to make much progress, and returned to Normandy early in 1150. In that same year, his father made him Duke of Normandy, and in 1151 Geoffrey of Anjou died, and Henry became Count of Anjou. In May 1152 he married Eleanor of Aquitaine, and gained control of the rich Duchy of Aquitaine.

In 1153 he returned to England, now an experienced soldier with many troops and extensive resources. Stephen fell back before him, and the treaty that closed the battle recognized him as heir to the crown of England. On October 25th 1154, Stephen died, and on December 19th Henry was crowned King of England.

Henry is of medium height and stocky, with a tendency to fat that he keeps in check by vigorous exercise. He has a great deal of energy, and is almost never idle; even in church he finds something to do other than quietly follow the service. Hunting is perhaps his favorite pastime, both with hounds and with hawks, but he also enjoys private reading or discussing difficult problems with scholars. He is an excellent manager, and treats war as a last resort rather than something to be pursued for its own sake. Despite this, he



is not popular. In part this is because he does not let his subjects do whatever they please, and cares not at all what they think of him. There are more substantive reasons, however. He has a terrible temper, the pride of his family, and an extremely lecherous disposition; in later years he is reported to have taken his son Richard's fiancée as his mistress.

## POSSIBILITIES

Both Adelard of Bath and William of Conches are natural magicians, and between them they were responsible for much of Henry's education. It is thus possible that Henry himself was trained in natural magic, and controlled his kingdom partly through the use of astral charms. Given the Church's dislike of magic, he would have had to use more subtle magic; throwing fireballs would draw down more trouble than it was worth.

Alternatively, he was certainly learned enough to turn to theurgy, which could serve many of the same purposes.

## MATILDA

### THE EMPRESS

Matilda, Henry's daughter and the only legitimate child to survive him, was involved in her father's political schemes from the first. She was married to the Holy Roman Emperor to secure an alliance, and after his death she was married to Geoffrey of Anjou to turn Anjou from an

enemy to a friend. After her brother William's death on the White Ship (see page 98), Henry forced his barons to accept her as his heir, intending to perpetuate his dynasty. On his death, however, Stephen of Blois seized the throne (see page 99).

As Empress, Matilda held the highest position open to any woman in Europe. She is a grand-daughter of William the Conqueror, and was acknowledged as heir to the throne of England. This has nurtured a strong pride in her, a pride that frequently gets in the way of her best interests. She is all but incapable of compromise, even with her peers, and cannot treat inferiors with anything but lordly condescension and command. Had she become queen without dispute, this may not have been too much of a problem, but when she needed to win allies it told sorely against her.

While her pride and high-handedness mar her character, she is not without virtues. She is brave, decisive, energetic, and extremely persistent in the face of adversity. During the civil war with Stephen she spends much time near the frontline of the conflict, and on one occasion successfully escaped from a siege at Oxford castle, fleeing across the frozen river dressed in white so that she blended into the snow. While few men seem to have liked her, almost all seem to have respected her abilities, and, at least to some extent, her claim to the throne. However, after Stephen's usurpation, the reclamation of her crown shaped her entire life.

## POSSIBILITIES

Matilda could be portrayed as a proto-feminist, determined to claim equal rights in a man's world. In this case, she might not, in fact, be arrogant or high-handed, but her actions in claiming things that a man would be granted without demur are interpreted as such by the men around her. Such a Matilda would be willing to employ female characters in roles traditionally restricted to men, although in her politically vulnerable position she would not be able to do so openly. A party could, however, be composed of male and female secret agents, serving Matilda's side in the civil war.

### MATILDA, CLAIMANT TO THE CROWN OF ENGLAND

**Human female Aristocrat 6:** CR 5; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 6d8 + 12; hp 40; Init +3 (Dex); Speed 30 ft; AC 13 (+3 Dex); Atk +6 melee (1d4, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d4, dagger); SA None; SQ None; AL Lawful neutral; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 7.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +9, Bluff +7, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (nobility) +9; Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Leadership, Lightning Reflexes

*Possessions:* Almost anything mundane. No magical items, normally, as she is reluctant to risk the Church's support.



# ROBERT OF NORMANDY

## DUKE OF NORMANDY, SON OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

Robert was certainly the nicest of the Conqueror's surviving sons, and as a result he spent most of his life being exploited, betrayed, and finally imprisoned by his younger brothers. See pages 100 to 101 for details of the political events of his life.

Robert was a great fighter, but much less impressive as a leader. Although he could defeat those who opposed him in battle, he did not know what to do with them afterwards, or how to handle defiance that stopped short of outright rebellion. It is possible that his father realized this, and gave him Normandy rather than England in the hope that the barons' respect for the ducal line would compensate for Robert's failings. If that was the hope, it failed. Robert, as eldest son, also felt that he ought to have been King of England, and pressed his claim on two occasions.

The Duke was also the most pious of his father's sons, and the only one to heed the call to Crusade in 1096. William was eager to take Normandy off him in exchange for the money he needed for the journey, and most likely had no intention of ever returning it. Robert acted bravely and effectively on the Crusade, and returned home to further battles with his brothers, now with Henry. This struggle ended with the Duke's capture at Tinchebrai, and he spent the rest of his life in comfortable imprisonment, his communication with the outside world highly restricted.

## POSSIBILITIES

The twenty-eight years of Robert's imprisonment are largely blank. He could have been up to almost anything; the time is certainly sufficient for him to have learned magic, or to have developed his piety towards sanctity. In addition, he has a claim on the crown, and thus might be a useful figurehead for player characters seeking to overthrow Henry. Spiriting him away from a heavily guarded royal castle is just the sort of challenge that player characters enjoy.

## STEPHEN

### KING OF ENGLAND

Stephen was a grandson of William the Conqueror, the son of his daughter Adela. His elder brother, Theobald, was Count of Blois, Champagne, and Chartres, and Stephen held extensive lands in his own right. On the death of King Henry, he hastened across the channel and got himself proclaimed King of England in the face of Matilda's claim. His claim was far from uncontested, and the calamitous events of his reign are described starting on page 99.

Compared to William and Henry, Stephen is a paragon of tolerance and mercy. He prefers to keep his promises, fight



fairly and chivalrously, and treat even his enemies with the courtesy due to his rank. One story illustrates this well.

In 1152 John Marshal, a significant but not overwhelmingly powerful baron in the west of the country, decided to push East, fortifying a new castle at Newbury. Stephen, by now only too well aware of the risks of letting barons extend their fortifications, came with his army and laid siege to the castle. The constable consulted John about surrender, and John asked for some more time to consider. Stephen agreed, but demanded the baron's four year old son William as a hostage. John agreed, and sent the boy.

The Baron had no intention of surrendering. He gathered reinforcements, resupplied the castle, and redoubled the defense. When warned that his son would be killed for his defiance, he replied that he had the hammers and anvils to make more sons. Although Stephen's advisers urged him to kill the boy, and a number of moves were made to make execution appear imminent, in the end the King was unable to kill the innocent child, and ended up playing with him in the royal pavilion instead. William lived another sixty-seven years, dying as regent of England for the young Henry III, a child-king he served with notable loyalty and ability.

Unfortunately for his reign, Stephen was not, at least at the beginning, the best politician. He was unable to balance fear and favor, and poor at judging the reaction of his barons to his more radical actions. He lacked the ruthlessness necessary to handle rebellious barons, and on several occasions in the civil war he gave away advantages, once even releasing Matilda from his custody because he felt it

was wrong to keep a woman prisoner. It is hard to escape the feeling that Stephen was a good man in the wrong place.

## POSSIBILITIES

Stephen's wife, Matilda, is a slightly shadowy figure, as with most medieval women. What we do know suggests that she was loyal, energetic, and a good politician. She might, therefore, make a good player character, working with the other player characters to advise and support her husband, and possibly ordering the severe measures he will not. This would be an unusual court-based campaign, because Matilda must be careful not to undermine her husband's apparent authority.

## WILLIAM RUFUS

### KING OF ENGLAND

William succeeded to the throne of England in 1087 at the age of 27. He was the second-eldest surviving son of the Conqueror, and was granted the kingship by his father's will. See page 95 for the political course of his reign.

Rufus is a determined and ambitious king, prone to autocracy and fond of display. His courts are spectacular occasions, and he ceremonially wears his crown and holds court three times a year, at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsun. He has a large number of men around him, most of who are sycophantic yes-men, as he takes dissenting counsel ill. He is a great enthusiast for hunting, and enforces the forest laws with great vigor and severity. The court is known for feasting, swearing, gambling, and illicit sexual excess, as well as hunting, and all churchmen at least profess to disapprove of the King's activities.

As far as can be told, the King does not care. Indeed, he seems to have some prejudice against the Church, for while he does not commit outrageous acts against it he is little inclined to support it, or to endow monasteries. He displays

nothing in the way of personal piety, except at times of crisis when it seems politically expedient. This serves to turn clergy even more against him, and as a result the accounts of his activities in most monastic records are positively hostile.

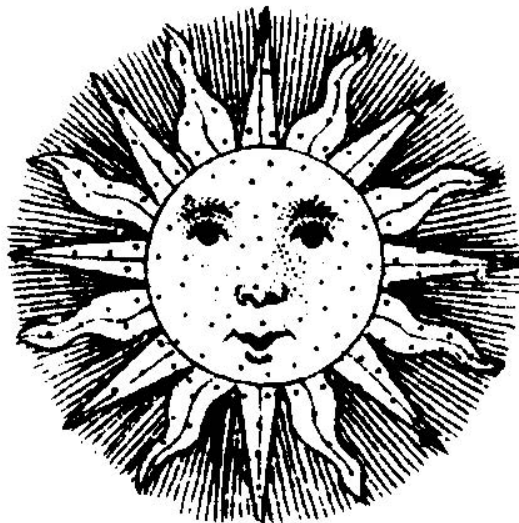
William's ambition manifests in his determination to hold on to his crown, and to extend his dominion, taking control of Normandy from his brother Robert and negotiating to take control of larger areas of France as well. It is quite likely that, in the long term, he aims at the throne of France.

