

Secret Societies of Thëah: Book One

*The Knights of the
Rose and Cross*



7th Sea

Roleplaying Game

The Knights of the Rose and Cross

"Heroic deeds awaken humanity's slumbering soul."

— Rosenkreuz

From time immemorial, the Order of the Rose and Cross has protected the innocent, defended the helpless, and brought justice to the wicked. Beloved by all, patronized by kings and commoners alike, they represent the best of the human spirit. But hidden secrets lie behind their noble seal — secrets that could shatter Théah if they became known. Don the tabard of the Rose and Cross, and learn what Théan honor truly means.

The Knights of the Rose and Cross includes:

- A detailed history and background of this ancient sect.
- The knowledge at the heart of the order which the Knights keep hidden from all — even their own members.
- Expanded rules for creating your own Knights, including new Advantages, a new Swordsman school, and guides on creating your own chapterhouses.
- A complete adventure with a new chase map.

7Sea

Rose and Cross



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Knights of the Rose & Cross



*Wicked men stop at nothing to make evil.
So should righteous men stop at nothing to make justice.*

— Rosenkreuz



7th Sea

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The old man turned, saw both of them on their knees and caught his breath. Cowan thought he saw a small tear in the old man's clear, blue eyes.

"Very well. This is what I ask you to do."

Part Two: Five Days Ago

They spent the better part of the night riding their horses to death. Adara didn't speak the entire way. They finally stopped to camp just a few hours before sunrise. Cowan set up camp and prepared the food while Adara sat silently before the fire. When they were done eating, he rubbed down the horses' legs and groomed them.

"You have demonstrated great restraint, Tyro," she said, her features lit by the fire.

Cowan smiled. "You'll tell me soon enough. You always do."

She almost laughed. "It's the reason I tolerate your impatience," she said. "I know the trait all too well." She motioned to a log sitting beside the fire. "Come here, and I will tell you."

He left the horses and put himself by the fire. It was warm. A bit too warm. He pushed back a little.

"Senior Corbitt was my Domini. He trained me. Saved my life more times than even a Prophet could count, I'd wager."

Cowan nodded quietly and waited for her to continue.

"He was a powerful man when he was younger. The son of a Vodacce merchant prince. Heir to a fortune."

She paused. Cowan couldn't wait. "What happened?"

She poked the fire with a stick and kept her gaze on the flame. "The same thing that happens at the beginning of every tragedy. He fell in love." Adara kicked a small twig into the fire. "He was betrothed to one girl, but loved another. He told his father. That was his first mistake. He tried to run away. That was his second mistake. When his father found him, he refused to return. That mistake gave him the scar you were eyeing."

Cowan felt a cold chill go down his back. He pushed himself closer to the fire.

"He never showed up at the wedding. Instead, he joined the Order."

"But what about his love?" Cowan asked.

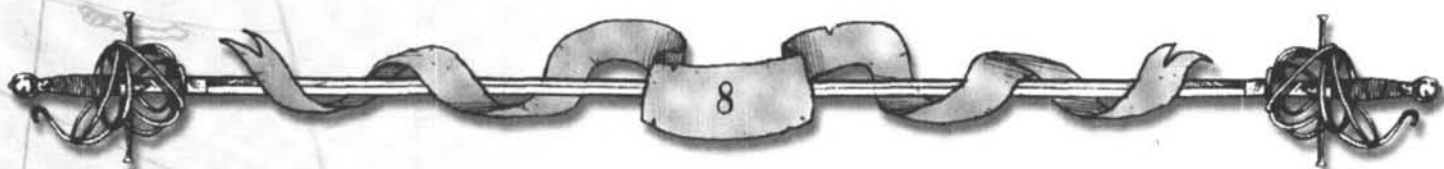
Adara shook her head. "When he ran away, when he earned that scar, she was with him. They took her away. He never saw her again."

They were both quiet for a moment. Then she spoke again. "Just two days ago, he received a letter written in a young girl's hand." Cowan began to realize where the story was going. Adara saw the flash in his eyes and she nodded.

"Yes. It's his daughter."

Part Three: Yesterday

Cowan had seen many things. He had seen men missing more limbs than they were able to keep. He'd seen illness and disease. He had fallen asleep on a hill once and seen





Rose & Cross

the Sidhe court riding across the countryside. The sight had turned his eyes gray.

But here he was in Vodacce. Buildings taller than he had ever imagined. A vast webwork of bridges where women in dresses as black as a nightmare walked high above the common women so far below.

The courtesans smiled at him as he passed them, and all he could do was smile back. Their lips and eyes were all that showed, but that was enough.

"Put your tongue back in your head before you trip on it and fall into the canal," Adara whispered.

"I'm sorry, Domini."

"Don't be sorry, be respectful. I don't know what the rules are in Avalon, but looking too close here will get you in trouble."

They walked on for an hour. Finally she stopped, looking up at the reaching structure. Cowan strained his neck trying to see the top. "It looks like building atop building atop building."

Adara nodded. "That's exactly what it is. And that's where our young lady is." She pointed upward. "At the very top."

Cowan shook his head. "How are we going to get up there? With rope?"

She smiled. "No. With cunning."

Part Four: Twenty Minutes Ago

A knock on the door.

Five men looked up from their supper, all with suspicious eyes. One of them, a large ugly man named Liborio, grabbed a candle from the table and walked toward the door.

"Eh. Who's there?" he asked.

"Open the door, idiot," a foreign man's voice said from the other side.

Liborio slid aside the lock and peeked out. Standing there in the darkness was a young Avalon man. Standing beside him was a woman with dark eyes and dark hair. He couldn't make out anything else behind the black veil across her face.

"Idiot, let me in. It is cold and I am hungry."

"You isn't comin' in here," Liborio said. "Nobody comes in here."

The foreigner flashed a Swordsman's pin. "I am here for the girl, dullard. Now step aside before I cut you in half and step *through* you."

Liborio shook his head. "Nah. Signore Vestini didn't say nothin' about movin' the girl tonight."

"Change of plans," the foreigner said. "Rose and Cross Knights are in town."

That made the men at the table sit up and take notice.

Liborio shook his head again. "No movin'. Signore Vestini—"

Suddenly, Liborio shook, shuddered and dropped his great mass to the floor. Before the men at the table could put down their forks, the foreigner and the witch had pistols in hand, each one pointed at a separate head.

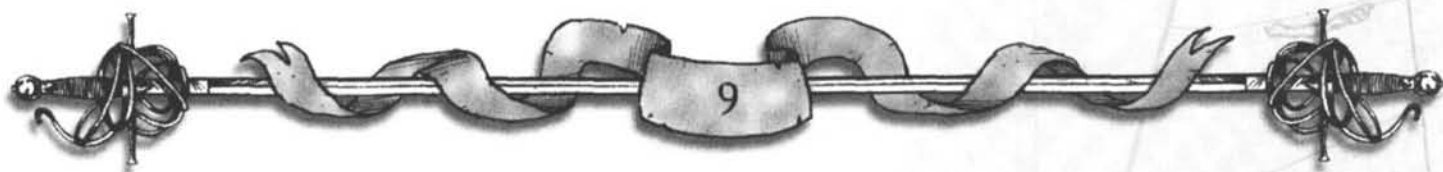
"Gentlemen," the fate witch said through her veil, "I don't believe there will be any dessert tonight."



Once he had all five of them on the floor tied together in a series of sailor's knots, Cowan looked up at Adara in the black dress and smiled. "Somehow, it isn't very complimentary on you, Domini."

"My mother thought so, too." She lifted the veil and looked at the stairs.

Cowan reached outside the front door and grabbed their weapons, then shut it and locked it behind him. He handed





Adara her sword belt and she strapped it across her waist. Then she hiked up the skirt and tucked it under the belt.

Cowan spent only a moment gazing at the long legs under that dress as she slipped her tall black boots over them. "Really, Tyro," she said, smiling. "It looks as if patience isn't the only virtue you lack."

He saw her smile and dared one of his own. "Nor yourself, Domini."

She stood and drew her sword and knife. "I lost my modesty a long time ago. Left it in a building not too far from here, in fact."

Cowan grabbed a candelabra from the table. "Another story?"

She nodded. "Another time." She pointed to the stairway. "Shall we?"



Cowan carried the candelabra. Adara slid up the spiral stairway, her back against the wall as they went. The building was quiet. Dead quiet.

The stairway kept curving upward, until finally Adara stopped. She turned to look at Cowan. She shook her head three times.

Six men.

He nodded that he understood.

A voice came from around the corner. He saw Adara's fists clench around the hilts of her weapons. Her legs tensed. She looked back at Cowan and looked at the candelabra. Her knife hand turned and thrust forward. Again he nodded that he understood.

He moved past his Domini and heard a chair scrape against the floor. Footsteps moved closer.

He moved fast, pushed forward, throwing the candelabra at the first thing he saw. The hot wax and flame splashed onto a man's face. He screamed.

Before he even knew it, his sword and knife were in his hands. Five more men charged him. He dodged the first one, parried the second, smashed the third in the face with the pommel of his sword, shoved his knife deep into the hip of the fourth, kicked backward at the fifth, swung about and sliced the first in the face, leapt up on the table in the center of the hallway, leapt backward and pinned the second one against the wall with his sword.

At the corner, Adara stood with her hands on her hips and a smile on her lips. "You've been practicing."

Cowan suddenly realized he needed to take a breath. He almost fell over, but caught himself on the table.

She pulled him back to his feet. "Very impressive," she said.

He smiled. "I had a great teacher."

For a moment their eyes met. Then she looked away. For two years he'd been looking at those eyes. For the first time, he saw them waver.

"Come now. We need to find Corbitt's daughter."

She pushed the table aside and moved down the corridor. "Grab that, Tyro," she said, pointing at the candle on the table.

Cowan watched her walk away, then grabbed the candle and followed his Domini.

Part Five: Ten Minutes Ago

Cowan never thought just walking up stairs could be such a strain. Adara didn't seem to be affected by the climb.

Finally, another platform. They slowed to a halt. This time, she pulled two pistols from her belt. She looked back at him and her eyes said what needed to be said.

No more games. This is the Lion's Den. No room for mistakes.





He nodded and set down the candle. His own pistols were in his hands. Cowan felt his muscles tensing, shivering under his skin. Adara's legs tensed again, ready to jump. Cowan clenched his teeth.

A moment.

A moment more.

They moved.

Across the dark room. No sound. No sign of movement.

The door at the far end. Shut tight. One of them on either side. Cowan caught a glimpse of the room as he moved. Pedestals. A globe in the center. Windows on the ceiling, letting the stars shine down their dim, silver light.

Adara made a movement. *Stay here.*

Cowan nodded.

She burst through the door. The sound of pistols throwing fire and lead. One went by Cowan's head. He threw himself to the right, spinning out of the firing arc.

A scream. A woman's scream.

He moved forward. Heard her voice call out.

"No!"

He looked at the doorway and the light shining through. The light flickered. Faded. Died.

Her voice again. This time panicked.

"Run! Run!"

Cowan looked at the dark doorway. Looked at the stairs they had climbed up to this strange room. Looked at the windows up in the tall ceiling.

He jumped, bounded off a pedestal and then the wall, and found a perch on the windowsill. And waited.

No movement.

Just the shadows.

The Knightly Order of the Rose and Cross

This book is the first in a series of sourcebooks on the Secret Societies of Théah. Within it, you will find our version of the Knights of the Rose and Cross – their past, their present, and hints of their future.

Game Masters are encouraged to take this information and shape it to fit their own campaigns. This is only one possible interpretation of the Order. Inevitably, Game Masters will have to decide what information within this book will be incorporated into their campaigns. Players who think they can read this book and gain all the Order's secrets are sadly mistaken.

The first chapter, *The Order*, details the Order's past and present. It also includes information on the Order's secret rituals, rites, and procedures, including a section on passwords, secret handshakes, and codes.

The second chapter, *Hero*, covers the most important members of the Order, including stats, positions, responsibilities, enemies and roleplaying notes.

The third chapter, *Drama*, includes an assortment of new rules. There's a new Rose and Cross Swordsman School, new Advantages, and the Order's own unique version of Sorcery.

Finally, the fourth chapter, *Knight*, gives advice to players and Game Masters on playing and running a campaign revolving around the Order and its goals. It also includes maps for a Rose and Cross Chapter house, a safe house, a new Action Map, and the conclusion to *Hunted by the Past*.

On the surface, the Order appears to be another gentlemen's club, but those who recognize the symbols the Knights wear know better. The Knights have their own secrets, secrets they guard closely. Secrets that could change the world... if only the world were ready to hear them.







The Order

Many people ask, “Why is the Rose and Cross a secret society? Everyone knows who they are.”

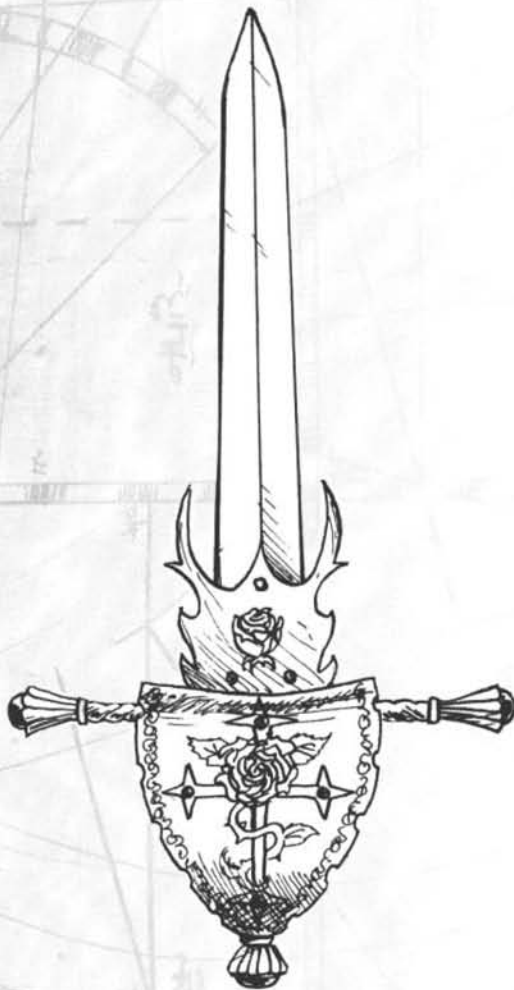
Well, that’s not exactly the case.

This chapter discusses many of the secrets of the Rose and Cross, including its secret past, its objectives, and the men and women known only as “the Invisibles.”

It is divided into three sections. The first, *The Public Face*, details information that is generally known by the majority of Théans about the Order. The second section, *Private Agendas*, contains information that only player Knights may have access to. The third section, *Resources*, details those resources available to the Knights.



Any player may read this section. It contains information that is generally known about the Knights and their secretive Order. In other words, this is what every Hero and Villain knows or could know if he stopped someone on the street and asked.



History

The Knightly Order of the Rose and Cross first appeared as a pamphlet on the streets of Crieux in the spring of 1613. According to the pamphlet, the Order was a secret band of gentlemen dedicated to three Vows: to bring justice to the unjust, to protect those who cannot protect themselves, and to serve those who wore the sacred seal of the Order. The pamphlet also read: “You do not know us, cannot see us. But we can see you.” The pamphlet showed an emblem of a cross surrounded by four entwining roses.

For weeks, many speculated on the identity of the man (or men) responsible for the pamphlet. The Hierophant ordered his Inquisitors to seek out the authors of the document. Months later, the Inquisition’s report said, “We can find nothing of these men. It is our official conclusion that the incident is nothing but a hoax.”



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Two days after the Inquisition's report, another pamphlet appeared in the streets of the Eisen city of Starke. Again, it referred to men and women walking invisibly among the people, "Meting justice when others are too weak to raise hands, delivering charity when others turn away." Upon the document was the same seal of the roseate cross and — unlike its predecessor — a name: Verkündigen Rosenkreuz. The Hierophant demanded an explanation and the Inquisition set themselves to discover the identity of this "Rosenkreuz."

While Verkündigen Rosenkreuz was obviously a pseudonym (Eisen for "He Who Declares the Rose and Cross"), the Inquisition had little evidence to go on. All printing presses in Starke were tested to see if the type matched the letters on the two pamphlets. The Printers' Guild objected to the invasion of their shops, but could do little to challenge the power of the Church (so they increased the price of printing Books of the Prophet). Ultimately, the search proved futile.

Ten weeks after the second pamphlet appeared, a third was littered across the grounds of the Grand Cathedral in Castille. As the first had been written in the Montaigne tongue and the second in Eisen, this one was written in Castillian and it declared that the Rose and Cross was devoted to "serving the Prophets and all who serve their Holy Mission."

It took only one week for the Hierophant to respond. He ordered that "the men of the Rose and Cross make themselves and their intentions plain." For almost a year, there was no response.

However, on Septimus 14, 1615, an assassination plot against a Montaigne cardinal was foiled by three men wearing the seal of the Rose and Cross. Two weeks later, the Castillian King's daughter — kidnapped nine days previously — was rescued by men wearing the same seal.

A Vendel League merchant was likewise saved from a burning building (set ablaze by Vestenmannavnjar patriots) by a man who gave him a small silver pendant bearing the Rose and Cross symbol, then disappeared. The seal made

its way all across Théah and the name "Rose and Cross" soon became associated with heroic rescues and miraculous feats of courage.

It became fashionable in high society to guess at who might be behind all these daring acts. The Rose and Cross became the most famous, most talked about men in Théah... and no one knew who they were.

But on Octavus 5, 1615, all of that changed. On that day, one hundred fifty men across Théah put on small silver Rose and Cross pins, identifying themselves as part of the mysterious Order. They would have been arrested immediately if they had not been men of high birth, prestige and position... and if one of them weren't the Hierophant's principal advisor.

The Three Founders

Two men and one woman claimed responsibility for establishing the Rose and Cross, all of them influential and powerful.

The first, and perhaps most important, was Brother Domingo del Aldana, one of the oldest and most powerful monks in the Davidian Order. Brother Domingo had served as the Hierophant's high advisor for over a decade. The second was Beatrice Desaix du Paix, first daughter of the Empeureur of Montaigne and one of the most famous duelists in Théah (whose son would go on to be one of Théah's first Swordsmen). The third man was Salvatore Vestini, third son of Augusto Vestini and heir-designate to the rich Vestini lands.

The clout these three brought to the Rose and Cross, coupled with the reputation the Order had gained, ensured their position in Théan society. Men and women from every noble family rushed to join the Order, but the founders respectfully apologized: becoming a Knight of the Rose and Cross was strictly by invitation only. However, memberships were available for those who wished to be *Patrons* of the Order. Needless to say, Théan nobility were anxious to gain the opportunity to be members of the most famous brotherhood in Théah.



Even the Hierophant had to recognize the Order. On Corantine 17, 1617, he declared the Knights to be official “servants of the Church and Makers of Justice.” With the Church’s blessing, the Order began to grow at an amazing rate.

Theories and Speculations

Over the next few decades, the Order of the Rose and Cross established strongholds throughout Théah. Chapter houses popped up all over, as did patron houses – the homes of noble men and women who gave shelter to any who wore the Seal. Since nonmembers are not allowed within the interior of a Chapter house, many speculate on the secrets locked within. The Knights had become famous for their spectacular acts of physicality and more than one Church scholar suspected their uncanny acrobatic skills to betoken something other than mundane training.

Some theorized that there might be some sort of alchemical connection to the Order. The rose is an alchemical symbol of purity and the cross a symbol of the four elements: earth, wind, fire and water. One Church scholar wrote:

“It is plain they claim to have discovered some sort of alchemical secret, something that gives them power over the elements within themselves and in the environment that surrounds them.”

Another scholar, with a slightly different approach to the symbol, took a more religious tone:

“The cross, that ancient symbol of the Prophet who died for us, and the rose, the Prophet’s Blossom, obviously indicate a spiritual awakening, one that can only be achieved by the wisdom the Prophets bring.”

Popular attacks on the Order’s honorability connected them in some way or another to Legion worship. One Church scholar, Ernst Bower, wrote:

“We are certain they perform forbidden rites to Legion. Our own scholars have heard stories of spitting on images of the Prophets and on their Cross as they swear devotion to its unholy name.”

Bower’s objections, while popular in some Church circles, are interesting for an entirely different reason: they are, almost word for word, identical to the accusations made against the Poor Knights of the Temple of the Prophet three hundred years before.

Revelations of the Rose and Cross

Five years ago, a man writing under the pseudonym “Balreaux” published a book called *Revelations of the Rose and Cross*. He claimed to have infiltrated the Order and gathered its secrets. Here are some of the secrets that book revealed.

The Three Vows

Balreaux claims that the Knights take three vows when they join the Order. The first is to protect those who cannot protect themselves. The second is to bring justice to the unjust. The last is to serve the Order and those who wear the Seal. Upon the taking of each vow, a sword is held against the Knight’s throat. If the Master Knight doubts the pledge even for a moment, the sword is plunged into the initiate’s throat.

Relations Between the Knights

Balreaux also claims that the Knights are segregated into factions: those who are of the first three Ranks and the Knights of the latter three Ranks. The top Ranks are called “Magister Knights” and the lesser Ranks “Apprentice Knights.”

The Invisibles

On that note, Balreaux also claimed that there was a third faction of Knights, members that were known only to the Master of each Chapter house. These men, known only as “the Invisibles”, moved among the unknowing, influencing politics on a grand scale.

The Elixir of Life

One of Balreaux’s most fantastic claims is that the Knights possess something called “the Elixir of Life.” This magic potion bestows many powers upon the Knights, including



fantastic physical prowess, the ability to speak any language fluently, and even the ability to move invisibly.

Effects on World Affairs

The Order has had little direct effect on Théan affairs. Most Rose and Cross activity is reactionary; that is, reacting rather than acting.

The Order's most important contribution has been to the common people. Men and women throughout Théah know of the Knights and speak of them in the same tone they use when they speak of rural legends.

However, the placement of the Order's Chapter houses has had a great deal of impact on Théan history. In a city with a Chapter house, the common people feel a little more secure, a little more safe. Unlike Swordsmen, who sell their blades to the highest bidder, Knights protect those who cannot protect themselves. Even more so than the local law enforcement, seeing Knights walk down the street reassures even the most cynical heart.

The Order has also caught the fascination of the Théan media. Newspapers print reports of Rose and Cross sightings ("The Seal Seen!"), rumors of secret memberships ("Is the King of Castille a Knight?"), locations of secret lodges ("Local Jennyhouse a Chapter House?"), and sometimes even facts ("Local Knight Goes to the Prophets").

Lastly, boys and girls from every nation, from every social stratum, dream of one day joining the Order. Fascinated with the image of dashing heroes and beautiful heroines, they watch for a flash of the Seal in times of trouble, hoping to catch a glimpse of the famous Knights.

Recent History

The Order has had great impact on the world of political affairs. Most recently, the Order's activities could even be considered politically dangerous.

Corantine 17, 1667: The Hanging of Olivier du Montaigne

Olivier du Montaigne, a cousin of *l'Empereur*, was found guilty of murder in a court of law. He pleaded his innocence, but it did him no good. Fortunately for him, he wore the Seal of the Rose and Cross.

The Order immediately sent a contingent of Knights to discover the truth. With only twenty-seven hours to act, they were hard pressed to prove his innocence. However, on the morning of Corantine 17, as Olivier was led up the gallows' thirteen stairs and the rope was tightened about his neck, five Knights rode into the square. They revealed a man – bound and gagged – whom they claimed was the true murderer.

An impromptu trial was held at which the Knights presented their evidence, and the judge deemed that the wrong man was on the gallows. Olivier was saved from the widow's rope... a small perk for being a Patron of the Rose and Cross.

Septimus 12, 1667: The Red Eye

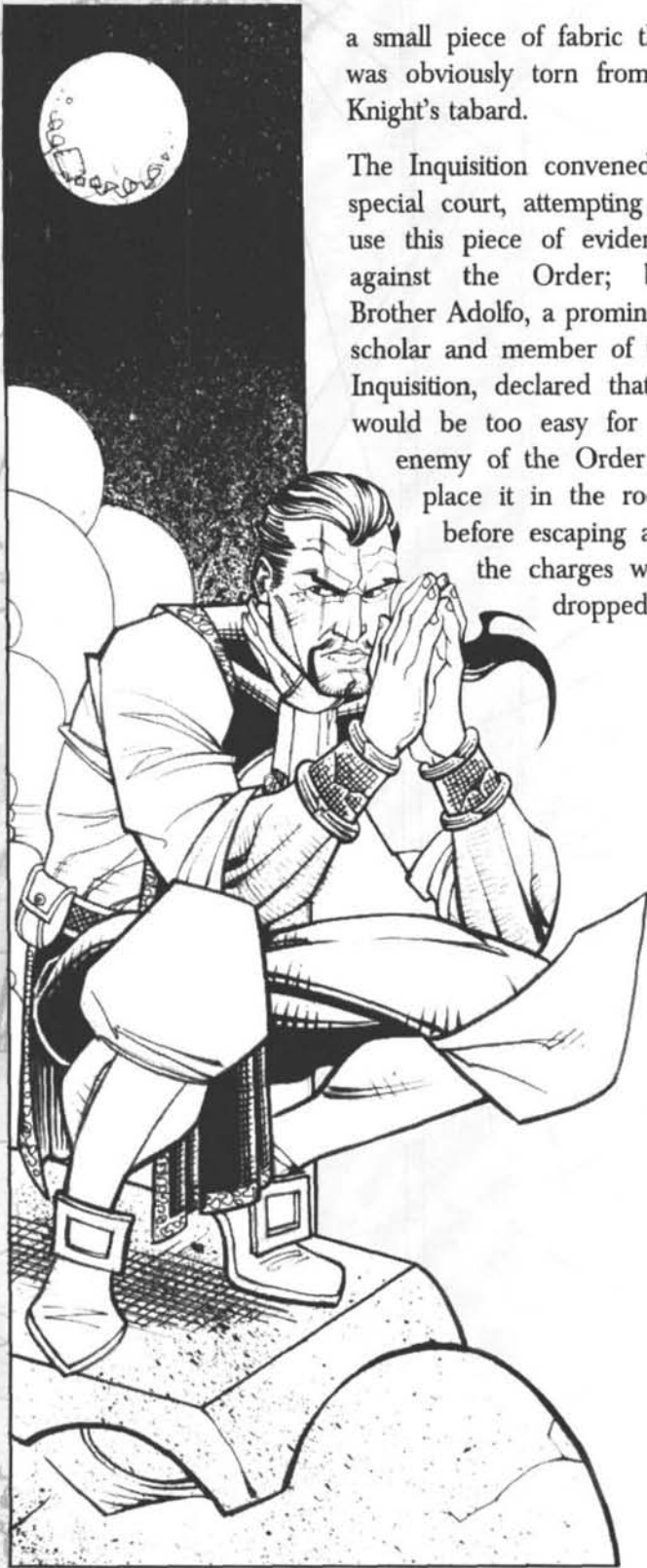
Jacob Jensen is a famous member of the Explorers' Society and collector of rare Syrne antiquities. When his most prized possession, the Red Eye, was stolen, the Rose and Cross worked closely with the Society to retrieve it.

Two months later, the stone was returned to its rightful owner... the *real* Jacob Jensen. While the Explorers were able to retrieve the artifact, it was the Rose and Cross who discovered at the very last moment that "Jensen" was, in fact, an actor impersonating the famous Explorer. The villain snatched the stone and sent his manservants against the Knights, but they dispatched the thugs, chased the culprit down and brought him to justice. The real Mr. Jensen was restored to his proper place, and his property returned.

Octavus 10, 1667: The Hierophant's Death

The Hierophant's death was controversial on several levels. One of the most sinister pieces of evidence at the scene was





a small piece of fabric that was obviously torn from a Knight's tabard.

The Inquisition convened a special court, attempting to use this piece of evidence against the Order; but Brother Adolfo, a prominent scholar and member of the Inquisition, declared that it would be too easy for an enemy of the Order to place it in the room before escaping and the charges were dropped.

Structure

As far as outsiders are concerned, the Knights are divided into Ranks: 1. Poor Knight, 2. Wandering Knight, 3. Sergeant Knight, 4. Adept Knight, 5. Senior Knight, and 6. Master Knight.

Knights address each other according to their titles, so Arthur Pandragon, a 3rd Rank Knight, would be addressed as "Sergeant Pandragon." If he were 1st Rank, he would be addressed as "Poor Pandragon."

The structure of the ranks is simple, much like the military's. Each Chapter house has one Master Knight. Under him are a number of Senior Knights who hold command over a number of Adept Knights. These three ranks serve as officers, while the Sergeant Knights have direct command over and look after the lower ranks. Outsiders rarely see higher-ranked members fraternize with the lower-ranked members.