His ambitions beyond his lifetime are less clear, as he has never married and shows no signs of doing so. He has no acknowledged bastard children, either, in marked contrast to his brother Henry. Given his indulgence in most vices, it seems unlikely that he is a subtle practitioner of chastity, and this has led to the suspicion that he is homosexual. If so, he must, perforce, keep it secret.

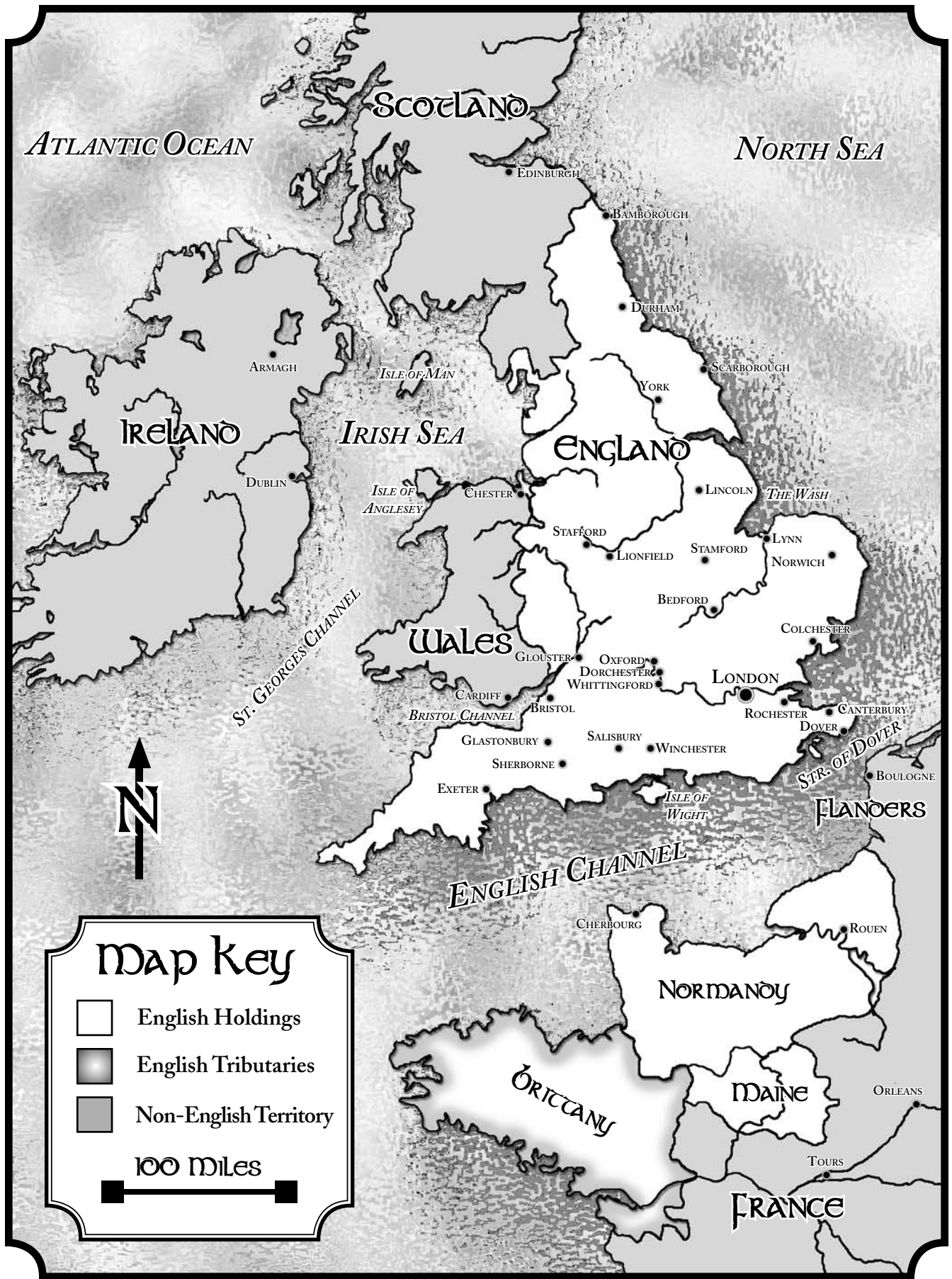
## POSSIBILITIES

Christ told people to keep their virtue secret, lest they act well for the praise of others. It is *just* possible to create a William who holds this maxim dear, and acts so that he appears vicious, while maintaining a life of virtue. While the court debauches around him, the King remains aloof, pretending to drink and indulge but in fact leading a life of fasting, prayer, and perpetual virginity. His apparent attacks on the Church are actually directed at corrupt churchmen, and some of his recorded acts are simple slanders on the part of monastic chroniclers. Such a William might even be a saint, and most likely dies a martyr.

On the other side, it is also just possible to have a pagan William, who genuinely rejects the Church and seeks to re-establish older religions. This is historically impossible, so basing his paganism on modern neo-paganism is not a problem. Such a William is likely to be highly sympathetic to modern players, but would certainly raise the ire of contemporary churchmen.











# CHAPTER SIX: MEDIEVAL CULTURE

The medieval world was very different from the twenty-first century, but also very different from the image of the time gathered from pseudo-medieval fantasy. This chapter falls into two parts, the first of which covers the culture of the time in enough detail for it to serve as the backdrop to adventures. This is a superficial look at a complex period, but as the player characters are likely to be killing monsters or creating great works of art, the details of merchant regulations are of little importance.

The second part of the chapter describes a number of historically important characters, providing game statistics for most of them, and, incidentally, example characters for many of the new character classes introduced earlier in the book. These are fantasy versions of real people, but the precise nature of the fantasy has been chosen to match their historical activities as closely as possible.

## PEASANTS

Nine-tenths of the population are peasants, people who make a living through agriculture. They live in small villages of a couple of hundred or so people each, scattered fairly evenly across most of the landscape. There are very few places where you could walk for a day without passing at least two villages; even in the twelfth century northwestern Europe simply does not have large tracts of wilderness.

### AGRICULTURAL LIFE

Grains, mainly wheat, are the most important food source, although other vegetables are grown. Potatoes, tomatoes, and maize are all unknown, but barley, apples, onions, and beans are all important secondary crops. Horses, cows, sheep, pigs, and hens are the main animals raised. Horses are kept for riding and labor, cows for milk, sheep for wool, and hens for eggs. All of these animals are eaten when they have outlived their usefulness, but only pigs are kept primarily for meat, and this is because they can forage in woodland, rather than using the resources of arable fields.

Peasants are busiest between mid to late spring and the beginning of winter, planting, weeding, and harvesting crops. It is probably not a coincidence that most of the major Church festivals fall between advent, at the beginning of winter, and Easter, in mid- to late spring. As a rule, people are not supposed to work on Sunday, but if the harvest must be gathered even the sternest priest would overlook this, the more so as Christ explicitly condoned harvesting on the Sabbath.

### PROPERTY

Most peasants live in crude houses, and own very few portable goods. Many own animals, from a few chickens for the poorest to cattle for the most wealthy. Most peasant families

raise enough food to support themselves, after paying the tithe, rent, and taxes, and most women make clothes for their family. Thus, peasants buy very little, and thus have little need for, or contact with, money. This is not to say that they are completely ignorant about it, as most villagers travel to local markets fairly frequently, and buy things there. However, money is a small part of their lives, and a peasant who refused to handle it would not be at much of a disadvantage.

### LEGAL STATUS

The most important distinction among peasants is that between serf and free. A free peasant is at liberty to go where he wants, do what he wants, and marry whom he wants. A serf must work a certain number of days on his lord's lands, without pay, may not leave the village without his lord's permission, and needs his lord's permission to marry (although the idea that the lord has the right to deflower a serf's wife is a myth). Free peasants may seek justice in the King's courts, while serfs are restricted to appealing to their lord.

Status is inherited, so that the children of a serf are also serfs. However, it also goes with land, so that land can be held by free or servile tenure. It is possible for a peasant to hold some land by free tenure, and other land by servile tenure, and this sort of situation can lead to long court cases over his true status.

The distinction between serf and free is not a distinction of wealth. Many freemen are free to starve, while not a few serfs are required to continue farming a large area of rich land. However, wealthy serfs do, in general, want to become free, and can often manage to buy grants of freedom from their lord. The role played by serfdom in society is decreasing already in the twelfth century, although it will be centuries before it loses all its significance.

# TOWNS

Although less than a tenth of the population lives in towns, they are still of great importance. They are centers of trade, and generally also of government. Most castles and cathedrals are surrounded by towns, which have grown up to serve the nobles or clerics resident there. The practical difference between a town and a village is that, in a town, many residents do not make their living from the soil. There may be legal distinctions as well, but in the twelfth century this process is only just beginning.

Towns are small, ranging from five hundred people up to ten thousand, with most large towns having around five thousand inhabitants. This small population is often crammed into an even smaller space, generally surrounded by a wall, without any sewerage. Thus, towns are crowded, stinking, unhealthy places to live. If it were not for constant immigration from the countryside, most towns would die out within a few decades.

## MONEY

Money is important in towns, and much trade is carried out using cash. The coins in use in this period are all silver pennies, with two hundred and forty pennies to a pound of silver. The shilling (twelve pennies), mark (thirteen shillings and fourpence), and pound (twenty shillings), exist only as accounting units; there are no corresponding coins. In England, only the King is allowed to mint money, and the silver is very pure. In Northern France, many magnates have minting rights, and the silver tends to be about half the purity of English money, with the result that French pennies are only worth about half as much.

This clearly does not come close to matching standard d20 price lists. You have two options. One is to continue using gold and silver pieces, and ignore this bit of historical accuracy. This is certainly not a bad option, as it simplifies things considerably, and it is the option taken throughout this book. Alternatively, you can translate d20 prices into medieval coinage. As a very rough guide, one d20 gold piece is worth about the same as two medieval English pennies. On the other hand, in medieval England a piece of silver weighing one fiftieth of a pound (a standard silver piece) would be worth about six silver pennies, and a standard gold piece would be worth about fifty five silver pennies. This means that you need to be careful when handing

out treasure containing precious metal; it is worth about thirty times as much in medieval Europe as in standard d20.

## GOVERNANCE

Most towns are ruled by the local lord, just like any other part of his domains. A few have charters from the king or some lesser lord, allowing them to govern themselves to some extent. In many cases, the town is required to pay a fixed sum of money every year, keep order, and supply certain military forces as required, and in return it gets a free hand in governing most of its internal affairs, and residents in the town get a monopoly over trade within its walls.

Everyone in a town is a freeman; there are no urban serfs. A serf who becomes a legal resident of a town, a process that involves holding land by so-called burgess tenure and paying an entry fee, ceases to be a serf. This means that runaway serfs are a significant source of town population. In addition, the larger

towns are about the only places

it is possible to lose yourself in the crowd, as most places do not have crowds to lose yourself in.

Many towns have a castle. The castle is not there to defend the town; it is there to control it. Thus, the castle is always easily defended against attackers from within the town as well as from outside. The larger cities in England all have royal castles, the most famous of which is the Tower of London, but in northern France these castles often belong to the ruling duke.

## TRADES AND CRAFTS

As the residents of towns do not support themselves by agriculture, many support themselves by some trade or craft. Important craftsmen include carpenters, stonemasons, and other people involved with construction; leather workers, including cobblers and harness makers; and metalworkers, particularly iron work. Bakers and other food suppliers are also important, and can be among the wealthiest citizens. Brewing is notable as one of the few trades that is often practiced by women.

The most important crafts, by a substantial margin, are the textile crafts. These include spinning, weaving, dyeing, and tailoring. Cloth is one of the few products that is produced in





significant quantities and is suitable for long-distance trade, and thus it forms an important part of many economies. Women in villages generally carry out spinning, as a sideline to looking after their families, so a peasant woman is rarely without her spindle. The further stages in the process are usually carried out in towns, closer to the market.

Craftsmen are just beginning to form themselves into groups, called guilds, to regulate their affairs and restrict competition, but these groups are not universal, and only in the very largest cities, such as London, are there guilds for different crafts.

## ❖ The Nobility ❖

The nobility rule, by hereditary right and military force. The feudal system is structured around military service, and the main duty of a lord to his vassals is to provide military protection. Accordingly, the nobility is strongly dominated by men. Women can hold noble rank in their own right, but only if there are no male heirs available. Even then, they are expected to marry to provide a man to actually fight; they are not expected to fight themselves. This bias against female nobles is a very important factor in the politics of the period, as Henry I's only legitimate heir is his daughter, Matilda. Stephen's claim to the throne is supported because many nobles do not want Matilda, or her husband, Geoffrey of Anjou, to rule over them, and from this a civil war develops.

### Fiefs

The nobility get their wealth and their power from land, and engaging in any sort of craft or manual labor draws the strong disapproval of your peers. This land is normally held from a higher noble, and ultimately from the King. It is possible for a noble to hold land from more than one lord, and indeed the King of England, while sovereign in England itself, holds his French possessions as a vassal of the King of France.

A vassal is required to provide his lord with a certain amount of military service, generally serving for forty days in a year. If he holds a lot of land, he is expected to provide more than one knight, and so most nobles enfeoff other knights as their vassals, so that they can help provide the necessary service. Nobles almost invariably perform their military service in person, although it is possible to supply the money to pay a mercenary instead. Women or children who hold fiefs always send someone to fight on their behalf.



### FAIRS

Fairs are much like temporary towns, where merchants gather from miles around to trade. The amount of raw commerce that goes on at such events is staggering, with goods usually not available to the common man there for the purchasing.

There are only a few great fairs in a year, and they last for about a week. Important English fairs include St. Ives, Boston, and Winchester, but these are small compared to the great fairs of France, particularly the Champagne fairs.

Nobles do have responsibilities towards the inhabitants of their fiefs. They are supposed to protect them from attack, which includes both military defense and enforcing the law. Scholars argue about whether it is permissible to rebel against a lord who fails in this respect, but this is an academic dispute as such rebellions have never succeeded. The nobility simply has too much more military power than the peasantry.

### MANORS AND CASTLES

The nobility live in better houses than the peasantry, as you would expect. Most live in manor houses, which take the form of a large hall with private quarters in a tower at one end. The kitchens are often in a separate block to reduce the risk of fire, as few manors are built of stone. Almost the whole of life takes place in the main hall. Meals are served there, it usually contains the only fire, and most of the inhabitants of the manor sleep there. The lord and his lady usually have a private chamber in the tower, where they sleep, and they may also have a private living room, called a solar. The lord's daughters, if any, also sleep separately, although his sons may well sleep in the hall with everyone else.

Some of the higher nobility live in castles. In theory, a royal license is needed to build a castle, but in times of chaos or civil war, anyone who can afford one can build one. Most castles take the form of a wooden tower on top of an artificial hill, or *motte*. At the base of the *motte* is a fortified compound, called the *bailey*, and again the walls are usually wooden. Sometimes the tower contains the lord's living quarters, but often a hall is built in the *bailey* and the tower is used purely for defense, as it is often quite small.



A few castles, those belonging to king or to richer nobles, have stone fortifications, and the main tower of such castles may be very impressive. The White Tower of the Tower of London is probably the most impressive castle tower in England.

## PROPERTY

Nobles have, comparatively, extensive resources, and their culture requires them to spend them on spectacular display. It is important to realize that there is not, in the end, a great deal to spend money on in medieval Europe.

Buildings are one major expense, as described above. A castle is beyond the reach of the minor nobility, but most would want to build as impressive a manor house as they could manage. Furnishing the buildings is less of a concern, as fine furniture is rare. Wooden tables and chairs, chests for valuable property, and possibly screens for the doors exhaust most manor's furnishings. The walls may be painted, but the floor is almost always simply strewn with rushes.

Textiles are another major expense. Fine clothing for the lord and his family heads the list, but a lord would also provide liveries for his followers, to make it clear whom they serve. This would also cover tapestries to decorate the walls, but these are very expensive.

Armor and weapons for the lord cost a great deal, to the point that it is very common for them to be passed from one generation to the next. The most minor lords, who might have an income of only ten pounds (2400 pennies) per year,

might not even be able to afford a full suit of armor and a sword.

Followers are the final major expense. All lords support a household, consisting of their family and a number of servants. The size of the household is one of the major indications of the status of the lord, so not everyone so employed has a well-defined job to do. Men who are capable of fighting are popular, even if the lord cannot afford to arm them.

Gold and silver plate are popular purchases, but this is not really an expense. Plate of this sort is used as a way of storing excess capital in good years, so that it can be used in bad years. Thus gold and silver heirlooms are very rare; things of this sort are normally bought to be sold again.

## ENTERTAINMENT

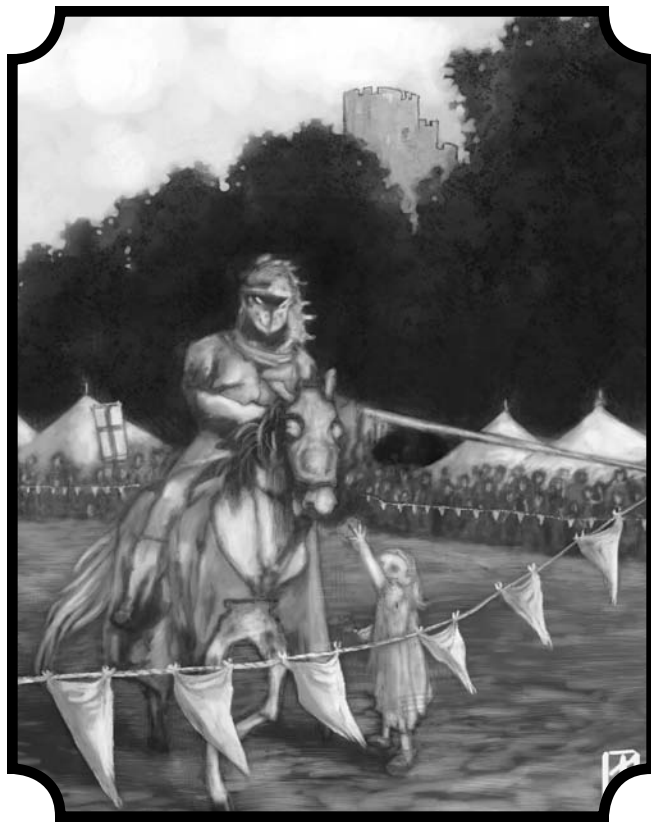
The primary entertainment for noble men is killing things, preferably other people, ideally each other. In some part of Europe, and during civil war, this gets out of hand, but most of the time lords avoid wanton slaughter. Tournaments, formalized occasions for nobles to fight each other with at least some rules, are becoming popular in the early twelfth century, although they make some rulers quite nervous, as they are, essentially, large gatherings of excited armed men.

As a substitute for killing people, many nobles turn to hunting, particularly deer and boar. Major Lords have parks or forests, which are areas set aside for their game animals. Peasants have certain rights in those areas, but may not harm the lord's game. The penalty for doing so is often death. The King has the largest forests, to the extent that the whole County of Essex is royal forest, in addition to extensive tracts elsewhere in the country.

Since hunting requires a large area of essentially idle land and a significant number of horses, dogs, and followers, it is a very expensive business. This makes it an ideal way for nobles to show off their wealth and status, and thus it is extremely popular. Many nobles are realistic about their chances of dying in a fair fight, and thus avoid tournaments, but game animals have little chance against an armed and mounted human. This is not to say that hunting accidents do not occur; William Rufus was notoriously killed in one, and some people doubt whether it was truly an accident.

Less bloodthirsty entertainments include feasts, often after a hunt to provide an opportunity to eat what was caught, music, and storytelling. Traveling entertainers are often welcome in noble houses, as they can provide a break from the monotony of talking to the people who have always lived there. Male nobles also tend to father a significant number of bastards.

Noble women are expected to entertain themselves with needlework and other practical activities, while remaining largely secluded from the rest of the household. Needless to say, some entertain themselves with members of the household, particularly if the lord is away for a long period.