Relations with Théah's Nations

The Order has gained quite a bit of popularity across Théah in its brief lifetime, but not all nations look upon the Order in the same light.

Avalon

While the Order has only two Chapter houses in Avalon, it is very active in the Glamour Isles. Elaine has her own order of knights and the two often cooperate. One of the Order's oldest Chapter houses is in the Marches, in the city of Kirkwall. It is said to contain the largest library in the Order, although no outsiders have ever seen it.



Castille

In Castille, the Rose and Cross maintain Chapter houses in Vaticine City, San Cristobal, Tarago, and San Felipe. The Order has to watch its step in Castille, because the Inquisition is watching. Many within the Inquisition await a single misstep so they may level the charge of heresy at the Order and bring it down where it belongs: on its knees.

Eisen

Eisen is home to only one Rose and Cross stronghold and that is in Freiburg. It seems Trägue couldn't care less whether the Order is in his city or not. Many in the city appreciate the Order's presence, especially after nightfall.

Montaigne

Montaigne shelters the greatest number of Rose and Cross chapters. There are Chapter houses in Crioux, Buché, Arisent, Muguet, and Charouse. The largest Chapter house, which is also the Order's headquarters, is in Paix.

L'Empereur occasionally takes notice of the Order, especially when they save one of his relatives or courtiers from villainous attentions. On those occasions he generally throws a huge party and donates heavily to the Order, then gets distracted by a pretty face and forgets to show up at the ceremony.

Ussura

With not a single Chapter house in Ussura, the Order has little influence with the Gaius or the boyars. A small contingent visited once, but got lost in the winter on the way to the capital. When they turned about, the storm inexplicably cleared and they had safe passage back to the Eisen border.

Vendel/Vestenmannavnjar

The Rose and Cross has only one Chapter house in Vendel, located in Kirk. It is a large building, however, and has done its share of good in the area.

Vodacce

The Rose and Cross are scarce in Vodacce. There was a Chapter house on Villanova isle, but it burned down. Twice. Other Chapter houses have suffered similar fates. However, there is a small Chapter house on Lucani's isle, although the Knights seldom see action beyond its shores.



A Friendly Spoiler Warning

This section details the private agendas of the Rose and Cross. If you do not stop reading now, the secrets will have no chance to blossom into surprises. Continued reading will reveal one of Théah's darkest and most profound secrets.

You have been warned.

History

The secret history of the Rose and Cross goes back much further than 1613; much further than even this century, or even many of the centuries that preceded it. The secret history of the Rose and Cross goes back as far as the Old Empire, the First Prophet, and the secret bargains made by Senators to gain the art of Sorcery.





The Fraternity of the Sword

Sixteen centuries ago, in the days of the Old Empire, there was a fraternity of men and women who protected the Emperor and brought justice in his name.

Sound familiar?

Back in those days, they were called the Fraternity of the Sword. For five generations they served the Emperor, but sorcery changed all of that.

They were the rivals of the Emperor's secret police, an espionage force called "the Invisibles." The two groups were always at odds with each other, stumbling over each other's feet while they tried to protect their charge.

When the Senators gained the power of sorcery, they stole power from the Emperor. The Fraternity faded, leaving only the most loyal members serving the Emperor, while those more interested in ambition and position followed the Senators.

Then the First Prophet appeared and changed the playing field a second time. His words deeply affected the leader of the Fraternity, Curtius. He listened to the Prophet's words and was struck by their truth. However, the Prophet's words of peace and passivity were not easy for a man born to wield a sword to follow. Curtius was torn between his duty to the Emperor and his devotion to the Prophet.

When the Prophet was killed, Curtius' conflict turned to despair. If he could not protect the Prophet, how would he protect the Emperor? His passion turned to madness and he drank a cup of poison, ending his torment forever.

The Invisible Sword

After Curtius' death, the Fraternity of the Sword faded. Disillusionment and despair weighed upon the brotherhood. Doubt filled the hearts of many of the Fraternity's highest members. They began to question their duty.

One Frater, Verginius, sought truth in the words of the Prophet. What he found there was illumination. He passed

on the message to his brothers, and they too saw the truth they had sought. The enemy, as they saw it, was not sorcerers, but sorcery itself.

They went to their rivals, the Invisibles, and suggested forming a new brotherhood, one that would not fall prey to politics. This fraternity would remain behind the scenes, out of view of noble and commoner alike. Together, they vowed to undermine their Enemy (a code word for "sorcery") and thwart him at every turn. The Invisibles agreed, and a union was born.

Calling themselves "the Invisible Sword", they used their combined political positions to covertly subjugate sorcery and those who practiced the art. For a while they were successful, but those with the dark art running in their veins proved too powerful for even such subtle maneuverings.

On a dark day, Corantine 8, 888, a Fate Witch revealed the Invisible Sword to her lord and husband. The entire fraternity was revealed and slain — save one.

This lone Invisible recorded the events of the betrayal before his own death in 891, when he was located by assassins and dispatched. His journal would remain undiscovered for one hundred years.

Discovery

For centuries, the Invisibles' quiet crusade remained a mystery. However, in 992, a young monk named Guillaume discovered the journal in the heart of a Castillian monastery. The tall building had long ago been burned down with sorcerous fire by the ruling noble family, but a hidden library remained safe behind its thick stone walls.

He read through the pages, discovered the ancient Fraternity and the crusade of the Invisible Sword. When he was done, Guillaume vowed that he would restore the sacred order and carry out its noble quest.

He knew that such an quest would require years, perhaps even lifetimes, to achieve, but such a realization did not dissuade him. He traveled all across Théah, seeking methods of countering and quelling the ancient Enemy. His





Rose & Cross

travels even led him east, into the desert lands of the Crescents. He died there – how he died is uncertain – but his young apprentice, the man who would eventually become “Verkündigen Rosenkreuz,” continued his quest with a passion that even Guillaume would envy.

On his journeys, the future Rosenkreuz – his original name is lost to history – met many sages, read many books. As his knowledge grew, he began to realize the truth of the First Prophet’s words: “The world is a puzzle. Only those who are worthy or make themselves worthy can see even that much truth.” As time went on, he came to realize the implications of the words – if the soul was worthy, it could transform the world. Even sorcery would be powerless against it, for sorcery was just another part of the puzzle.

He confirmed this during one of his best-known encounters while in the Crescent Empire was with a man who called himself “Khalid.” Khalid was an alchemist, a profession that Rosenkreuz – a faithful scholar of the Church – knew well. However, Khalid told Rosenkreuz that transforming base metal into gold was only an analogy, the first step to a greater and grander goal. The true purpose of alchemy, he explained, was to transform the base soul into “the golden soul.”

“The rose and cross are the key,” he explained. “The rose is the symbol of the soul, for as it dies, so it blooms. We are all dying. Every day of our lives. And so do we bloom.”

“And what of the cross?” Rosenkreuz asked.

“Not the ‘cross,’” answered Khalid, “the *crux*. The crucible where all is transformed.”

Rosenkreuz was ecstatic. The symbolism was perfect. Transforming the soul through knowledge! He went to the

Church, showed them his discoveries and explained his beliefs.

He was condemned and cast out of the Church. The Vaticine had no interest in hearing his words.

Brothers of the Rose and Cross

Rosenkreuz was not deterred. He took three monks with him, taught them the secret knowledge he had gained, and dubbed them “Brothers of the Rose and Cross.” Together the monks traveled the countryside, seeking to further their knowledge, spreading the good news of the Prophet.

In order to protect themselves, the Brothers hired mercenaries. The inquisitive monks – in the belief that all knowledge is useful – began to question the warriors on fighting techniques and tactics, and in return shared the knowledge of reading and writing with the warriors. Without even realizing it, they had begun a new Fraternity of the Sword.

Soon enough, the monks had become warriors and the warriors, monks. The scholar-warrior, wearing the seal of the Rose and Cross, was born.

The Third Prophet

On Decimus 10, 999, a man came to Verkündigen Rosenkreuz. He sat with him all the night, the two speaking in hushed tones. In the morning, Rosenkreuz revealed the man’s identity to his followers.

The man was the Third Prophet.

The Prophet rejoiced at Rosenkreuz’s discovery. “You have all you need to lead mankind away from the wicked path of sorcery,” he told the Brother. Rosenkreuz beamed with



The Warrior-Scholar

During the Middle Ages, Théan culture was rigidly divided between three castes – Noble (warriors), Clergy (scholars), and Peasantry (farmers) – and ne’er should those castes mix. The Knights were both warriors *and* scholars, a fact that angered both the nobility and the clergy. Both castes had unique privileges, and neither liked the idea of the Knights having the best of both worlds.



pride. "I have more truths to show you, more secrets to teach you. But we must go to Vodacce and build our new Church."

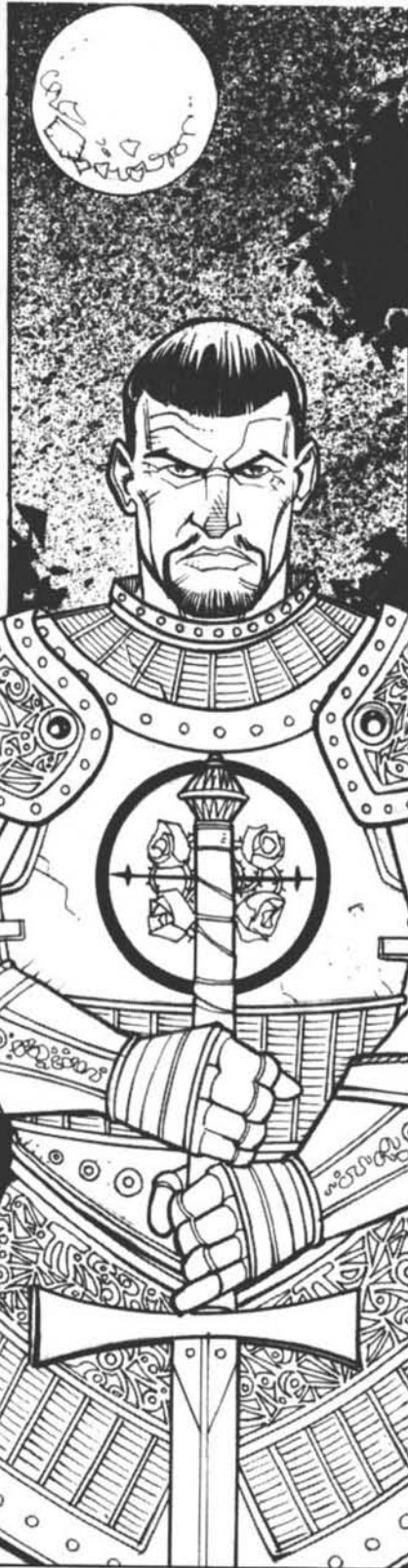
The Brothers (now numbering in the teens) and the Prophet made their way to Vodacce. On the road, the Prophet shared his knowledge with Rosenkruz. Two months later, they arrived in Vodacce... but they arrived too late.

Another Prophet was already there waiting for them.

The False Prophet

Verkündigen Rosenkruz and the Third Prophet came to Vodacce hoping to rebuild the Church. What they found was another man claiming to be the Prophet, in the midst of a crusade against the Vaticines. Rosenkruz and the Third Prophet challenged the False Prophet's authority, calling him pretender in his own court. The False Prophet ordered them captured and killed.

Rosenkruz's Brothers were able to rescue him, but not the Third Prophet. A day later, the man was burned alive as a sorcerer by the False Prophet's new Inquisition. None save the brothers knew his true identity. They longed for justice, but Rosenkruz knew better. He looked at what befell the men who challenged the False Prophet's authority, and ordered the Brothers to remain silent. "Justice will come," he said. "But not now, and not by our hand."



Rosenkruz's Death

The Brothers went underground, hiding from the False Prophet and his Inquisition. Rosenkruz tried to spread the truth about the False Prophet, but none would hear of it. The man's charisma was too great, his political power too strong. Because he was of noble birth, the False Prophet had influence where his predecessors did not. He had connections, but more importantly, he had resources.

Once in Montaigne, the Brothers found refuge in an abandoned monastery. Rosenkruz hired craftsmen to rebuild the dilapidated castle, including a secret wing to hold the books the False Prophet had declared "forbidden." He also spent his remaining days recording events as they had unfolded and the wisdom he had gathered.

He forbade any of his followers to wear the seal of the Rose and Cross, and enjoined them to keep their knowledge of the Third Prophet a secret. He also made them swear to pass down their knowledge to one — and only one — brother. Only through secrecy could justice come to those who betrayed the Prophet.

Then, on Quintus 5, 1035, Verkündigen Rosenkruz told his brothers it was time for him



to rest. He told Anthony, his most trusted follower, that instructions for the Brotherhood were in his desk. Then he laid down on his bed, shut his eyes, and stopped breathing.

Rosenkreuz's body was placed in a tomb in the secret section of the monastery. At his request, he was buried with a book, a key, and a scale. The book was his journal; the key unlocked the front door of his own tomb. No one knows why he requested the scale.

Building a New Order

In 1118, during the most bitter fighting of the crusades against the Crescents, a man named Hughes Allais du Crieux came to the Hierophant with an interesting offer. Hughes was a knight, one of the most famous knights of his age, and recently returned from the captured Crescent lands. He asked the Hierophant to establish a new order of Knights to help protect the captured lands and those who wished to visit the homeland of the Second Prophet. The Hierophant found the offer intriguing and gave Hughes his commission. So was the Holy Order of the Poor Knights of the Prophet born.

While Hughes Allais du Crieux may have worn a Prophet's Cross around his neck, he also wore a Rose and Cross next to his heart.

Hughes was a follower of Rosenkreuz's teachings. He was introduced to the Brotherhood when he was a boy, tutored by a monk who wore the seal. Hughes became fascinated by Rosenkreuz's teachings, and when the opportunity arose he took the first step toward earning justice for the murder of the Third Prophet.

Du Crieux's Poor Knights

Hughes' new order of Knights emulated Rosenkreuz's teachings. They were both warriors and scholars, seeking to better themselves through knowledge while using their physical prowess to bring justice to the world.

The Knights' vows also included vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. However, the Knights vowed to serve the

Prophets, not the Church. They lived the lives of monks until they were needed as fighting men. Then, they put away their robes, strapped swords to their hips, donned tunics of white and red and went to war.

Their monastic life kept them devoted to the disciplines set forth by Rosenkreuz one hundred years before. As lower Knights were brought into the fold under the "Poor Knights of the Prophet" pretense, those that could be trusted were informed of the true purpose of the Order: to spread the truth of the False Prophet and the news of the True Prophet.