## CHIVALRY

Nobles think of themselves as warriors, and specifically as knights. The ideals of chivalry are first articulated in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, and the ceremonies are much less elaborate than they become in later centuries. Nevertheless, the essential core of chivalry is established quite early.

Chivalry is based on four virtues: valor, loyalty, piety, and love. Valor is physical bravery in combat, and obviously

necessary to a warrior like a knight. Loyalty is more than obedience to your superiors; it involves putting their interests ahead of your own even in the absence of direct orders. Piety requires the knight to submit to the Church and lead a good Christian life, while love demands that he have a lady to whom he dedicates his exploits. There is some tension between these virtues, particularly between piety and the other three, but this complexity simply makes for more interesting characters. For more details on chivalry, see *Love and War*, a **Penumbra** book published by Atlas Games.

## LAW

Most law in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries is customary law, the way that things have always been done. Even when kings and other great lords make new law, they often claim to be doing nothing more than codifying the good practices of the past. There is a tendency, increasing throughout this period, towards codifying the law, and writing everything down. Indeed, the *Domesday Book*, compiled in England in 1086, is one of the most important examples of this trend: it lists all the fiefs in England, together with their holders and the amount that they must pay to the king for them.

The canon law courts (page 68) are in addition to this system, and independent of it.

## DECISIONS

Medieval courts rely much less on evidence than modern courts. Certainly, if everyone in a village saw a murder, the criminal will be convicted, but most crimes are committed in rather more secrecy. Instead, the power of God is invoked to determine innocence and guilt.

## COURTS

In England, the main courts are the county courts. This court meets in the main town of each county, officially twice a year but in practice, more often to deal with all the necessary business. The King's Sheriff presides over it, and in most cases fines are royal revenue. If the county has an earl—most do not—one third of the fines go to him, and the rest to the King.

The simplest way that this is done is through oaths. The accused swears, on the gospels or holy relics, that he is innocent. For some crimes, this is sufficient for an acquittal. For more serious crimes, the accused might have to find a number of *compurgators*; other men who will also swear that he is innocent.

The counties are divided up into smaller areas called *hundreds*. These vary greatly in area, but tend to cover about the same number of people (far more than a hundred). A hundred court can only deal with minor offenses, such as stealing turves from an abbey's land, and must pass pleas of the Crown, such as homicide, on to the county court. Some hundred courts are controlled by the King, but many are controlled by landowners or religious houses. The Abbey of St. Edmund, for example, controls the hundred courts in eight hundreds of Western Suffolk.

An alternative is the ordeal, which dates back to Anglo-Saxon times. There are two forms; fire and water. For fire, the accused must carry a heated iron bar a fixed distance. The burned hand is then bound, and inspected after three days. If it is healing cleanly, he is innocent. For water, the accused is thrown into a pool or pit of cold water. If he sinks, he is innocent (and quickly fished out), while if he floats he is guilty. The ordeal is hedged around with religion: for fire, a priest exorcizes the iron bar, keeps it on the altar during Mass, and finally blesses it against magical interference. Similar precautions are taken in the case of water. Accused women and free men may take the ordeal of fire, serfs the ordeal of water.

Feudal lords also have their own courts, where the lords hear cases between their vassals. In theory, these courts also hear disputes between a lord and his vassals, but as the lord presides most vassals would prefer that such cases were heard in the royal courts. The smallest version of the lord's court is the manor court, where the lord of the manor deals with petty crime and minor disputes between the people on his manor. Access to royal justice, in the hundred and county courts, is a disputed privilege; knights have it, peasant serfs don't, but the location of the dividing line is unclear.

The final alternative is trial by combat, which was introduced by the Norman conquerors. The accuser and the accused fight, and the victor is in the right. The combat uses staves or clubs, rather than more dangerous swords or spears, but it is still possible, if rare, for a combatant to be seriously injured or killed. The parties are expected to fight for themselves, but in exceptional cases they may nominate a champion. Generally, this privilege is limited to women, children, cripples, and clergy, although the clergy can usually get the case transferred to canon law courts, which do not use trial by combat, anyway. This system is occasionally abused by the physically strong, but not as often as the cynical might think.

## GAME RULES

To modern eyes, these methods of determining guilt and innocence do not look very reliable. The GM must therefore decide the extent to which God does intervene to ensure that they work properly.

Whatever the decision, rules are needed for the ordeal and trial by combat. The ordeal by water can use normal drowning rules, while the hot iron inflicts 1d4 damage, but never enough to kill. Standard d20 rules assume that all wounds heal cleanly, and the special rules for this case will depend on the GM's decision about the extent of God's intervention. For trial by combat, use the normal combat rules, except that the damage inflicted is nonlethal damage.

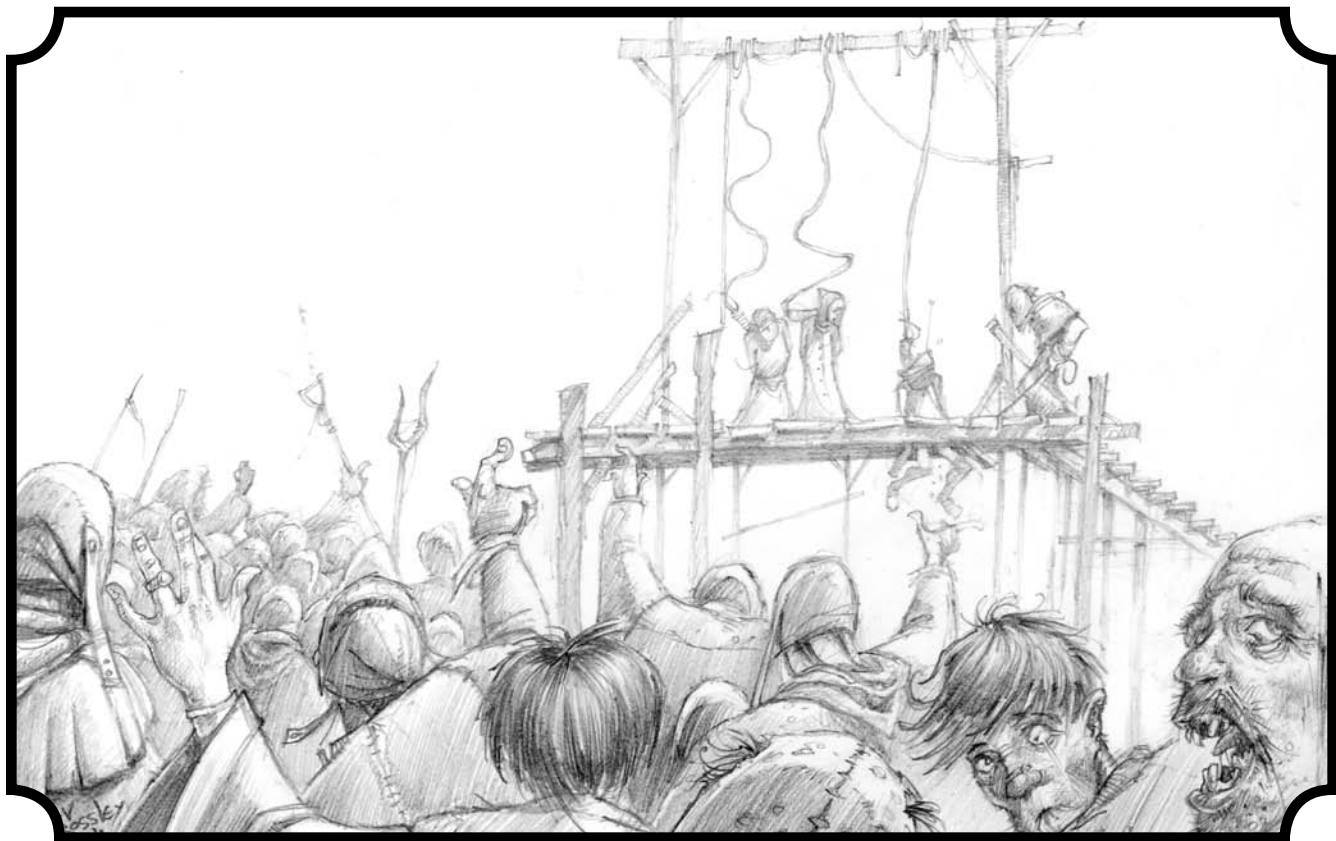
The effect of oaths depends almost entirely on the extent of divine intervention. Almost all medieval people believe that God watches over such oaths, and thus are reluctant to foreswear themselves. Many would rather confess to minor crimes than risk divine retribution. A higher level of divine intervention would see those who did foreswear themselves cursed in some way. An obvious, immediate curse, such as the foresworn individual instantly being covered with leprosy, would make oaths perfectly effective, and thus is probably too overt for most campaigns. An intermediate level of intervention might see the foresworn suffering from nightmares and presentiments of eternal damnation, possibly applying a -1 penalty to actions due to tiredness, and slowly driving them to confess.

The ordeal has real effects whatever the GM decides, but they may not be linked to guilt. Historically, about two thirds of those subjected to trial by ordeal were acquitted, so the result could be determined by a simple d6 roll: 1-4, innocent, 5-6, guilty. The level of divine intervention can then be modeled by a bonus to this roll for the guilty, or a penalty for the innocent. A +/-1 modifier gives a 50% chance of convicting the guilty, and an 87% chance of acquitting the innocent, while a modifier over two guarantees that the innocent will escape conviction.

Trial by combat is more complex, but, again, divine intervention can be modeled by a die roll modifier, applying to the attack rolls of both sides, aiding the innocent and penalizing the guilty. In this case, however, the effectiveness of the modifier depends in large part on how greatly the opponents differ. Very roughly, giving one side a +1 bonus and the other a -1 penalty increases the Challenge Rating of the character with the bonus by one. This is very rough indeed, but it gives the GM a place to start. An advantage of two points in Challenge Rating should guarantee victory. Thus, an innocent 1st level commoner facing a guilty 10th level fighter needs, approximately, a +12 bonus to his attack rolls, while the fighter suffers a -12 penalty.