For one hundred years the Order prospered. Even after the end of the Crusades, the Knights continued to thrive. Many of Théah's nobility contributed to the Knights' cause, a fact that led the "poor" Knights to an unorthodox trade for a monastic order: banking.

The Knights were, for all intents and purposes, a standing army, which required great amounts of revenue to maintain. Through donations (of both capital and land), and captured treasures from the Crescent Empire, the Knights' wealth increased. Because the Knights were not only a military order but a clerical one as well, they were exempt from taxation. In fact, after one hundred years, they were richer than many of Théah's kings and queens.

The Knights' Demise

As the Holy Order grew, they continued to spread the philosophy of Rosenkreuz disguised as ritual and ceremony. The Knights' message was simple: Purity of the Soul, Purity of the Flesh. It was a sentiment that Church officials could find no offense in.

However, because of the Order's secretive nature, many within the Church began to whisper of occult activity within the ranks. Speculation soon turned to accusation. Many in the Inquisition demanded to be made privy to the Knights' secret initiation rites. Jacques du Muguet, the Master of the Order, refused. The King of Montaigne, Phillip IV, demanded the right to tax the Order (a demand motivated by a monetary debt he owed to the Knights).



The Hierophant began to recognize that the Knights were becoming a dangerous threat to his political security and made a fateful decision. On Redi, Octavus 13, 1307, Phillip declared the Knights in Montaigne guilty of heresy. One month later, the Hierophant declared *all* Knights guilty of heresy, and also gave every Théan sovereign the right to arrest and try the Knights for the crime. However, his mandate allowed the crowned heads of Théah to keep only *half* the wealth discovered. The rest was to go to the Church.

Before the Knights knew what had happened, the King's men surrounded their monastery in Montaigne, demanding a peaceful surrender. Having not heard the Hierophant's proclamation, the Knights refused. A skirmish erupted between the King's army and the Knights, and for a while it seemed the army was outmatched. However, as more supplies and reinforcements arrived, it became clear the Knights would be defeated. They held off the army for three days before they surrendered.

Over the next few months, the Knights were tried for heresy. They were accused of many crimes, the most heinous being witchcraft. In order to save himself, a young Knight named Jeremy Johnson testified that upon his initiation into the Order he had been forced to spit on the Prophet's Cross and swear fealty to Legion. Thirty-six Knights were tortured to gain confession, but they died before such words escaped their lips. As a reward for his testimony, Johnson was freed of all charges and pardoned by the Church.

The Hierophant demanded a public confession from the Order's Master, Jacques du Mugeut. He refused. "We are innocent of all but trust," he was reported to reply. The Hierophant ordered that a Knight be burned at the stake for every day that he refused to make his confession.

Locked away from his fellow Knights, all he could do was hope they understood his refusal. For fifty-four days, he refused, and fifty-four Knights died in the fires as the Hierophant and King Phillip watched. As each Knight was tied to the post, he was asked, "Do you have any last words?"

The first Knight nodded. "Aye," he said. He looked the Hierophant and the King in the eyes and said, "I vow we will have our revenge."

For fifty-four days, without exception, each and every Knight who died uttered the very same words. "I vow we will have our revenge." Finally, after fifty-four days, Jacques could take no more. He told the Hierophant that he would confess. He was brought before his accusers and told to confess the Order's crimes against the Creator.

Jacques shook his head. "No," he said. "We have always been innocent." The Master was brought out into the courtyard, tied to a stake, and set aflame. As the flames grew, he looked at the Hierophant and the King and spoke the same words his Knights had so many times before.

"I vow we will will have our revenge."



Master and Apprentice

While ribbing apprentices is a common practice among the Knights, Domini are very protective of their students. Some Knights have been known to draw blood over an offense against a student.

However, one common practice among the Domini is what many in the Order call "nest kicking" or "cutting the tie" (referring to cutting the knot used to tie one's sword into its sheath during times of peace). A Domini usually employs a trusted friend within the Order to "cut the tie." The friend gives the apprentice grief until the Domini shows up. The Domini makes motions to protect his apprentice, but the friend then asks, "Can't he take care of himself?" The Master must then let his apprentice defend himself.



Jacques du Mugeut, the last of the Prophet's Knights, died on Quartus 18, 1308.

Or so many believed.

Escape to the Highlands

Many of the Prophet's Knights escaped the fire. They fled to a place that the Vaticine Church would never look, and they brought their treasures, including the mystically uncorrupted body of Rosenkreuz, with them.

They fled to the Highland Marches. Robert MacDuff, a Highland noble seeking autonomy from Montaigne rule, secretly offered the Knights sanctuary from the Vaticine Church. In return, the Knights would help him win freedom from the Montaignes. The Knights agreed.

At the Battle of Dun Vahl, MacDuff's footmen stood against the mounted cavalry of the Montaignes. As the battle began, however, he was flanked by armored horsemen armed with spears and lances. The horsemen fought like men possessed, driving the Montaigne line into the charging Highlanders. MacDuff had won the day and the Knights won their sanctuary.

Beginning Again

Slowly the Knights began to rebuild their order. MacDuff provided them with lands in the north where they built a massive chapel and monastery, complete with secret corridors and chambers to hide their prizes.

For the next two centuries, the Knights hid themselves from outsiders. As far as the rest of the world was concerned, they were a simple order of monks living in the wastelands of the Marches. The Poor Knights were no more. The Knights turned to their past, found the symbol that had inspired their founder, and discovered their new identity.

This time, however, they would take steps to ensure their safety. This time they would champion not the Church, but the people.

The Knights of the Rose and Cross

Almost all of what was written in the *Public Face* section is true. Papers declaring the Knights of the Rose and Cross appeared everywhere, almost simultaneously. Church scholars didn't recognize the symbols; Rosenkreuz's testimony from so long ago was buried deep in their libraries, the forgotten words of a heathen madman.

The Knights cared little for Church sanction or support. Using the treasure they had sequestered after their betrayal, they had all the backing they needed.

The Knights used monies both donated and surrendered to purchase land all across Théah. As mentioned before, the Hierophant did eventually recognize the Order, an act that freed them from royal taxation. Once their position was secure, they began to build again.

Many young gentlemen came to them, begging to be Knights. The Order was strict, however, and demanded the men surrender their worldly possessions to take up the Seal of the Rose and Cross. The noble men and women who came to the Knights did so gladly for the chance at glory and prestige. Most of them were second and third-born sons, anyway, and stood to gain little from an inheritance. With the Knights' knowledge of finances, they were able to make a small bequest go a long way.

Current Affairs

And so we reach the present day. It has been a long road for the Knights, and it seems they have reached the pinnacle once again. They are wiser, know their enemies and their allies, and remain true to their original vows. What does the future hold for them? Perhaps history truly is a circle. Perhaps another betrayal awaits the Order in the not-too-distant future. Only time will tell.

Effects on World Affairs

The Order has little direct effect on world affairs, but its actions have made ripples. The Knights have not forgotten the lessons of the past and stay far away from any kind of



political traps. While their Order is strictly secret, they keep a friendly public face with the kings and queens of Théah.

Structure

The Order suggested in the Public Face section is largely correct. The complete story follows.

Ranks

There are currently 514 Knights in the Order, divided into specific Ranks, each with its own specific purpose and station. Let's take a look from the bottom up.

Initiate

Initiates are those who are petitioning for position within the Order. They are untried men and women hoping for a chance to wear the Seal of the Order. Generally, initiates undergo an 18-month training process. Only one out of ten initiates make it to graduation. Each Chapter house can have up to ten initiates at a time.

Knights usually refer to Initiates as "Beggar Johns" until they reach the next Rank, when they earn the right to be called "Knight."

Poor Knight

Poor Knight is the lowest Rank of Knight. These Knights have been trained but are still untried. Generally, they are not allowed very far from the Chapter house and are always assigned as an apprentice to a Knight of higher Rank, usually a Wandering Knight.

The relationship between teacher and student is a sacred one in the halls of the Rose and Cross Chapter house. While other Knights may refer to the student as "Poor William" or "Poor Alexi", the teacher always calls his student "Tyro William" or "Tyro Alexi."

The student, on the other hand, *never* refers to his teacher as "Master." That title is reserved for the Master of the House. He calls his teacher "Domini William" or "Domini Alexi."

Wandering Knight

Wandering Knights are members of the Order who have proved their worth as Poor Knights. They travel the world on missions for the Order, seeking adventure wherever it may lead them. As mentioned above, many a Wandering Knight has a Tyro who follows him or her as a page. Depending on the Wandering Knight, this can be a blessing or a curse for the Tyro.

There are more Wandering Knights than any other Rank within the Order. While they are officially one Rank lower than Sergeant Knights, they do not answer to a Sergeant's authority.

Sergeant Knight

Sergeant Knights train Initiate and Poor Knights. Sergeants are usually experienced Wandering Knights who have proved the capability to train others. It is not uncommon for the oldest Knight in the Chapter house to be a Sergeant.

Even though Sergeants do not have authority over Wandering Knights, most Wandering Knights give them grudging respect anyway.

Adept Knight

Adept Knights are promoted from Sergeants (and Wandering Knights who can no longer travel) and serve as lieutenants for Senior Knights. In other words, they do the paperwork. When a Senior Knight gives an order, it is usually to an Adept Knight. Most Adepts are looking to become Senior Knights, working diligently to please their superiors to gain a higher position in the Order. Every Senior Knight is usually assigned at least three Adept Knights.



Senior Knight

Senior Knights are the true rulers of the Chapter house. They maintain finances and make certain the house runs smoothly. There are usually two Seniors in a Chapter house.

Master Knight

There is only one Master Knight for each Chapter house. The Master Knight does not run the house – that’s the job of the Senior Knights – but serves as the house’s chief diplomat. He’s the one at parties taking donations from the nobility. He shows up at charity events and gives speeches, writes articles for local newspapers, and addresses public concerns. The Master holds no real power in a Chapter house, but his advice on diplomatic matters is usually considered highly valuable.

The Highest Ranks

There are three more Ranks within the Order, but only four men occupy those Ranks. These are the highest members of the Rose and Cross, keepers of the Order’s secrets and protectors of its legacy. These positions are held in the Crioux Chapter house. They are passed down from the current holder of the office.

Seneschal

There are currently two Seneschals within the Order. Seneschals are to the Minister as the Adept Knights are to the Senior Knights; they carry out the daily duties of maintaining the Order. While they are privy to many of the Order’s secrets, they only know what the Minister allows them to know.

Minister

Miles Valroux du Martise, the current Minister of the Order, is the real power behind the Rose and Cross. He is

the only man who knows the locations of the secret library and of Rosenkreuz’s tomb.

Grand Master

The Grand Master, Aristide Baveux, is the face of the Rose and Cross. As far as the outside world is concerned, he is the highest-ranking man in the Order. He knows only a few secrets; those the Minister considers safe for him to know. On the other hand, he has done more for the Order than most of his predecessors.



Tabards

The tabard of the Rose and Cross is one of the most identifiable in Théah. Blue with gold trim, the Seal of the Order is prominently displayed in the center. Poor Knights must wear a red tabard until they prove themselves worthy of wearing “the blues.”

The highest-ranking members of the Order (from Adepts to Masters) wear black tabards.

The Invisibles: The Unseen Rank

Finally, there is a Rank within the Order no Initiate or Poor Knight knows of. A few Wandering Knights have stumbled across them, but many are too loyal to the Order to ask any questions. The Adept and Senior Knights know about them, but only a few would be able to recognize them.

They are the Invisibles, the secret hand of the Order.

Invisibles are Knights who do not openly wear the Seal of the Order, nor are they ever introduced to lower

members as Knights. There are only a few Invisibles within the Order – possibly no more than a dozen. They are the Order’s covert espionage force, an aspect of the Rose and Cross that the public must never see.

Invisibles are trained in the arts of subterfuge and sabotage, performing missions that Knights cannot, and should not, perform. More information on the Invisibles – their activities, motives, rituals, etc. – is available in the Game Master section of Chapter Four.



Patrons

Perhaps the most important members of the Rose and Cross are its patrons: men and women who donate funds to the Order's coffers on a regular basis.

With enough resources, anyone can become a member of the Order. A patron is *not* a Knight, but he is allowed to wear the Seal, and a Knight is bound to protect anyone wearing the Seal.

A kind annual donation of 5,000 Guilders is all it takes to be a patron of the Order.

Initiation

When a man or woman becomes a Patron of the Order, the Knights hold a small initiation ceremony. Friends and family are invited to attend. The patron stands in the center of the main hall of the Chapter house on the Seal of the Order, surrounded by Knights. One by one, each Knight draws his sword, swears fealty to the patron and lays his sword at the patron's feet. Finally, the Master of the Chapter house does the same and places a key to the front of the house in the patron's hand. From now on, the patron may refer to himself as a "Benefactor of the Rose and Cross."

Life in the Order

Becoming a Knight

Men and women do not "join" the Knights of the Rose and Cross; they must be invited. Those who are asked to join have usually performed some spectacular or courageous deed. A Knight approaches the lad or lady and extends an invitation.

The vast majority of initiates are young noble men and women who stand little chance of great inheritance. Third-, fourth- and fifth-born sons and daughters often approach Knights about joining the Order, hoping the Seal will bring them the prestige their heritage cannot give them.

Training

The training of a Knight is no mean task. Initiates undergo 18 months of rigorous physical and spiritual training before they are considered Knights.

Physical Training

The physical training is demanding. Initiates rise at sunrise and don't go back to bed until sunset. During that time they practice swordsmanship, athletics, and otherwise hone their martial skills. The training regimen is relentless, requiring initiates to push themselves beyond what they consider to be their limits. All the while, the sergeants tell them, "You are more than you know. You are more than what you have been told. You are more than what you can imagine."

When initiates are not learning to fight or developing their minds, they clean pots, change linens, and shovel out stables. They also serve meals, launder stained tunics, wash windows, dust, shop, prepare meals, mop, make candles, and scrub out chamber pots. Most initiates don't make it past three days, let alone 18 months.

Initiates are not allowed to wear the Seal of the Rose and Cross or any other identifying symbols or colors. They are not official members, and do not gain that privilege until they are accepted into the Order.

Mental Training

Knights are expected not only to train their bodies, but also their minds. Within each Chapter house is a vast library of knowledge from all across Théah. However, each Chapter house also contains a secret library that contains books declared heretical by the Church and Inquisition.

These books, most of them copies of books Rosenkreuz himself brought back from the Crescent Empire, detail science, mathematics, medicine, and the Crescent version of alchemy. These books are available only to Knights.

One of the most important volumes in the Order's collection is a book known as *The Book of M*. The book details various medical procedures unknown in Théah, procedures that if approved by Church scholars would revolutionize Théan surgery. However, because new ideas



such as these are declared heretical by the Church, they must remain the Order's secret.

Spiritual Training

Initiates are required to exercise their souls as well as their bodies. In the first few months of training they gain glimpses of the Order's philosophies, but not a clear picture. This way, those who do not prove worthy to wear the Seal can give those outside the Order only the most general impression of their training.

Graduation

When his training is done, the initiate undertakes the Ritual of Vows. He is placed in a dark chamber, surrounded by Knights holding swords. In the center of the circle is the Seal of the Order. The initiate comes to the ceremony naked and kneels in the center of the circle, upon the Seal. Standing to his left and right are the Senior Knights and before him is the Master Knight. The Senior to his left holds a tabard bearing the Seal and the Knight on his right a bowl of water.

The Master Knight places a sword at the initiate's heart and asks him, "Will you protect those who cannot protect themselves?" The initiate replies, "So I vow."

The Master Knight then places the sword at the initiate's throat. "Will you bring justice to the unjust?" The initiate replies, "So I vow."

Finally, the Master Knight turns the sword so it is held in both hands. He asks, "Will you serve the Order and those who wear the Seal?" The initiate takes the sword in both hands – by the blade – and replies, "So I vow." He must then take the sword from the Master Knight, an act that usually draws blood from his palms.

During the ceremony, the Master watches the initiate carefully. The initiate has been told by the Sergeant Knight that if he hesitates or shows any doubt, the Master will plunge the sword into the initiate's body.

If the initiate can take the sword from the Master, the bowl of water is emptied over his head. The Master then gives the Knight his new name, a name known to and used by only his brothers within the Order. Then he is given his tabard. The Knight is also told by the Sergeant that the sword is his (he won it, after all) and that he is required to name it.



Dueling with Honor

Knights who face off in a duel do so with the understanding that the outcome is final. Facing another man with a sword in your hand is no mean feat and requires great courage. To dispute the outcome of a duel is to dishonor your opponent's courage. In other words, if you won the duel and your opponent disregarded its outcome, his actions say, "Your courage meant nothing."

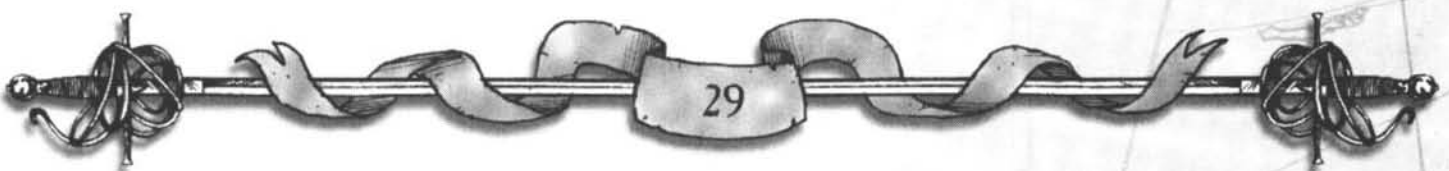
Give the same respect you expect from your opponent.

When the ceremony is done, the Master turns to the circle and announces that a new Knight is among them. "Who are you?" he asks the Knight. The Knight announces his name to the Order. A Knight never reveals his sword's name to anyone.

The Poor Knight

Once an initiate reaches the rank of Poor Knight, he learns the truth about frying pans and fires. He is usually assigned to a Domini to whom he attends. He mends his Domini's torn clothes, cleans his boots, cooks his food, and cares for his horse. During these months, the Domini still refers to him as "Poor Knight." When the Domini feels the apprentice has earned his respect, he hands over his blade and says, "Tyro, oil my sword." From that moment on, the Poor Knight is recognized as the Wandering Knight's apprentice. If the Knight does not accept the apprentice after six months, he is usually discharged from the Wandering Knight's service.

While Poor Knights usually serve as a Knight's Tyro for approximately two to three years, the bond between the two is a powerful one. A Tyro usually refers to his master as "Domini" long after graduating to Wandering Knight.



Poor Knights who have no Domini are under the direct supervision of the Sergeant Knights and assigned tasks around the Chapter house. Poor Knights with skills are of particular value to the Order. Blacksmiths, coopers, and potters are all needed within a Chapter house. Knights who prove themselves useful are often given the unofficial title of "Craftsman Knight", a small distinction from their fellow Poor Knights.

The Great Secret

After many months (sometimes years) of service, Poor Knights who show promise graduate to the rank of Wandering Knight. The initiation into the second Rank includes giving the Knight Rosenkrenz's Great Secret.

The Knight learns that human souls have power: a power that is immeasurable but accessible, a power that is greater than any sorcery.

At the beginning of the initiation ceremony, the Poor Knight removes his tabard and kneels in a circle of Knights, and is told the story of Rosenkrenz and his meeting with the Third Prophet. He is also told the story of their betrayal by the

False Prophet. He is told the history of the Poor Knights of the Prophet and how they were betrayed by the King of Montaigne and the Hierophant. Then he is told the story of how each and every knight vowed revenge against the two men.

Finally, he is told to make the Vows he made when he became a Poor Knight. Once again, the Knight speaks the three vows, but this time, as he does, he realizes their importance... and their power.

The Three Vows

As the words pass through his lips, as they clatter against his teeth, he feels a surge of power unlike anything he has ever felt before. His body feels as if it is on fire, but does not burn. The power of the words courses through him, and he is finally aware of the Third Prophet's lost lesson to humanity.

Mankind's own words have power.

Once the ritual is over, the Knight knows what power lies in his soul. When a Knight makes a Vow, a promise based on the three Vows he takes at his initiation, it will come to pass.





The Knight does not know how it will happen, nor is it guaranteed that he will be a part of it, but the Vow will come to pass.

Wandering Knight

Wandering Knights are the “knights errant” of the Order. Traveling the countryside, stopping at charter houses and Patron houses for rest and supplies, they serve the Order’s primary function: to provide Théah with an example of what humanity can achieve.

As wayward adventurers, Wandering Knights – also called “vaganti” by their brothers – spend most of their time on the road. Unlike other Knights, they are not specifically associated with any Chapter house, but find shelter in any Chapter house they come to.

Sergeant Knight

Sergeant Knights are responsible for a Chapter house’s Poor Knights. They organize daily duties, manage training sessions, and (when necessary) deal out punishment.

Almost all Sergeant Knights come from the Wandering Knight stock: older Knights who are no longer fit for active duty. Some Knights, however, retire early to train fledgling Knights.

Occasionally, Sergeant Knights will go out on missions with Wandering Knights and their Tyros, but such an occasion is rare. Only when circumstances are dire and their experience is sorely needed do Sergeants find themselves donning their old blue tabards and riding out with the younger Knights.

Upper Ranks

The upper-echelon Knights serve as administrators and see little, if any, combat.

In a Chapter house, the rank the lower echelon sees most often are the Adept Knights. They are hands-on administrators, making sure everything is running smoothly.

Almost all Adepts are retired Wandering Knights who have shown skills for organization and management.

For an Adept, the day starts early. He rises at sun-up, washes, and meditates, then makes his way through the Chapter house, making sure all is well. After breakfast, he reports to the house’s Senior Knights. He informs them of any problems, then performs any duties they require of him.

Senior Knights are also retired Wanderers who served for a time as Adepts. Promotion to Senior Knight is a great honor, for this is the Rank that is directly responsible for a Chapter house’s prosperity. Senior Knights manage the house’s books, making sure funds are secure and productive. A Senior Knight usually has three to four Adept Knights at his disposal.

As far as the public is concerned, the Master Knight is the head of the house. He is usually a young, handsome Knight who has great oratory skills and social graces. He is usually recruited from the Wandering or Sergeant rank and actively takes part in missions. The Order does not consider sending the Master Knight out on missions a risk, chiefly because a Master who is injured (or worse) on a mission makes great press.

The Grand Plan

“Only those who desire to hear the Truth can hear it. Trying to tell the Truth to those who do not want to hear it is like trying to show a blind man light.”

– *The Book of the First Prophet*

The Order does not have plots that involve control or manipulation of Théah. They tried that four hundred years ago and found out exactly what happens when your reach exceeds your grasp. Instead, the Knights have a much more subtle plan for bringing humanity out from under the shadow of sorcery.



The Knights know the secret of the Third Prophet's message and hope to teach it to humanity by example. They go out into the world wearing the Seal, perform noble deeds, make heroic sacrifices, and fulfill the Vows they make when they become Knights.

As they do, there will be those who feel the Truth in their words and deeds. Those who want to learn the message will come to the Order. They feel the Truth in a Knight's actions, feel the Truth in his words, and they desire it. Even though a man will not fully understand what it is he desires, he comes to the Order seeking Truth like a man in the desert desires water. That is his first step toward the Truth.

This is when the Knights test him. As an initiate, he must undergo grueling and demeaning tests. If his desire for Truth overcomes his pride, without even knowing it, he has taken the second step. If he can survive wearing the red tabard, serving as Tyro, seeing the sights that await him, he is worthy of taking the third step. He speaks the Vow for the first time, feels the power burning in his veins and his mind and that is when he learns the Truth he has sought for so long. And when he learns that Truth, he will go out into the world and share it with others; share it through his own acts and deeds, spreading the Prophet's Truth across Théah for others to learn.

This is the Order's Grand Plan. This is how they spread the Prophet's Truth.

Through action and example.

Enigmas & Legends

The Knights of the Rose and Cross are the latest incarnation of what may be the oldest fraternity in history. Within their past are a thousand stories and legends. Some of them are below.

The Black Rose

Recently, a man wearing black robes, a black mask and the Seal of the Order has been spotted all across Théah. "The Black Rose", as the *Freiburg Gazette* has dubbed him, has

made quite a sensation both within the Order and in the courts.

The Order would take credit for his heroic activities... if they knew who he was. However, because no one is aware of his identity, the Grand Master has decided to deny his membership within the Order. This denial has not kept the Black Rose from continuing his guerrilla acts of derring-do. In fact, since Rois-et-Reines' official public statement, his activities have increased.

Many Knights have tried to capture him, but all attempts have proven futile.

Louis-Claude du Sinjin

He goes by many names. He's called himself the Archduke of Stanley, the Count of Soldano, and the Marquis of M'Lady. He is best known, however as Louis-Claude du Sinjin (yet another obvious pseudonym). He says he is an alchemist, a lover, a poet, a wit, and a diplomat to the crowned heads of Théah. His critics call him a leech, a court jester, and a charlatan.

He wanders Théah winning the favor of those with means, spending his time in luxury. When in town, he receives invitations to the best parties. If he doesn't, he crashes the party anyway.

The most spectacular aspect of his personality are his claims to his age. Sinjin has claimed on many occasions to be four hundred ninety-eight years old. He also claims that he will die on his five hundredth birthday, which occurs on the first of Primus, 1670.

Sinjin has been associated with the Order on many occasions, but he denies it... most of the time. Depending on his mood, he occasionally claims to be a Wandering Knight, a Master Knight, or even one of their Invisibles.



Wandering Renaud

In 1501, a boy from a small town in Montaigne came to the Order riding a donkey with an old, heavy sword strapped to his side. He was only fifteen years old, but claimed to be the finest swordsman in all of Montaigne and demanded he be made a Knight on the spot.

A Sergeant tested the boy's skills and found himself on the ground with the old, heavy sword at his throat. Another Knight tested him and found himself in the same position. The Order agreed to train him.

That boy's name was Renaud.

For fifty years he served the Order as a Wandering Knight. Every attempt to promote him met with failure. "I will die wearing blue, not black," he said.

While many women sought to capture his heart, Renaud remained true to the Order for five decades. If he ever fell in love, he kept it secret from the world.

After his retirement, Renaud packed his bags and went back to the small village in Montaigne. There he spent the rest of his days until his death in 1572. It is said that while on his deathbed, he whispered, "Bring me my love," and gestured toward his sword. His maid then thought he whispered the name "Josephine" just moments before his death.

His tabard and sword are enshrined at Crioux House.

A Knight at the Edge of the Wilderness

On the border between Vodacce and the Crescent Empire, before a ruined wall that is older than memory, stands a single Knight, looking east.

The Knight wears a Poor Knight's tabard, wields a Poor Knight's sword, and wears a moustache in the style the Poor Knights once did. And he's been standing in exactly the same spot for longer than anyone can remember.

No one knows his name.

No one knows how long he's been standing there.

Everyone is afraid to ask.

But one thing is certain: he's standing, watching and waiting for something. Or perhaps, as some have suggested, he's some sort of warden, guarding Théah against an unknown horror from the east.

In 1652, a Wandering Knight in Castille awoke from a sweat-drenched dream, put on his tabard, grabbed his horse, and rode east toward the Lone Knight. When he arrived, he approached the man with trembling hands. He emptied a waterskin into a cup and gave it to the Lone Knight.

The man was motionless for a long moment. Then, without averting his eyes, he took the cup and drained it. With his gaze still fixed on the horizon, he whispered with a hoarse voice, "Thank you, brother."

The Wandering Knight nodded, climbed back on his horse and rode home. When he reached the Chapter house, he climbed back into bed and slept for a week. When he awoke, he thought the entire event a dream.

The Secret Library & Rosenkreuz's Tomb

These two great treasures are located somewhere in the Highland Marches. Some suspect they may be in the Chapter house in Dun Vahl, but others know it is unwise to keep secrets in public sight.

The Secret Library contains the complete history of the Order as well as all the knowledge gathered by Rosenkreuz and his followers. The path to the Great Secret lies within those volumes and only a handful of men have ever been allowed to view them; Miles Valroux du Martise blindfolds them for the journey to and from the Library.

Rosenkreuz's tomb, on the other hand, has never been seen by more than twenty men. The secret of its location is also guarded by Miles.



Relations with Other Groups

Avalon

In Avalon, Queen Elaine has no need for knights — she has her own. However, the Order has found a kind of camaraderie with Elaine's knights. Together, they have kept the villainy in Avalon to a minimum.

The Rose and Cross has always had a strong relationship with the Highland Marches. The Order serves as both an unofficial, neutral police force and a connection to continental Théan politics. The MacDuff meets regularly with the Master of the Highland Chapter house to discuss politics... and drink Highland whiskey.