## PENALTIES

For minor offenses, the standard penalty is a fine. This money goes to the owner of the court, so fines are sometimes levied for major offenses, at least against the rich. At the extreme,



wealthy nobles are often merely fined for rebelling against the King and trying to kill him, but they are fined very heavily — the King might confiscate their lands, and then restore them after a couple of years, which is equivalent to fining them two years' income. While fines may be heavy, they are usually within the criminal's means, as the intent is that they be paid.

More serious offenses, such as theft or poaching, are punished with flogging and mutilation, such as cutting off a hand or ear. Blinding and castration is regarded as a very serious penalty for men, just under the death sentence. Death by hanging is the penalty for murder, rape, robbery, and other very serious offenses. Occasionally death is inflicted by other means, but this is unusual.

Imprisonment is very rare, but not completely unheard of. It is most commonly used to hold people awaiting trial, and sometimes people are imprisoned until they pay their fines. Imprisonment for a fixed period as a penalty is extremely unusual, and imprisonment for longer than a year and a day is invariably politically motivated.

The penalty is at the discretion of the judge, and when the king judges in person he can do whatever he wants. Thus he can inflict the death penalty for petty theft and fine someone for slaughtering an entire village. Indeed, that is quite likely: a petty thief has no power, but someone capable of slaughtering an entire village has followers who might cause trouble, and thus he must be reconciled.

## CHARACTERS

### ADELARD OF BATH

NATURAL MAGICIAN,  
SCHOLAR, AND TRANSLATOR

Adelard was born, in 1080, and raised in Bath, in the west of England. His father was a prominent tenant of the bishop, and his family was sufficiently wealthy to allow Adelard to devote his time to study. When he became an adult he was attached to the household of the bishop of Bath, and worked within the cathedral. At the end of the eleventh century scholarship in England was not impressive, so in 1107 Adelard obtained leave from the bishop and left England to study in France, at the famous school of Tours. There he spent three years studying music and the other subjects of the quadrivium, before moving on to Laon, a center of study extremely popular among those seeking an administrative position in the English court.

Thus far his career was conventional for the period, and he expected a career within the church, probably continuing in the service of the Bishop of Bath. His interests leaned more towards the quadrivium than law and logic, but he was a perfectly competent logician, and appeared well qualified for an administrative post.

At this point, however, his life changed substantially. He met another scholar, a dabbler in natural magic, who taught him the basics of astral charms, and told him that the Saracens knew far more of such matters than those in the west. Fascinated, he left Laon in 1111 to travel south, to the lands of southern Italy and Sicily where he might meet and learn from the Arabs. In Sicily he spent two years in the entourage of William, Bishop of Syracuse, who encouraged him in his studies and assured him that they were not against the laws of God. In 1113 he left Sicily to travel to the Norman principality of Antioch, one of the Crusader states, where he sought out many secrets of natural magic and perfected his Arabic.

In 1115 he disappeared, sending no letters home, and people feared that he might have been killed. He was still alive,

however, and in 1122 he presented himself to the Bishop of Bath, and was restored to a position in his household. Adelard was eager to tell of the glories he had seen in his travels, and of his visit to Jerusalem itself, but those who listened carefully realized that he said very little about what he had done during the seven years he was missing.

Over the next few years he spent his time making translations from the Arabic of texts on mathematics and astronomy, including the first complete Latin translation of Euclid's Elements of Geometry. He also wrote a number of books of his own, one on the use of abacus, another on the





astrolabe, and three more literary texts. The first, *De Eodem et Diverso*, (On the Same and Different) is an exhortation to the study of philosopher. The second, *Questiones Naturales* (Natural Questions), is a work on natural philosopher. The third, *De Avibus Tractatus* (A Treatise on Birds), is a text on falconry and the care and diseases of birds of prey.

Adelard is probably the most powerful natural magician in Western Europe, and a suitable patron for characters with a scholarly inclination. He has connections to Henry Plantagenet as well as to the Bishop of Bath, but he himself is only in minor orders. He also has a mysterious episode in his past, which is likely to come back to haunt him and those associated with him.

Adelard is a fairly good teacher, and extremely tolerant of impertinent students, as long as they show a genuine desire to learn. He does not, however, have much patience with the stupid, especially not now that he is vastly more intelligent than most people, and he has no patience at all with those who express contempt for learning. Indeed, he occasionally turns them into donkeys to learn the error of their ways.

## ADELARD OF BATH, NATURAL MAGICIAN

Human male Scholar 3/Natural Magician 17: CR 20; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 20d4 + 40; hp 88; Init +0 (Dex); Speed 30 ft; AC 18 (*bracers of armor* +8); Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +9/+4 ranged (1d4-1, dagger); SA None; SQ Lore +12; AL Neutral good; SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +20; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 14 (+4 inherent bonus from *wishes*), Int 33 (+5 inherent bonus from *wishes*, +6 from *headband of intellect*), Wis 14, Cha 12.



*Skills and Feats*: Bluff +7, Concentration +19, Decipher Script +27, Diplomacy +27, Handle Animal +7, Knowledge (alchemy) +34, Knowledge (astrology) +37, Knowledge (geography) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (liberal arts) +34, Knowledge (metaphysics) +17, Knowledge (natural philosophy) +34, Perform (cittern) +8, Profession (clerk) +8, Sense Motive +20; Astral Charm (*demand*), Astral Charm (*dominate monster*), Astral Charm (*resistance*), Astral Charm (*screaming*), Astral Charm (*shapechange*), Astral Charm (*wish*), Author, Election Astrology, Logica Vetus, Natal Astrology, Political Astrology, Purify Earths, Purify Metals, Purify Waters, Skill Focus (Knowledge: astrology), Trained Memory.

*Astral Charms Known* (\* indicates a charm known through a feat): 0—detect magic, detect poison, know direction, light, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation, ray of frost, resistance\*; 1—charm person, cure light wounds, mage armor, sleep, unseen servant; 2—alter self, detect thoughts, fox's cunning, invisibility, tongues; 3—charm monster, dispel magic, fireball, fly, screaming\*; 4—cure critical wounds, dominate person, legend lore, minor creation, 5—baleful polymorph, mass suggestion, telepathic bond, teleport; 6—analyze dweomer, geas/quest, greater screaming; 7—control weather, greater arcane sight, limited wish; 8—demand\*, greater prying eyes, screen; 9—dominate monster\*, shapechange\*, wish\*

*Possessions*: bracers of armor +8, cloak of resistance +5, headband of intellect +6

*Theories*: +4 to Objections and Replies in Knowledge (natural philosophy).

## ANSELM OF CANTERBURY

### ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, SCHOLAR, AND SAINT

Anselm was born in 1033 in Aosta, a town in Italy. He was a serious youth, unusually pious and curious, but also reluctant to take on responsibilities and roles for which he felt himself unsuited. This led to quarrels with his father, and in 1052, when his mother died, these quarrels finally led to a break, and Anselm left home to travel Europe.

He spent six years traveling through France, studying at various schools, until in 1058 he arrived at the relatively new monastery of Bec in central Normandy, attracted by the reputation of Lanfranc, the prior and head of the school there. He settled down, and over two years decided that he was called to a monastic life. In 1060 he took his vows, and became a monk of Bec. There he joined Lanfranc in overseeing the school, until his teacher left in 1063 to become Abbot of Saint-Etienne in Caen. With Lanfranc's departure, Anselm became head of the school of Bec, and he began to shape it to his concerns.

Anselm believed that contemplation of God was the most important activity in the life of a monk, and saw scholarship as a means to that end. He was not interested in questioning the Christian faith, but in setting out the ways in which it

was true. He did, however, have great faith in the ability of rational argument to convince even the skeptic. Accordingly, he refused to accept any more external students at the school, turning it to focus on the education of the monks. After some years, they asked him to write down his teaching on the nature of God, and he did so in the *Monologion*, a meditation on God's nature and being.

Over this period he formulated and developed his most important philosophical contribution, the ontological argument for the existence of God. This runs, briefly, as follows. Consider the idea of a being than which nothing greater can be imagined. This is, of course, God. Now, something that really exists must be greater than something which does not. Therefore, that than which nothing greater can be imagined actually exists. Therefore, God exists. Anselm was very proud of this argument, which he regarded as a direct revelation from God, and defended it throughout his life, both against trivial misreadings and against more fundamental objections.

He was also interested in developing other areas of theology, considering the nature of the Son, the reasons for the Incarnation, the Fall of the Devil, and the procession of the Holy Spirit at various times in his career. Had he been allowed to remain quietly at Bec, even as abbot, a position to which he was elected in 1078, he would doubtless have passed his life happily in God's service.

Alas, he was not to be left undisturbed. Lanfranc, his old teacher, had become Archbishop of Canterbury after the Norman conquest of England, and in 1093 William Rufus nominated Anselm to the same post.

Anselm genuinely did not want the position, as he felt more called to teach than to lead one of the larger provinces in Europe. Nevertheless, the election was also a call, and Anselm felt he was bound to accept. He would not, however, accept investiture from William Rufus, a layman, and so his relations with the King began as they would go on. He found that he disagreed with the King on many points, mainly concerned with the authority a king could hold over his bishops, and over the obedience due to the Pope, Urban II. In 1097 things came to a head, and Anselm sought permission to leave the country to take his concerns to the Pope, finally reaching Rome in 1098. He was not to return while William was on the throne.

In 1098 Anselm attended the Council of Bari, where a number of Greek Christians were attempting to heal the Great Schism of 1054 between the eastern and western Churches. One point of theological difference was over the procession of the Holy Spirit; the East saying He proceeded from the Father alone, the West from both the Father and the Son. Anselm was asked to speak on the topic, and although he constructed a fine argument he failed to win the Greeks over, so the Schism persisted.

When Henry took the throne in 1100 he invited Anselm, by then back in Normandy, to return to his see as quickly as

possible. Anselm did so, but soon discovered that he had the same political disagreements with Henry as with his elder brother. From 1103 to 1107 he was in exile again, this time returning when the Pope reached a compromise agreement with the King. In 1109 Anselm died at Canterbury.