Inismore is not as friendly to the Rose and Cross as her neighbors. The O'Bannon's opinion of the Order is difficult to fathom, and on some days truly mercurial. On the other hand, his opinions on just about anything are pretty much the same way. Perhaps it's safe to say that the High King of Inismore tolerates the Order's presence. However, the one thing that makes him more angry than anything else is the idea of a bunch of foreigners telling him what's best for his nation.

Castille

While the general population of Castille is as enamored with the Order as the rest of Théah, the Inquisition despises them. The Order has spent a great deal of effort keeping tabs on the Inquisition, trying to tell if they recognize the Order from three hundred years ago. As far as they can tell, Verdugo and his cronies haven't made the connection yet.

Eisen

Because of its devotion to autonomy, the Order is not very popular in Eisen. The Order has only one Chapter house, and that is only because the Eisenfürst in Freiburg really doesn't care if it's in his city, as long as it doesn't make too much noise. Trägue does not sponsor the Order, nor does he attend any of its social events, despite the many invitations it extends to him.

Montaigne

It could be said that Montaigne is the home of the Rose and Cross. The best-known Chapter house is located in Crieux and the country holds the largest number of Chapter houses in Théah. The Order also holds great political power there, sending Master Knights to Crieux to meet with ambassadors and heads of state on a regular basis. There they discuss politics, seek sponsors for the Order, and look for new sites for Chapter houses. Crieux is also the place where more Initiates are recruited than anywhere else.

L'Empereur is the Order's most famous patron. At least once a year, he donates thousands of Solei to the Order's coffers. *L'Empereur's* love for the Order has also caused a rift to form between the Knights and the Lightning Guard. If a week passes by without blood being spilled between a Guard and a Knight, it is a cause for celebration.

Ussura

Matushka does not like the Knights of the Rose and Cross. She sends winter at them whenever they cross her borders. She sends bears and wolves at them when they try to camp. She hates the Order and all it stands for. She doesn't want the Knights teaching her children self-reliance; she likes them just the way they are.

For that reason, the Rose and Cross has had *no* success in trying to establish a Chapter house in Ussura. In fact, it's given up the notion entirely.



Vendel/Vestenmannavnjar

The Vendel have been very friendly to the Order, allowing it to establish one of the largest Chapter houses in Théah. The Vestenmannavnjar, on the other hand, do not like the Order, nor do they tolerate it in their lands. The Order smells a bit too much like the Inquisition (Prophet worshippers with weapons) for their taste.

Vodacce

The Knights have never had much luck in Vodacce. However, unlike the general public, the Knights know why.

Fate Witches are scared to death of them.

For some reason, when *sorte strega* look upon a Knight's strands, most of them are court cards, unmalleable by the witch. This fact greatly disturbs the general fate witch populace and, as a side effect, it has made them very unpopular in Vodacce. Nobody gets an even break in Vodacce, especially a meddling foreigner who thinks he knows what's best for the country.

All the merchant princes are aware of the problem and they do not want the Order's Chapter houses in their cities. Vodacce princes don't like random elements muddling up their private wars, especially the moralistic, do-gooder variety.

The only Prince who even tolerates the Order is Lucani. Recently, in fact, the Master of the Chapter house on his island was seen at one of his parties. None of the men spoke to him. And their wives just stared with angry, frustrated eyes.

Die Kreuzritter

The Rose and Cross is not currently aware of the existence of the Black Cross. As fellow brotherhoods of crusader knights, the two organizations had much in common, but since their parting their goals have diverged.

Explorer's Society

The Knights view research of the Syrne as a double-edged sword. The Knights suspect (as Rosenkreuz suspected) that the artifacts have something to do with sorcery. On one side, the Society's activities lead others to further understanding of sorcery. On the other, it leads the Order to further understanding of sorcery. Understanding one's enemy is the first key to defeating him.

Invisible College

The Knights are very sympathetic to the College. However, the Inquisition's relentless pursuit of evidence against the Order limits the help they can offer. The Knights have been involved in hiding College members and escape attempts, and have even freed more than their fair share of "heretics" from the burning post, but every time they do, they must do so... invisibly.

Los Vagos

El Vago and the Order have run across each others' paths on more than one occasion. However, like the Invisible College above, the Order cannot officially endorse the actions of the Vagabond. If it did, it would certainly draw the wrath of the Inquisition. However, it has been said that many members of Los Vagos also wear the Seal of the Order, even if only as a Patron.



What Do You Wish To Leave?

One of the Order's most famous Knights, perhaps its greatest, was Renaud. His courage, loyalty and honor have yet to be matched in the Order.

When asked, "What do you wish to leave to the Order?", his reply was simple and direct. He looked at each of the young Knights straight in the eyes, pausing at each one. Then, with a tear falling from his own eyes, he said "No one lives forever, so live a life that will never be forgotten."



Rilasciare

The Knights sympathize with the Free Thinkers, but believe they simply take things in the wrong direction. They are pranksters, nothing more. Pure rebellion against authority is not the path to victory against sorcery. It is simply a path to disorder, a path the Knights do not understand or appreciate.

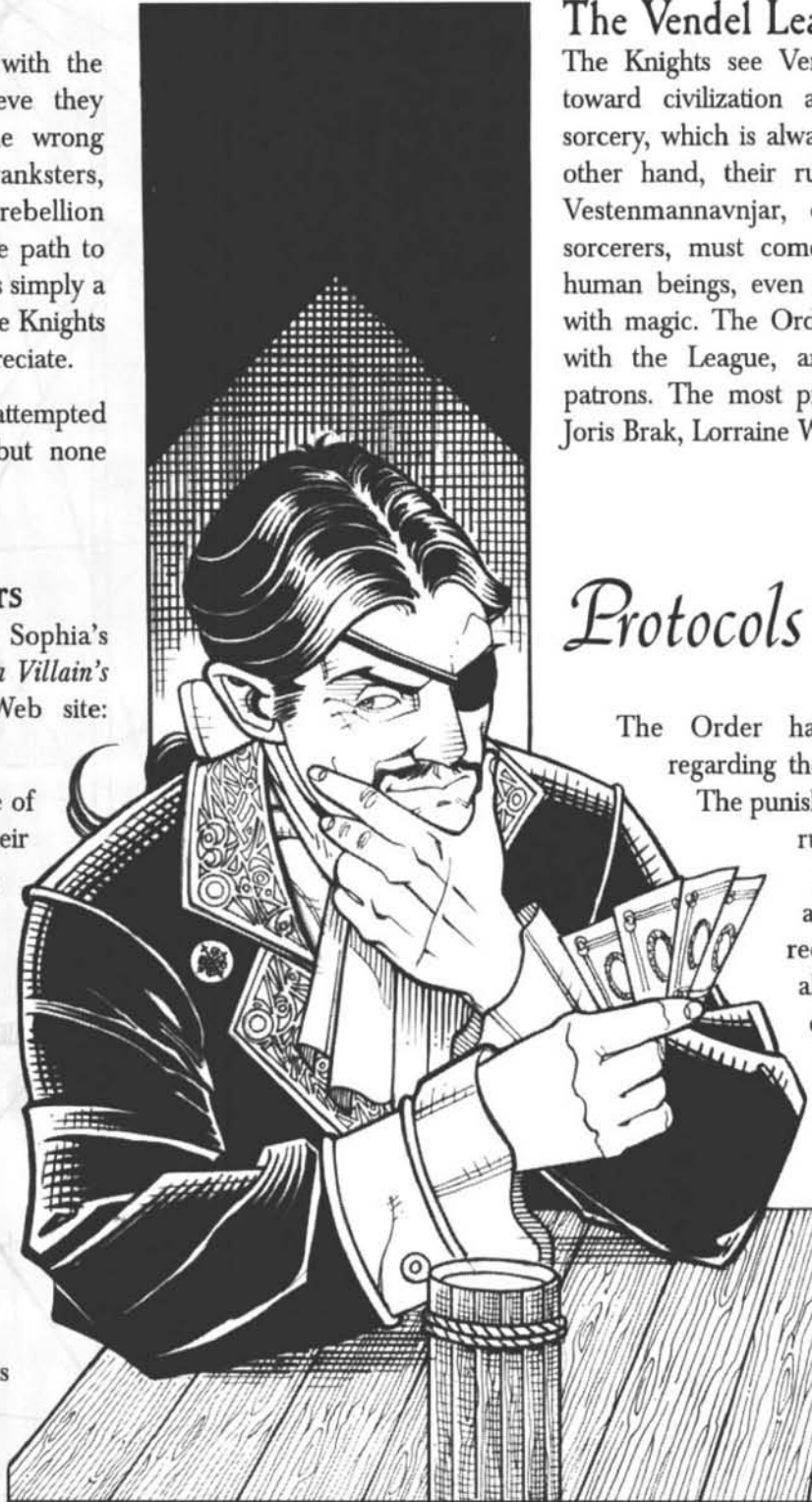
Many Free Thinkers have attempted to infiltrate the Order, but none have yet succeeded.

Sophia's Daughters

(For information on Sophia's Daughters, see the *7th Sea Villain's Kit* and the *7th Sea* Web site: www.7thSea.com.)

The Knights are not aware of Sophia's Daughters or their actions. The Daughters, however, are very aware of the Order. They have sent many young women to woo Knights and to attempt to join the Order. Three of them have succeeded thus far.

The Daughters also keep tabs on Louis-Claude du Sinjin (see pp. 32 and 54), because when they fed him their longevity elixir — ordinarily fatal to males — he not only neglected to die instantly, but indeed has failed to die altogether.



The Vendel League

The Knights see Vendel progress as a step toward civilization and a step away from sorcery, which is always a good thing. On the other hand, their ruthless treatment of the Vestenmannavnjar, even though they are sorcerers, must come to an end. They are human beings, even if their blood is tainted with magic. The Order is on amicable terms with the League, and many members are patrons. The most prominent are Val Mokka, Joris Brak, Lorraine Weller, and George Skard.

Protocols

The Order has very specific rules regarding the conduct of its Knights.

The punishments for disobeying the rules can be harsh, but generally the Knights are a forgiving folk, and they recognize that there are always exceptions and circumstances to consider before passing judgment.

The Code of Chivalry

Knights of the Rose and cross swear the Three Vows when they become Knights, but they are still expected to obey the Code of Chivalry. A full essay on chivalry and its



impact on the Order (and the rest of Théah) can be found in the Player Section of Chapter Four.

Betrayal

The most severe crime a Knight can commit is betraying the trust of the Order. Revealing the Order's secrets is such a severe fall from grace that many members consider death the only penalty. After all, if a Knight reveals one secret, how much longer will it be before he reveals another?

Every case of betrayal is unique and demands its own consideration.

Quarrels

Quarrels between Knights are usually a minor complication in the day-to-day affairs of a Chapter house and are usually settled with an objective arbitration (usually a Sergeant or Adept Knight, or a Senior Knight if the matter is very serious). If the men cannot reach an agreement, they face off with swords and fight until first blood.

The Black Stone

It is firmly set in Rose and Cross philosophy that killing, under any and all circumstances, is wrong. Unfortunately, there are times when it is the only course available to the Order.

Knights only kill under one circumstance: when it is absolutely necessary to protect the Order. When they discover an intruder or if a member betrays the Order's trust, there is only one course of action.

The Knights gather in the chapel. Each puts on a blindfold. Then, one by one, they draw stones from a bowl. Within the bowl are a number of white stones and a single black stone. When everyone has drawn a stone, the Knights retire to their rooms, close their doors, and open their hands. If a Knight has a white stone, he sits and meditates on the fact that he was fortunate he did not draw the black stone. If he

draws a black stone, however, he must go to where the prisoner is kept and kill him.

The Ritual of the Black Stone is one of the darkest moments of a Knight's life. The Knights believe that murder is wrong under any and all circumstances. However, sometimes it is necessary to maintain the greater good. A Knight who draws a black stone is performing an evil act so his brothers do not have to.

Fellows of the Order

There are two circumstances — marriage and retirement — where a Knight loses his Knighthood and earns this title. Let's take a look at both.

Marriage

If a Knight falls in love and decides to marry (or even simply decides to marry), he must surrender his active Knighthood. The Order is very strict on this subject; in its hundred years of existence, there has never been an exception.

Marriages are usually held in the Chapter house, supervised by the chaplain (the Order always offers to pay for the ceremony). The Knight comes to the altar carrying his tabard in his hands. He puts the tabard in his bride's hands and she gives it to the chaplain. However, a Knight never surrenders his sword.

At the end of the ceremony, the Knight loses whatever title he had within the Order. While he is no longer a Knight, he is still a member; his title is now "Fellow."

Retirement

There comes a time in every Knight's life when he hangs up the tabard and sword. There is no mandatory retirement age for Knights; the Order usually finds a place for them in a Chapter house as an advisor or chaplain.

When a Knight does finally retire, he is brought into the initiation room and surrounded as he was when he began his career in the Order. The Master Knight asks him three questions:





The Rose and Cross Cipher

a bl	oh an
ah N	oi O
aw V	oo T
ay at	oow ab
b B	ou W
ch J	p E
d D	r U
ee F	s K
eh or	sh G
eye P	t Z
f Q	th A
g Y	u d
h C	ur h
hw L	v f
ih R	w p
j S	y y
k I	z u
l the	zh l
m M	an a
n with	be rose
ng and	the mo
o X	with we

“What was your greatest victory?”

The Knight replies with a tale of his most handsome triumph to inspire the younger Knights to equal glories.

“What was your greatest regret?”

The Knight tells of one tragedy that he hopes the younger Knights will never have to go through.

“What do you wish to leave to the Order?”

The Knight sums up his entire career with one simple phrase.

The Knight is once again baptized. The Master Knight announces that the man is no longer a Knight, but is still a brother, and therefore shall be called “Fellow” by his brother Knights.

Handshakes, Passwords, and Secret Signs

The Knights use many different methods for covert communication, including handshakes, code words, and a sophisticated cipher. All of these are detailed below.

The Cipher

Instead of substituting letters, the Order’s cipher substitutes sounds. Recently, the Knights have also been using a kind of shorthand to replace common words as well. The cipher appears in the box on the left. The left-hand column is the phonetic sound and the right-hand column is the letter(s) that replaces the sound.

Example: The phrase “We need help in Castille” translates to “PF with or the ERIBlKZF the.”



The Handshake

The secret handshake used by the Knights works in steps.

The handshake is made with both hands rather than just the right. The first Knight clasps the top of both hands with his right hand. The second Knight clasps the bottom.

The phrases that follow the handshake mean different things. The standard first Knight opening, "It is a good day to meet good company," means "Are you a Knight?"