## ANSELM, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

**Human male Priest 11/Saint 4:** CR 15; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 11d6 + 4d12; hp 85; Init +0 (Dex); Speed 30 ft; AC 10 (+0 Dex); Atk +7 melee (1d4, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d4, dagger); SA Spells; SQ Absolution, Exhortation, High Mass, Lesser Penance, Sacraments (all); AL Lawful good; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +16; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 21, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Diplomacy +23, Knowledge (Christianity) +21, Knowledge (metaphysics) +21, Knowledge (theology) +21, Heal +23, Profession (prelate) +23, Sense Motive +23; Burning Synderesis, Commanding Speaker, Divine Warning, Fast and Pray, Feed the Hungry, God's Truth, Healing Prayer, Pastor's Insight, Preacher's Tongue, Truth Sense.

*Spells Prepared:* (6/7/5/5/4/3/1) (6/5+2 Wis/4+1 Wis/4+1 Wis/3+1 Wis/2+1 Wis/1): 0—cure minor wounds, detect poison, guidance, light, mending, purify food and drink; 1—bless water, command, comprehend languages, cure light wounds, endure elements, remove fear, sanctuary; 2—calm emotions, consecrate, cure moderate wounds, delay poison, make whole; 3—create food and water, cure serious wounds, remove blindness/deafness, remove curse, remove disease; 4—cure critical wounds, divination, restoration, tongues; 5—atonement, hallow, true seeing; 6—heal

*Possessions:* None personal, but access to the resources of Bec or Canterbury, depending on the date.

## Geoffrey of Monmouth

### AUTHOR

Geoffrey of Monmouth was a Welshman, born in 1092 in the town of Caerleon-on-Usk in south Wales. He was a bright and creative boy, and entered the church, seeking an ecclesiastical career. In 1129 he became a canon of St. George's in Oxford, a town that was just beginning to attract scholars, and in 1152 he was elected Bishop of St. Asaph, in Wales, moving to London, as war prevented him entering his see. Politically and ecclesiastically his life was not very significant. He witnessed a few charters and was elected to a poor bishopric that he couldn't even enter.

Geoffrey is far more important as an author. His most important production, the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, claims to tell the story of Britain from its first colonization by Brutus the Trojan to the final defeat of the native Britons by the invading Anglo-Saxons. Along the way, he tells the story of Arthur, the British king who, for a time, held back the Saxon onslaught, and even conquered France, defeating the remnants of the Roman Empire. Indeed, Geoffrey himself believes that his writing is his most important contribution.



He does not make his stories up, although he would be the first to admit, in private, that he recasts and rewrites to increase the impact of the stories. The speeches he puts into the mouth of Arthur were probably never spoke in exactly those words, but Geoffrey believes that Arthur himself certainly existed. He spent many years studying the history of Britain before he felt ready, in 1133, to begin work on his great history. The book was finished in 1136, and was an immediate success, being copied dozens of times and spread across the country.

As an artist rather than a chronicler, Geoffrey does have an agenda. He resents the way that the British have been pushed to the fringes of history, so he pushes them back to the center, adding a British army that sacks Rome and extending Arthur's conquests to include parts of the Roman Empire. He also believes that the fall of the British was due to their own sins and inability to put aside internal differences, so he does not harbor grudges against the invaders. He is a little surprised at just how literally many people take his work, but he certainly does not want to stand up and admit to making much of it up.

Although he claims that he translated the *Historia* from a 'certain ancient British book', it is actually based on many different sources, which Geoffrey has worked together. However, the Prophecies of Merlin, which form a section of the work, were genuinely translated from an ancient text. Geoffrey edited his translation somewhat, and added levels of symbolism and obfuscation to what were, in origin, worryingly clear and accurate prophecies. He still has the originals, and serious concerns about some of the predictions.

## Geoffrey of Monmouth, Author

**Human male Artist 8:** CR 8; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 8d4; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); Speed 30 ft; AC 12 (+1 Dex, +1 Lesser Weapon Protection); Atk +3 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +5 ranged (1d4-1, dagger); SA None; SQ +4 Inspiration checks per day, Enduring Art, Moving Art (loyalty), Imitation, Materials; AL Neutral good; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +7 (+3 to all saves against magic from Charm Against Magic); Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 17, Wis 13, Cha 14.

**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +13 (11 + 2 Cha), Craft (fable) +14 (11 + 3 Int), Craft (hagiography) +14, Craft (history) +17, Craft (romance) +17, Decipher Script +14, Diplomacy +19, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (history) +17, Profession (clerk) +12, Sense Motive +14; Artistic Inspiration, Charm Against Magic, Lesser Weapon Protection, Negotiator, Skill Focus (Craft: history), Skill Focus (Craft: romance), Skill Focus (Knowledge: history)

**Possessions:** Few personal possessions, but access to the resources of St. George's or, later, the bishopric of St Asaph. He wears a Charm Against Magic and a Lesser Weapon Protection charm.

## Heloise

### Scholar, Lover, and Abbess

Heloise was born near Paris in 1100, and her parents died when she was young, leaving her to be raised by her uncle Fulbert, a canon of the cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris. Fulbert proved to be a good choice of guardian, taking her into his house and raising her well. Heloise displayed early signs of a lively intelligence, and Fulbert arranged to have her taught to read and write by the nuns at Argenteuil. At first she read romances and literary classics, including Roman poets such as Ovid and Virgil, but she soon wanted more taxing studies. Her uncle was, at the time, providing lodging to Peter Abaelard (page 119), the most renowned logician in Western Europe, and the situation seemed ideal. Fulbert appointed Abaelard as Heloise's personal tutor in 1115.

Heloise promptly fell in love with her brilliant, charismatic teacher. As the lessons progressed, she discovered that she had something to teach him, as Abaelard's knowledge of the classics was less than hers. She brought him manuscripts, and one day, greatly daring, she read Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* with him. It succeeded better than she had dared to hope, with Abaelard declaring his undying love for her, and they consummated their love that evening.

Their affair was passionately physical, but not purely physical. They found as much pleasure in intellectual debate as in sex, at least until Heloise became pregnant. At this point, Fulbert "noticed" their affair, although Heloise suspected that he had simply been turning a blind eye previously, and became angry with Abaelard. Abaelard spirited Heloise away to Normandy, and had her dress as a nun to avoid suspicion.

Abaelard planned to return to Paris to promise Fulbert that he would marry Heloise, as long as the marriage was kept secret. Heloise protested vigorously; she did not want to distract Abaelard's attention from his studies by drawing him into marriage, nor did she want to harm his reputation or his chance of an ecclesiastical career. Abaelard was insistent, however, reluctant to let her reputation suffer to protect his. The deal was made, and the two were married. Soon after, Heloise gave birth to their son, whom they name Astralabe.

Shortly afterwards Fulbert and his family started spreading the news of the marriage, much to Heloise's disgust. She vigorously denied the story, claiming that she was still unmarried. Fulbert became angry with her, and Abaelard, fearing for her safety, took her to the convent of Argenteuil, where she dressed as a nun but did not take vows. Indeed, Abaelard continued to visit her there, and they even made love in the convent refectory.

And then Abaelard was attacked and castrated. In the aftermath and shock Heloise agreed when Abaelard suggested that she should become a nun as he became a monk. Abaelard insisted that she take her vows before he did and, weeping, she agreed, although the lack of trust rankled for years.

She quickly decided that this was a mistake. While she kept the outward forms well enough, inside she still longed for Abaelard, and longed to make love to him again. Even during Mass she was unable to banish the thoughts from her mind, and she almost despaired. She felt no remorse for her relationship with Abaelard, even the sinful parts, only regret that it was over and a wistful desire that it could happen again. Despite living what she saw as a life of hypocrisy, Heloise was a talented administrator, and was made Prioress of Argenteuil in 1123. A few years later Abbot Suger of St. Denis established, with the help of forged documents, that the abbey owned Argenteuil, and expelled the nuns. Abaelard heard about this, and arranged for them to be installed at his old oratory of the Paraclete, with Heloise as Abbess. Throughout all of this, Heloise had no personal communication from Abaelard, and she began to feel betrayed and neglected.

The crisis came in 1133, when Abaelard released an account of his life and sufferings. A copy came to Heloise, and she wrote in reproach to her lover. Why had she not been sent the account directly? She still loved Abaelard and was his alone, and deserved some respect, at least, for her sacrifice. Abaelard's reply was formal and emphasized standard religious piety. Heloise lost her cool, and her next letter burned with all her passion. She told Abaelard that his letters made her worry even more about him, that she still suffered from their entry to religion, and that, far from being a good abbess, she burned constantly with sexual desire for him.

The letter shocked Abaelard out of his complacency, and his reply addressed Heloise's concerns. There was no way they could go back to what they were, but perhaps they could move forward as Christians. The exchange seemed to purge Heloise of her pent-up anger, and she realized that Abaelard

could truly never again be what she wanted. The rest of their correspondence, while warm, was concerned with practical matters of how to rule the nuns, and Heloise slowly began to settle into her new life.

The Paraclete was soon a successful abbey, with six daughter houses, all ultimately owing obedience to Heloise. Many of the greatest churchmen of Europe, including Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, maintained correspondence with the abbess, showing great respect for her learning and abilities. Over time, while Heloise never felt the call to be a saint, she did come to find a vocation in leading and teaching her nuns, in her studies, and in her position. She died in 1163, and was buried alongside Abaelard in the church of the Paraclete.

## HELOISE, ABBESS

**Human female Scholar 7/Prelate 7:** CR 14; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 14d4 + 14; hp 63; Init +1 (Dex); Speed 30 ft; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +4 melee (1d4-2, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d4-2, dagger); SA None; SQ Command, Contacts (Province, +3), Lore +8 (+3 scholar levels, +5 Int), Respect, Sense of Threats; AL Chaotic good; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +16; Str 7, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 18, Cha 16.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +12, Bluff +23, Diplomacy +29, Knowledge (astrology) +22, Knowledge (Christianity) +25, Knowledge (history) +22, Knowledge (liberal arts) +22, Knowledge (metaphysics) +22, Knowledge (moral philosophy) +25, Knowledge (natural philosophy) +22, Knowledge (theology) +22, Profession (abbess) +24, Sense Motive +23; Iron Will, Isagoge, Logica Vetus, Natal Astrology, Negotiator, Political Astrology, Theologia Summi Boni, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Christianity), Skill Focus (Knowledge: moral philosophy), Skill Focus (Profession: abbess), Trained Memory.

*Possessions:* None personal, but she has control of the resources of the order of the Paraclete.

## PETER ABAELARD BRILLIANT PHILOSOPHER

(Note: The usual form of his name is 'Abelard'. However, Abaelardus, with five syllables, is probably the correct form, and less easy to confuse with Adelard (page 115). Anglicized, Abaelardus becomes Abaelard.)

Abaelard was born in 1079 in Le Pallet, near the border between Brittany and Anjou. His first studies were at Loches and Tours with a scholar named Roscelin, a controversial figure whom Abaelard later came to regard with contempt. Accordingly, he later kept quiet about his early education. By 1100 he was in Paris, learning from William of Champeaux, the finest teacher of logic at that time. According to Abaelard, William became jealous of his student's ability, leading the young man to establish his



own school at the royal residence of Melun, just outside Paris. The competition between the two scholars was entangled with and complicated by the struggles for the favor of the King of France, which resulted in Abaelard occasionally having to leave Paris for a time. During one of those excursions he studied theology at Laon, in 1113, and managed to irritate Anselm, the main teacher in that center, in part by giving his own lessons which were, Abaelard says, more popular than Anselm's.

In 1113 he moved back to Paris, and taught logic as the master of the cathedral school. He was lodging with one of the cathedral canons, a man named Fulbert, and Fulbert was the guardian of his niece, Heloise, who was living with them. Heloise, who was in her mid teens, was highly intelligent, and interested in study. Fulbert encouraged her in this, and appointed Abaelard as her personal tutor, sometime in 1115. Abaelard and Heloise fell passionately in love, and Heloise became pregnant. Abaelard spirited Heloise away to Brittany and made his peace with Fulbert, promising to marry her, on condition that the marriage remained secret. Heloise vigorously opposed the marriage, but Abaelard was determined to have his way. They were married, and soon after Heloise gave birth to a son, whom they named Peter Astralabe.

Fulbert and his family started spreading the story of the marriage, despite the agreement, and Heloise vehemently denied that it had ever happened. Married men were not considered appropriate teachers, and Abaelard was concerned for his career, as was Heloise. Fulbert was,

naturally, unhappy with Heloise's reaction, and Abaelard put her in the convent of Argenteuil, where she dressed and lived as a nun.

Unfortunately, Fulbert thought that Abaelard had made Heloise take the veil in order to be rid of her. He hired a gang of ruffians, and in 1117 they burst into Abaelard's lodgings and castrated him.

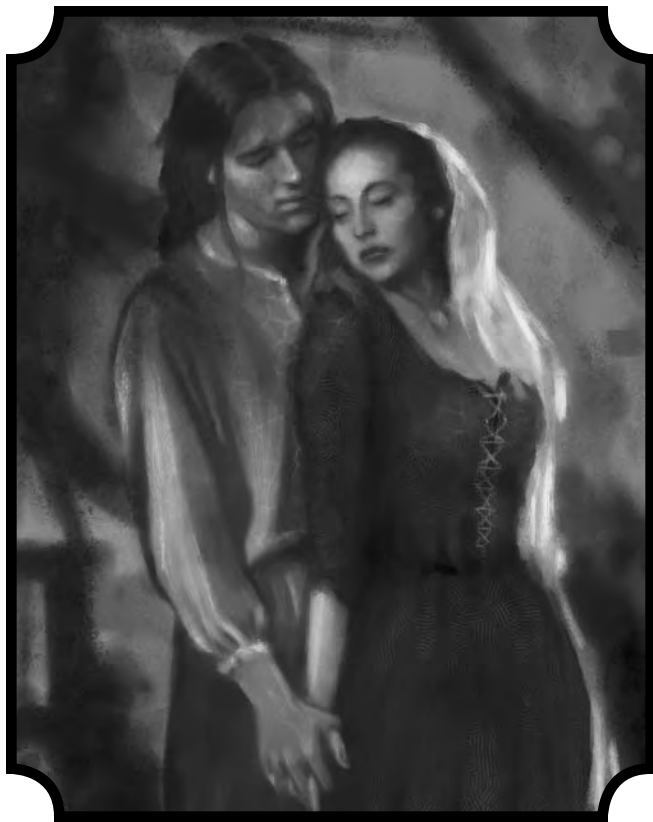
Two of the perpetrators were caught and themselves castrated and blinded, but the incident changed the direction of Abaelard's life. He reflected on his past conduct with shame, and decided to become a monk. At the same time he urged Heloise to become a nun, and she did so, at the convent of Argenteuil.

Abaelard entered the monastery of St. Denis, close to Paris, and the abbot and other monks quickly set him up as a teacher, back in Paris, with his own house and numerous students. In part this was motivated by a respect for his abilities, but also by Abaelard's growing commitment to a genuinely austere monastic life, which sat ill with the monks of the wealthy abbey. At this time Abaelard wrote his *Theologia Summi Boni* (see page 78). Two pupils of Anselm of Laon accused Abaelard of heresy in this text, and had him summoned before a council at Soissons. Abaelard's accusers convinced the Archbishop and papal legate to condemn Abaelard without examining him over the contents of the book, and Abaelard was forced to cast the book into the flames, and recite the Athanasian Creed to confirm his orthodoxy. He was briefly confined at a strict monastery, but soon returned to St. Denis. His stay there did not last long, as he believed that the historical evidence showed that St. Denis had been Bishop of Corinth, while the Abbot believed it showed him to have been Bishop of Athens. Amid accusations that he had insulted not only his abbey, but France itself, Abaelard hurried away.

After further political trouble, Abaelard established himself in a hermitage which he dedicated first to the Holy Trinity, and later to the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit as Comforter. Despite its remote setting in a marsh, many students flocked to it, and Abaelard had, once again, considerable success as a teacher and theologian. After a brief and unhappy period as abbot of a monastery in Brittany, he returned to Paris, to teach in the schools once more.

Abaelard returned to Paris in 1133, and the city had changed substantially. There were now many masters, and the city was becoming known as a center of logical and theological study. While Abaelard had intellectual differences with the other masters, there was, for some time, no personal animosity, and Abaelard was able to teach in peace for many years.

In 1140 William of St. Thierry accused Abaelard of heresy, sending a letter to Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, and an extremely influential reforming churchman. A council was called at Sens to investigate Abaelard's doctrines, but Bernard convinced the bishops to condemn Abaelard's



propositions before he had a chance to speak. Abaelard appealed, unsuccessfully, to the Pope, and was confined to the abbey of Cluny. Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, took up Abaelard's case, and was able to get the excommunication lifted. Abaelard, alas, was old and dying, and on 21 April 1142 he passed from this world.

## PETER ABAELARD, Philosopher

**Human male Scholar 14:** CR 14; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 14d4 + 14; hp 55; Init +0 (Dex); Speed 30 ft; AC 10; Atk +6 melee (1d4-1, dagger) or +7 ranged (1d4-1, dagger); SA None; SQ Clear Explanation, Deep Knowledge (liberal arts), Lore +12, Memory Palace; AL Chaotic good; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 21, Wis 16, Cha 17.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +9, Concentration +18, Diplomacy +26, Knowledge (astrology) +25, Knowledge (Christianity) +25, Knowledge (history) +22, Knowledge (liberal arts) +28, Knowledge (metaphysics) +25, Knowledge (moral philosophy) +25, Knowledge (natural philosophy) +22, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +25, Knowledge (theology) +25, Sense Motive +22; Author, Consolation of Philosophy, Election Astrology, Etymologiae, Isagoge, Logica Vetus, Natal Astrology, Negotiator, Opuscula Sacra, Political Astrology, Skill Focus (Knowledge: astrology), Skill Focus (Knowledge: Christianity), Skill Focus (Knowledge: liberal arts), Skill Focus (Knowledge: metaphysics), Skill Focus (Knowledge: moral philosophy), Skill Focus (Knowledge: nobility and royalty), Skill Focus (Knowledge: theology), Trained Memory.

*Possessions:* None. He has access to a substantial library, however.

*Theories:* May use Knowledge (liberal arts) to respond to questions posed in Knowledge (theology) or Knowledge (moral philosophy). +4 to Knowledge (liberal arts) for Objections and Replies, +17 Knowledge points in Knowledge (liberal arts), does d8+3 damage with a successful objection.

## RANULF FLAMBARD

AGENT OF KING WILLIAM,  
Bishop of Durham

Ranulf was born in 1060, the son of a village priest in the diocese of Bayeux in Normandy. He sought the patronage of Odo of Bayeux quite early in his life, and fairly soon found himself in England, in the household of Maurice, William the Conqueror's chancellor. This, of course, brought him into close contact with King, and he was quickly successful. His good looks, sharp intellect, and force of personality made him a formidable politician, and his bravery and lack of ties to the great families meant that he was willing to carry out politically unpopular tasks. An ordained priest, although not blessed with God's power directly, Ranulf was appointed chaplain to the King, a position he still held at the

Conqueror's death.

By Rufus's accession Ranulf had already gathered extensive lands, but he still had no formal position beyond King's Chaplain. William found that Ranulf suited his personality, and was as willing an agent for the son as he had been for the father, and so Flambard soon found himself the holder of the King's Seal and once of his chief judges for the whole of England. Indeed, his wife, Aelfgifu of Huntingdon, claimed that he was second only to the King. Ranulf was a fearsome lawyer, and high-handed in carrying out the King's commands. He saw no reason to seek the favor of anyone but his master, and so inevitably made enemies. Indeed, "Flambard" is a nickname likening him to a torch or bonfire, in reference to his putting himself above everyone, and burning with avarice and cruelty.