The standard response is, "Good company is something to be treasured", which means "Yes, I am."

If the second Knight replies, "Good company is hard to find," the first Knight knows that there is trouble in the area. Likewise, if the first Knight wishes to communicate trouble, he turns the hand-clasp over.

Roses

The Knights also use different colored roses to communicate what manner of mission they are currently on.

Red: All is well.

Purple: I have news; speak with me.

Yellow: I'm here to meet someone.

Pink: Extreme danger; leave the area.

White: I need help/sanctuary/aid.

Black: Return to the Chapter house at once.

Signet Rings

The Rose and Cross signet ring is more than just a piece of jewelry given to a Knight upon graduation to Wanderer. Every Chapter house has two entryways. The front door is accessible to the public. The central door will open only to those who have a signet ring. The door is fitted with a lock. The Knight fits his ring inside the lock, turns, and pushes.

The raised surface of the ring engages the mechanism and the door unlocks. Then the Knight pushes the four roses (or some other code) in a specific order to open the door. If the code is not entered properly, a warning bell sounds in the Chapter house.

The Wanderer's Code

Knights use a silent code of hand signals and gestures to communicate with each other. Called "the Wanderer's Code", it is taught to Wandering Knights and used by Invisibles as well.

Combat Codes

Knights use these codes to communicate silently in the field.

I see...: The Knight points two fingers at his own eyes.

Number of Opponents: When indicating to another Knight how many opponents he sees, the Knight uses the following signals: Nodding the head means one opponent. Shaking the head once means two

opponents, twice means three. Waving the fingers down means four opponents, and waving the open hand down means five opponents.

Get weapons ready: The Knight places his hands flat on his hips.

Conversational Codes

Knights use these codes to communicate silently while in the public eye. These codes are used mostly by the Invisibles.

Stay here: The Knight looks into his companion's eyes, looks down at the feet, then looks into the eyes again.

I'm lying: When a Knight wants to communicate to another Knight that he's lying, he scratches his chin while he speaks.

Avalon: First two fingers extended.

Castille: Crossing two fingers.





Eisen: Tapping the chin with the first two fingers.

Montaigne: Touching the side of the nose with the first two fingers.

Ussura: Hands on shoulders.

Vendel: Rubbing fingers together.

Vestenmannavnjar: Wrapping the right hand around the chin and pulling down, as if on a beard.

Vodacce: Last three fingers extended.

using the rules in Chapter 3. These fourteen, however, are the core of the Order.

Avalon

The Carleon House

Location: Carleon, Avalon

Master Knight: Thomas Lynn

Number of Knights: 15

“The Carleon House” is one of the Order’s newest Chapter houses, erected three years ago by the house’s patron, Queen Elaine. The house is located in the capital city, just a few blocks north of the promenade.

She has been known to attend social gatherings at the house and a friendly rivalry between the Queen’s Knights and the Order’s Knights has sprung up. The Queen has been known to fuel this rivalry with friendly flirtations directed at the Chapter house’s Master, Thomas Lynn.

Recently, the Knights have been giving support to Berek and his Sea Dogs. Some Knights have even gone so far as to serve as marines on his ship, the *Black Dawn*. The Sergeant of the Carleon House is Rachel Milligan, an Inish woman of outstanding beauty and fame. Milligan’s training regimen is a bit different from most sergeants’. Rachel teaches her students to be able and quick on their feet. “If he can’t hit you, he can’t hurt you,” she tells her students. Rachel’s style of instruction is a bit unorthodox... but she is Inish, after all.

The Monastery of St. Brigid

Location: Kirkwall, Highland Marches

Master Knight: Andrew MacClaine

Number of Knights: 32

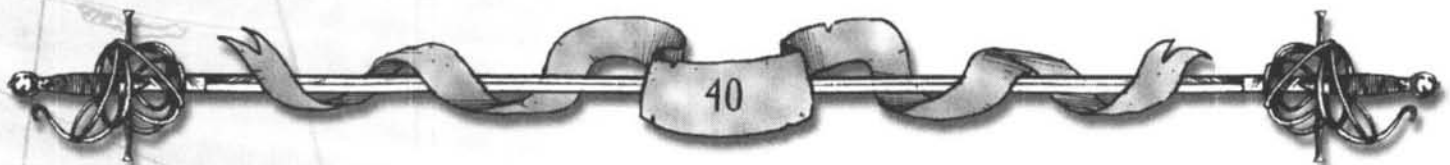
The Monastery of St. Brigid sits on one end of Kirkwall’s main thoroughfare, exactly one mile from the ancestral MacDuff castle. Here amid the confines of the Highland capital, the Knights have no fear of invasion; their hosts protect them well. Everyone knows that the monastery houses the knights of the Rose and Cross. Most believe it is



The Order has many resources at its disposal. These resources are made available to the Chapter houses, who distribute them to their resident Knights. Listed below are the safe houses, patrons, Chapter houses, and special items that only Knights may take advantage of.

Chapter Houses

The Order currently has fourteen primary Chapter houses active in Théah. The average house has approximately thirty Knights. Other houses exist, but they are not as prominent as these. The GM can create these houses as he or she wishes, and the players can even form their own





simply a prominent chapterhouse, held by good-hearted men who like their privacy. They couldn't be more wrong.

It is here, under an old basement, that the Order's secret library is kept. The location of the library is known to only one man: Miles Valroux du Martise, the house's Senior Knight and Minister of the Order. Not even the Master Knight, Andrew MacClaine, knows its location. Entry involves a complex series of locks rendered all but invisible by a cunning series of secret doors. Once in the library, if a Knight were to find four specific volumes, pull each book down until it locked, then pull down on all four torchholders, a secret panel would open, revealing Rosenkreuz's final resting place.

Only a scant handful of Knights know the monastery's true purpose. Even those living there have no idea of its importance. Visitors, trainees and poor knights come through the monastery all the time, and leave ignorant of the secrets they barely missed. As a result, no one bothers to question the monastery's secrets, or venture down to the lower levels. What's the point; if there were something down there, they'd guard it more closely, wouldn't they? The Knights have chosen the safest haven in Théah to hide their secrets – and kept it hidden by pretending there's nothing there.

Castille

The House of the Seven Crosses

Location: Vaticine City

Master Knight: Josephina Vasquez del Rioja

Number of Knights: 52

During the time of the Poor Knights' betrayal, seven monks attempted to smuggle a Knight out of Castille to Montaigne. They succeeded, but were later captured by the Inquisition and tried for heresy. The Knight heard the news and came back to Castille. He was too late. The seven monks were hanged for saving his life.

Many years later, that Knight purchased the land on which the scaffolds were placed during that dark time. He built a

church there, calling the place "The House of the Seven Crosses" in memory of the men who had helped him escape. That place is now the Chapter house for Vaticine City.

On particularly misty nights, if you look from the tallest window in the house, in the square below you can see seven monks walking in a circle, softly chanting. On such nights, before she sets herself to bed, Josephina St. Katarina, the Master Knight, lights the lantern that hangs by the front door. When the monks finish their walk, they step toward the door and knock three times. An initiate is usually sent to answer it; see Chapter Four for more details.

San Cristobal Library

Location: San Cristobal

Master Knight: Francisco Garcia del Torres

Number of Knights: 22

In 1588, a Senior Knight named Hernando de la Rioja inherited a large collection of books from his grandfather, a renowned church scholar. The senior de la Rioja donated the books to his Chapter house on the condition that they would be made available to the public. The Master Knight agreed and the San Cristobal Library was founded.

Since that time, Knights and Patrons have donated books to the library, making it necessary to expand the space needed to hold the books. Three more buildings have been purchased, making this library one of the largest in Castille.

A small contingent of Inquisitors arrived on Sextus 10, 1667 to have a look at these books. The Master Knight turned them away. Two weeks later, a larger force arrived. Again, the Master Knight turned them away. Francisco is waiting for the third force to arrive, certain that the only thing that will turn them away this time will be steel.

The San Cristobal Library is the current location of *The Book of M*.

Casa de Tarago

Location: Tarago

Master Knight: Elijah Basquez

Number of Knights: 28



Founded in 1667, the Tarago house is famous within the Order for an event that many Knights doubt even occurred. In Primus of 1668, a young Poor Knight named Florenza San Gustavo was meditating in the chapel when she heard someone enter. She looked up from her meditations and saw an older man dressed in monk's robes.

Not recognizing the man, she asked him his name. He smiled, put his finger to his lips, and shook his head. He looked about the chapel for a moment, then returned to the young girl. He looked in her eyes and whispered, "You know who I am." Then he walked out the door.

Florenza immediately followed him. Outside the chapel doors, three Wandering Knights were talking. She asked them who the old man was. They shook their heads. They had seen no one enter or exit the chapel. She begged them to come into the chapel, and when they did, they found her meditation book open to a page bearing an illustration of Rosenkreuz. Written on the page were the words, "You know who I am."

Don Juan House

Location: San Felipe

Master Knight: Durante d'Avila

Number of Knights: 15

In the summer of 1654, Oliver Dechaine was washing the windows with his fellow Poor Knights. At one point, he paused and put his hand on one of the windows. He was looking down at the street, fascinated by something the other Poor Knights did not see. Very suddenly, he said, "I will die today."

Later that day, a fire broke out in the Chapter house. Many Knights fled from the flames, but Oliver remained, helping other Knights escape. He ran back into the house one last time for the Master Knight. Moments later, the Master Knight stumbled from the black smoke, reporting that he had been trapped under a fallen beam and someone had rescued him.

When the fire was over, the entire west wing of the building was in ruins, except for the small room where Oliver had





made his prediction. That room was almost untouched... except for one small detail. On the window where he put his hand, a mark remains. It is a black hand print, burned into the glass. The Knights of San Felipe's house do not touch the window, and the mark remains there to this very day.

Eisen

Freiburg House

Location: Freiburg

Master Knight: Dietrich Proust

Number of Knights: 37

This small, squat building looks like a dwarf squashed between two stones. Behind the main building is a smithy maintained by the Chapter house's Master Knight, Dietrich Proust. Most every Knight in Eisen has one of "Dietrich's swords", the best blades in the Order.

But this Chapter house is famous for another reason as well. It was here that the Knights hid Mattias Lieber after his death-defying escape from the Inquisition. They hid him in a secret room below the anvil in the smithy. He stayed there for almost a week, writing his thoughts in a journal. He left the journal behind and the book remains in the house's rectory.

Montaigne

The Shackles and Chains

Location: Arisent

Master Knight: Hermoine Valroux du Martise

Number of Knights: 33

The "Shackles and Chains" Chapter house was once a very popular tavern house in Arisent. It was a notorious place in its prime, but it fell on hard times in 1632. A small fire coupled with an angry group of musketeers shut the place down in the summer of that year. The Knights purchased it in 1645 and added another story and two wings to the structure.

The reason they purchased the building in the first place had nothing to do with its sordid past, but with its specific location. Just below the tavern is a small cave that has access to a select number of catacombs. These catacombs link up to a series of tunnels that pass directly by the prison under the Montaigne capital. The Knights of the Shackles and Chains now have direct access to that prison and can come and go as they please.

Bellamy House

Location: Buché

Master Knight: Evangeline du Montaigne

Number of Knights: 48

Located in the heart of Buché, the Chapter house on Black Pole Road — recently renamed "Bellamy House" — is the exact location where the Poor Knights were burned at the stake in the thirteenth century. It is the fifth-largest Chapter house, holding almost fifty Knights. It is actually three houses, linked by walkways constructed by the Order's masons and craftsmen.

The Knights sleep in the west wing and the main house is left empty after sunset. Every new moon, a Domini takes his Tyro to the main house just after midnight. There, they sit just to the right of the front door, under a window that overlooks the square... and wait. No Knight ever speaks of what he sees on that night, except to say that the sight will stay with him until his dying day.

Forty-second Street House

Location: Charouse

Master Knight: Faith d'Arrent

Number of Knights: 14

One of the smallest Chapter houses is in Charouse. "Forty-second Street House" (as the resident Knights call it) keeps a low profile in the city. There used to be many more Knights here and many of the bunks are empty, making it a prime stop-over house for Wandering Knights moving through Montaigne.

The reason for the house's desertion is in the basement. It came up from the sewers and killed fourteen Knights before





they were able to cage it. On some days, it squirms and oozes and screams. On others, it howls and rakes its claws against the bars. Faith d'Arrent, the Master Knight, showed the thing to a pair of Explorer Scholars who walked away scratching their heads. She still bears scars from capturing the thing — scars that bleed every full moon.

Not only does the thing haunt the basement, but apparently it haunts dreams as well. Only a small number of Knights are kept in the house to keep the strain to a minimum.

Crieux House

Location: Crieux

Master Knight: Aristide Baveux

Number of Knights: 62

Crieux House was donated to the Order in the spring of 1519 by Sebastian Allais du Crieux. It is a huge mansion filled with some of the most expensive art and furniture in Montaigne. While it serves as the Order's "public face", it is still only the third largest house in Théah. All membership records are kept and updated here. The house also contains a press which it uses to print the Order's newsletter, *The Quill*.

The house's Master, Aristide Baveux, is also the Grand Master of the Order, a man well connected in Montaigne society. He regularly visits *l'Empereur* and is seen at almost all of his parties. Baveux has brought many Patrons to the Order, expanding it greatly into Théan society.

No important documents are kept at Crieux House. In fact, the majority of papers and records are fake. Spies who break into the house do so with an amazing amount of ease, and the records they steal tell them nothing the Order doesn't want them to know.

The Dungeon

Location: Entour

Master Knight: Simon Valroux du Martise

Number of Knights: 55

For almost one hundred years, the Chapter house in Entour was called "The House of Red Shutters." That was before it

became the home of the most notorious Sergeant Knight in the modern Order. Sprague (the only name he answers to) is one of the best Swordsmen in Montaigne. If you ask him, he will tell you that he is the best. Most of the Chapter house is dedicated to his studio, a place trainees have dubbed "the Dungeon."

Knights from all across Théah come to Entour to train under Sprague. His regimen is harsh, too much for most Knights to bear. Those who survive his ordeals come away as some of the finest Swordsmen in the Order. But none of them, not a single one, can even begin to compare to Sprague.

The House of Nine Keys

Location: Paix

Master Knight: Hughes Sices du Sices

Number of Knights: 12

The Chapter house in Paix is largely overshadowed by the enormous Crieux House and the reputation of the Dungeon. However, "the House of Nine Keys" is also the true heart of the Order. The house's Master Knight usually attends parties as one of Baveux's Senior Knights, a fact that almost no one notices.