In fact, he was neither particularly avaricious nor particularly cruel. He went little beyond William's requirements, and gathered wealth which was merely much greater than he had been born with, not particularly startling for the time. He was certainly not a paragon of virtue, and his fondness for good food and fine women was well known, even after he had become Bishop of Durham. He had a slightly cruel sense of humor, as when, as bishop, he invited the monks of Durham to dine at his table. Of course, they could not refuse, but Ranulf served only food that they were forbidden to eat, and had beautiful women, dressed in tight clothes with their hair loose down their backs, serve as waitresses. Those monks who refused to look up he labeled hypocrites, while he accused those who protested of lacking respect.

William appointed Ranulf Bishop of Durham in 1099, not long before his death. This was fortunate for Ranulf, as he would otherwise have had little to defend him in the next reign. Indeed, he was very much involved with the rebellion against Henry in favor of Robert, acting as one of the instigators. When the rebellion failed, Henry had him arrested and confined in the Tower of London. His imprisonment lasted only a year or so, and Ranulf managed to escape, climbing out of a window and down a rope. Within another couple of years he was reconciled with the King, and acting as his agent in his attempts to conquer Normandy. He was as successful there as he had been in aiding William, and Ranulf was able to die, in 1128, still in possession of his see and his liberty.

## RANULF FLAMBARD, Bishop of Durham

**Human male Canonist 15:** CR 15; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 15d4 + 30; hp 64; Init +1 (Dex); Speed 30 ft; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+1, dagger) or +8/+3 ranged (1d4+1, dagger); SA None; SQ Assess Person, Contacts (Christendom +5), Good Timing, King's Favor, Required Negotiation, Scheme Linking, Skill Mastery (Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Profession (steward), Sense Motive; all taken twice); AL Chaotic neutral; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +13; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 18.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +25, Bluff +27, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +31, Gather Information +25, Innuendo +20, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (Christianity) +16, Knowledge (history) +22, Knowledge (local) +22, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +22, Profession (steward) +20, Sense Motive +27; Iron Will, Leadership, Negotiator, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Appraise), Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Skill Focus (Gather Information), Skill Focus (Intimidate), Skill Focus (Sense Motive)

*Possessions:* Extensive mundane possessions. +5 *vorpal longsword*, which he can't actually use, but carries because it is obviously valuable and impressive. He doesn't realize just *how* valuable, and if he is really pushed and uses it in desperation, he will be surprised at how effective it is.

## WILLIAM OF CONCHES

### TUTOR OF HENRY PLANTAGENET

William was born in Conches in Normandy in 1090. He demonstrated scholastic aptitude early in his life, and around 1110 he went to Chartres to study in the school there, under Bernard of Chartres. He learned grammar and the other liberal arts, and made a start on the study of philosophy. He started teaching at Chartres and Paris in 1122, and continued until he lost his post as a result of a scholarly dispute.

This dispute was with a group of teachers known as the *Cornficians*, who believed that it was not necessary to spend so long studying the liberal arts; all that was needed was a grounding in the basics of rhetoric, as you would then be able to convince people that you knew everything. William strongly disagreed, stressing the importance of a thorough grounding in all seven liberal arts, but the students preferred the easier masters and William was forced out of the school.

He left in something of a huff, and returned to his native Normandy in 1136, where Geoffrey of Anjou engaged him as a tutor for his sons, including Henry Plantagenet. As Henry grew to adulthood William became more of

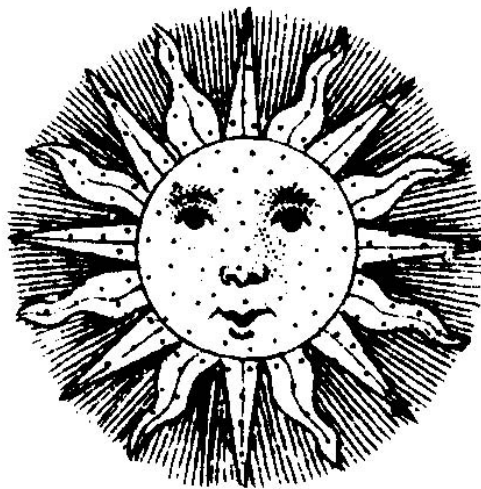
an adviser than tutor, but he remained close to the young prince, and his fame as a philosopher spread throughout the Angevin domains.

In 1122 he had briefly met Adelard of Bath as the natural magician was returning to England, and had acquired an interest in natural philosophy from him. The two corresponded over the following years, and William began to dabble in natural magic. Adelard sent William a copy of his *Questiones Naturales* soon after it was written, and William seriously considered following Adelard's path to power.

During his dispute with the Cornficians, however, he was accused of heresy by William of St. Thierry. The other William was careful with his accusations, but he let William of Conches know that much of his concern was prompted by the latter's dabbling in magic, and that he would bring this up with the Bishop if necessary. This forced William's hand, and he left the schools. A number of disturbing dreams convinced him that William of St. Thierry was right, and he abandoned natural magic, sending a dramatic letter to Adelard breaking off their correspondence.

After that, he generally tried to avoid using or making astral charms, although he occasionally allowed himself to be persuaded to cast horoscopes. He wrote his own text on natural philosophy, the *Dragmaticon Philosophiae*, in which he tried to distance himself from Adelard, although his extensive debts to the older scholar are clearly visible in the work.

William has very little respect for inherited position, and is quite willing to tease and criticize even such influential people as Geoffrey of Anjou. He has no tolerance at all for lazy students, and makes sure that any of his students learn all of the basics before moving on to the more interesting material. His attitude to natural magic is wavering, as he comes to doubt the source of his dreams, and indeed to wonder whether William of St. Thierry might not have been a magician himself, seeking to distract attention from his own activities.



# APPENDIX: REFERENCE CHARTS

## MASTER FEATS TABLE

Feat	Prerequisite
Artistic Inspiration [General]	None
Astral Charm [General]	Number of Astral Charm feats equal to the level of the charm learned.
Author [General]	None
Beatific Vision [Charism]	Burning Synderesis, Divine Message, character level 15th+
Brute Speech [Charism]	Gift of Tongues
Burning Synderesis [Charism]	Any seven Charisms, at least one of each type (Prophecy, Healing, Body, Succor, Teaching, and Vengeance)
Charm Against Magic [General]	Character Level 5th+, Lesser Charm Against Magic
Charm of Wounding [General]	Character Level 5th+, Lesser Charm of Wounding
Charm of Youth [General]	Character Level 15th+, Lesser Charm of Youth
Clothe the Naked [Charism]	Character level 5th+
Commanding Speaker [Charism]	None
Curse Charms [General]	None
Damage Ward [General]	Character Level 5th+
Disease Remedy [General]	None
Divine Illumination [Charism]	Any two Prophecy Charisms
Divine Message [Charism]	Divine Illumination, any three other Prophecy Charisms, any two non-Prophecy Charisms
Divine Warning [Charism]	None
Election Astrology [General]	Natal Astrology, Political Astrology
Emotion Charm [General]	Character level 5th+, Lesser Emotion Charm
Etymologiae [Book]	Speak Latin, after 650
Exorcism [Charism]	None
Fast and Pray [Charism]	None
Feed the Hungry [Charism]	Character level 5th+
Free the Prisoners [Charism]	Character level 5th+
Frequent Inspiration [General]	None
Gift of Skill [General]	Character level 5th+, Lesser Gift of Skill
Gift of Tongues [Charism]	Truth Sense
God's Truth [Charism]	Any two Teaching Charisms
Greater Charm Against Magic [General]	Character Level 10th+, Charm Against Magic
Greater Charm of Wounding [General]	Character Level 10th+, Charm of Wounding
Greater Gift of Skill [General]	Character level 10th+, Gift of Skill
Greater War Charm [General]	Character level 10th+, War Charm
Greater Weapon Protection [General]	Character level 10th+, Weapon Protection



## MASTER FEATS TABLE (CONTINUED)

Feat	Prerequisite
Healer's Hands [Charism]	None
Healing Prayer [Charism]	None
Immunity [Charism]	Any two other Charisms
Isagoge [Book]	Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 300
Lesser Charm Against Magic [General]	None
Lesser Charm of Wounding [General]	None
Lesser Charm of Youth [General]	Character Level 5th+
Lesser Emotion Charm [General]	None
Lesser Gift of Skill [General]	None
Lesser War Charm [General]	None
Lesser Weapon Protection [General]	None
Logica Vetus [Book]	Knowledge (liberal arts) skill modifier +10, Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 300 BC
Many Tongues [Charism]	Any two Teaching Charisms
Miracle Cure [Charism]	Any other Healing Charism, character level 5th+
Natal Astrology [General]	None
Opuscula Sacra [Book]	Speak Latin, after 520
Pastor's Vision [Charism]	None
Poison Remedy [General]	None
Political Astrology [General]	None
Posterior Analytics [Book]	Knowledge (liberal arts) skill modifier +15, Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 300 BC
Preacher's Tongue [Charism]	None
Preacher's Voice [Charism]	None
Punitive Malediction [Charism]	Warning Malediction, character level 10th+
Purify Earths [General]	None
Purify Metals [General]	None
Purify Waters [General]	None
Qanun [Book]	Knowledge (natural philosophy) skill modifier +15, Speak Arabic, after 950
Questiones Naturales [Book]	Speak Latin, after 1130
Raise the Dead	Five different Miracle Cure Charisms, character level 12th+
Resurrection Body [Charism]	Any sixteen Charisms, character level 20th+
Sense of Significance [Charism]	None
Shield of God [Charism]	None
Sword of God [Charism]	None
The Consolation of Philosophy [Book]	Knowledge (moral philosophy) skill modifier +10, Speak Latin, After 525
Theologia Summi Boni [Book]	Speak Latin, after 1120
Timaeus [Book]	Knowledge (natural philosophy) skill modifier +8, Speak Latin, Greek, or Arabic, after 350 BC
Truth Sense [Charism]	Pastor's Insight
War Charm [General]	Character level 5th+, Lesser War Charm
Warding [Charism]	Exorcism, character level 5th+
Warning Malediction [Charism]	Divine Warning
Watch and Pray [Charism]	None
Weapon Protection [General]	Character level 5th+, Lesser Weapon Protection

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