The Paix house gains its name for the nine locked doors in the basement. Each door is locked behind another one, all leading to the vault. Each key is kept by a separate Knight, save for the *tenth* key, which is held by the Master of the house. No one save the Master knows what it opens — although it's safe to assume that whatever it is lies in the vault. The current Master has never used the key. Neither did his predecessor.

Vendel

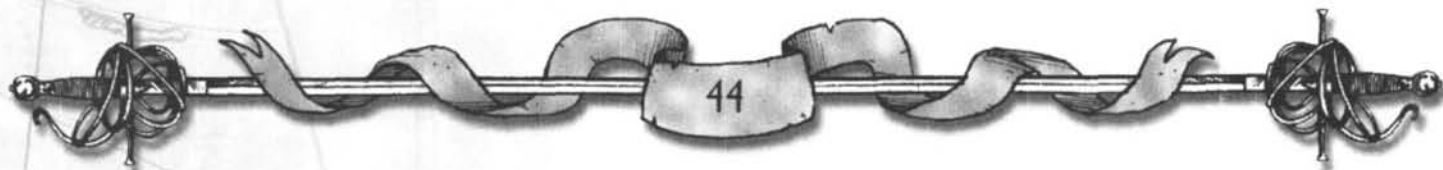
1st and 5th House

Location: Kirk

Master Knight: Colin Quinlan

Number of Knights: 72

In the splendid city of Kirk, "the House the Guilder Built" stands on the corner of West 1st and North 5th Streets. It is





the largest Chapter house in Théah, run by Colin Quinlan, a pleasant Inish fellow who saved Val Mokka's life from a Vestenmannavnjar assassin. Mokka offered to build the Chapter house himself if Baveux agreed to make the young man the Master of the house. The Grand Master agreed and Quinlan became the youngest man ever to hold the rank.

The house is unlike any other in Théah. Seven butlers, eighteen maids, and four carriage drivers serve the Knights' needs. Food, wines and other sundries are delivered to the house daily and members of the Order receive discounts at all the local shops. So far, the Order has not seen fit to question Val Mokka's motives. Then again, he hasn't asked for anything in return for his generosity.

Yet.

Vodacce

Lucani

Location: Lucani's Isle

Master Knight: Antoinia

Number of Knights: 17

The only Chapter house in Vodacce is on Lucani's isle, sponsored by the merchant prince himself. If what the Order is doing on his isle ever became public knowledge, however, he might just turn them all over to his cousins.

The Master of the Order is Antoinia. The woman appears to be in her thirties, but is actually much younger. It's her gray hair that misleads people. Antoinia is the daughter of a Fate Witch and one of the most important women involved in smuggling women out of Vodacce. She maintains a strong relationship with Juliette (the two were childhood friends), a friendship that no *sorte strega* can touch.







Hero

Adara

A Wandering Knight of great renown, Adara earned her reputation in the Order with courage, loyalty and cunning. She has served the Order for almost ten years and has refused promotion three times. "Do not ask me again," she told the Order the last time they offered her a higher position. "I would prefer to 'die in a blue tabard than live in a black one'."

Perhaps we forgot to mention "headstrong" as one of the factors in her reputation.

Adara is the daughter of a fate witch, but did not receive the gift, much to her father's consternation. When she was nine, Adara fled the household looking for safety from her father's temper. He caught up with her, beat her as he had beaten her mother and threw her into a canal.

He may have left her to die, but fate was not ready to take her just yet. She was found by a merchant who married her against her will. That night, she fled once again. This time, as she ran through the darkness, she fell into the arms of a Knight of the Rose and Cross. His name was Corbitt.

The Knight smuggled her out of Vodacce and she recovered from her injuries in a monastery friendly to the Order. As she did, she begged Corbitt to make her a Knight. Corbitt shook his head. "No, little one. It is not up to me. Only the masters can invite you to join."

Adara left the monastery dejected. She wandered continental Théah for a year, learning much of the ways of the world. After that year, she met a young man in a tavern who boasted that his father had purchased him a commission in the Rose and Cross. Adara seduced the young man, knocked him out, took his papers, cut her hair and went to Entour to be made a Knight.

The ruse lasted a week. However, Sprague was so impressed with her cunning (and her willful manner) that he accepted her as an initiate. She finished her

training in almost record time, gaining the title Wandering Knight in less than three years.

Image: Adara is a beautiful Vodacce woman in her late twenties. She has raven-black hair that curls down her shoulders and eyes that seem even darker when properly lit. She is average Vodacce height for a woman, a little above five and half feet tall, slim and athletic. She is very physical with her movements, caring little if anyone gets in her way.



Adara

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She still bears the scars from her childhood – both physical and emotional.

Roleplaying Adara: Many who do not know her well would think Adara allows no nonsense into her life. She has pushed her mind and body to the limits of their ability and she demands the same from those around her. Adara does have a sense of humor, however, as well as a warm and generous heart. This side of her is only shown to those she trusts implicitly. She's been betrayed too many times to drop her guard easily.

Adara: Hero

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 2

Reputation: 32

Arcana: Stubborn

Background: Hunted (2)

Advantages: Vodacce R/W, Montaigne R/W, Castille, Indomitable Will, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Rose & Cross Vow

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Oratory 2

Spy: Shadowing 2, Stealth 2

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1

Desaix (Apprentice): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 1, Feint (Fencing) 1

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 1

Knife: Attack (Knife) 1, Parry (Knife) 3

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3

Basquez, Elijah

Master of Casa de Tarago, Elijah Basquez is stricter than most Master Knights. Of course, since he's a Dolman, that's only to be expected. Elijah takes the three vows very seriously, and often goes out into the field incognito in order to take them into his own hands for a while, the way he did in his younger days. His Knights often worry about him and follow along

to make sure he doesn't get in over his head, but he's never needed their help. At least, not that they know of.

Elijah hates the Inquisition, who tortured his only daughter, Tara, to death three years ago. They mistakenly believed that she was a half-blooded Fate Witch, thanks to a tip from a "concerned citizen" who was really a jilted lover of hers. Since the day her body was returned to him by a priest who apologized for his daughter's "sins", Elijah has despised



Elijah Basquez



those men who hide behind religion as an excuse for their actions. That priest, his daughter's jilted lover, and every man who was a member of the Inquisition in his town at the time began disappearing one after another. Many of them fled the town, only to have their terrified horses gallop back through the city gates without them. While it is uncertain exactly what happened to the Inquisitors, rumors suggest that Elijah is responsible for their disappearance, though none can explain *how* he might be involved. The Inquisition is said to be sending more members to investigate Elijah. He wouldn't have it any other way.

Image: Tall and stately, Elijah has a hooked nose and thick eyebrows. His body is thin and spindly, but nevertheless possesses great strength. He is usually found wearing plain clothing in the Dolman fashion, his one vanity being the Rose and Cross pin that he always wears prominently on his chest.

Goals: Elijah wants to see the Inquisition crushed. Utterly and completely. While he maintains his duties to the Rose and Cross and continues to uphold his Vows in the evening, he has overstepped his limits as a Hero while chasing this goal, and is rapidly on his way to becoming a Villain. It doesn't matter to him, however. He'd sell his soul to get revenge on them for what they did to his daughter. Fortunately for him, he has an interested buyer.

Roleplaying Elijah: Speak with great intensity, as though every word were vitally important. Use your eyebrows to display emotion, and gesticulate with your hands rapidly, as if trying to wave an urgent message to a man on the next hill. In short, everything you do must be intense and energetic. The younger Knights will simply have to keep up with you. A slur against your daughter's memory is grounds for a duel to the death.

Elijah Basquez: Hero

Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 2, Resolve 2, Panache 3

Reputation: 52

Arcana: Righteous

Background: Vendetta (3)

Advantages: Castille R/W, Montaigne R/W, Combat Reflexes, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), The Secret (Rose & Cross), Rose & Cross Vow

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Oratory 4, Diplomacy 3, Politics 2

Spy: Shadowing 3, Stealth 4, Sincerity 3

Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 2, Underworld Lore 1

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 1, Leaping 3, Swinging 3

Desaix (Journeyman): Double Parry (Fencing/Knife) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Lunge (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 4

Dirty Fighting: Attack (Dirty Fighting) 3, Throat Strike 2

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 4

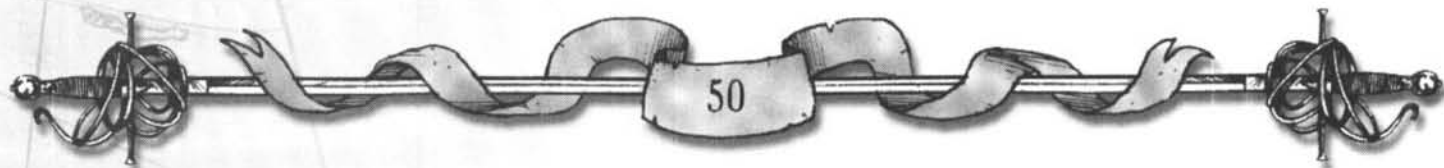
Aristide Baveux

"Some men serve the cause with cunning. Others serve it with steel. We all serve the Order in our own way."

It could be said that Aristide Baveux is the most beloved man in Montaigne, if not in Théah. He is at the very least one of the best-known men in the world. He and the Order have built their reputations upon each other, a situation that is mutually beneficial.

Baveux is the Grand Master of the Order, a position of great importance and responsibility... but not the responsibility the rest of the world perceives. He is the Order's "face", its mouthpiece. He is the part of the Order the public gets to see. Baveux knows this and that fact does not diminish his service or his loyalty. He has worn the Seal for twelve years now and has not regretted it for a single day.

Aristide, the second son of a noble Montaigne family, stood to gain little from his father in terms of inheritance. Instead of waiting for his father's fortune, he decided to make his own. He joined the Montaigne army as an officer and gained a great reputation as a generous and well-respected captain.





Rose & Cross

After his service, he was approached by a Knight of the Rose and Cross. Aristide leapt at the opportunity to join. He rose quickly through the ranks to Sergeant, training initiates and Poor Knights in the ways of the Order.

In his fifth year of service, both his father and brother were killed by a highwayman, leaving Aristide as the sole inheritor of the estate. He donated almost all of his fortune to the Order and he convinced Duke Sebastian Allais du

Crieux to donate his own estate to the Order, an act that put him in charge of Crieux House.

Image: Aristide is in his late twenties and has the features of Montaigne nobility. His hair is blond, his eyes blue, and his prominent nose is in full view of the world. He is still very athletic, a fact that can be attributed to sparring with the Poor Knights every day – in his old red tabard.

Roleplaying Aristide: He speaks quickly and with great energy, impassioned about almost any conversation. It was once said by one of Aristide's Adepts that he believed the Grand Master could convince *l'Empereur* that the sun really did rise in the west. Aristide overheard the conversation and has put his mind to figuring out a way to do it, just to say that he did.

Aristide Baveux: Hero

Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Panache 3
Reputation: 127

Arcana: Insightful

Advantages: Montaigne R/W, Castille R/W, Connections (Ally), Commission (Captain), Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Noble, The Secret (Rose & Cross), Rose & Cross Vow

Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 4, Fashion 2, Oratory 5, Diplomacy 4, Sincerity 5

Scholar: History 3, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 3, Research 2, Law 3

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2, Side-step 3

Commander: Strategy 4, Tactics 3, Incitation 5, Leadership 4, Logistics 2

Desaix (Master): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Lunge (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 5

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5

Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 4

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 3, Reload (Firearms) 2



Aristide Baveux



Marcos San Felipe

Unbeknownst to the Church, Marcos has spent years poring over rare and forbidden Crescent books in the Rose and Cross collection. As a result, he has discovered certain medical facts that will take the rest of Théah another decade to unearth. These pieces of information, primarily concerned with the medicinal value of certain plants and fungi, have allowed him to stride confidently beyond the



Marcos San Felipe

level of skill his peers believe is possible in the field of medicine and surgery. If his feats of healing were witnessed by one of them, he would undoubtedly be denounced as a sorcerer, so he works his craft secretly for the Knights of the Rose and Cross at San Cristobal Library.

Marcos has a great passion for the mysteries of the Crescent Empire. He has never been there during his lifetime because of the edicts of the Church, but he has promised himself that he'll get to see its wonders before he dies. His most prized possession is a small shard of gemstone that its previous owner claims came from a ruin in the heart of the Crescent desert. When he stares into it for long periods of time, Marcos has difficulty looking away, and he states that it shows him images of the most beautiful things in the world.

Image: Marcos is soft-skinned and somewhat plump. His hair is dark and usually kept cut short. He has unusually pale grey eyes and a concerned smile. Marcos' hands are small and unblemished by calluses. His skin is pale.

Goals: Marcos honestly wants to heal the sick and injured of Théah, one and all. He would like to see the end of the Inquisition so that he can distribute the techniques he has gleaned from the Crescent books to other doctors. He isn't interested in glory – he just wants to improve the lot of the common man.

Roleplaying Marcos: When you read a book, be enthralled by it. Make others shake or shout at you to get your attention. Speak quietly. Shake hands with a very gentle grip. Never cause suffering.

Marcos San Felipe: Hero

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 2
Reputation: 53

Arcana: Altruistic

Advantages: Castille R/W, Montaigne R/W, Crescent R/W, Théan R/W, Castillian Education, Grand Master, Membership (Rose & Cross), Rose & Cross Vow, University

Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Oratory 2, Diplomacy 3, Sincerity 4

Doctor: Diagnosis 5, First Aid 5, Quack 1, Dentist 4, Examiner 5, Surgery 6, Veterinarian 4

Scholar: History 4, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 3, Research 5, Natural Philosophy 3, Occult 2

Servant: Etiquette 3, Fashion 2, Menial Tasks 3, Unobtrusive 4

Desaix (Apprentice): Double Parry 3, Feint (Fencing) 3

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 3

Knife: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 4

Cowan Cooper

“Poor Cowan” is a recent recruit in the Order, but a noteworthy one. His father was a fisherman who served one tour with the Sea Dog Berek and returned with enough of a fortune to make him a patron in the Order. But he didn’t use his money to increase his own status: he used it to increase his son’s.

Cowan came to the Order with very little formal training. He didn’t know how to read or write and his knowledge of the world was limited to the shantytown where he grew up. But the Knights saw promise in the young lad and brought him into the Order as an initiate.

Other initiates (noble sons and daughters) blundered through the manual tasks set to them, but Cowan simply set his mind to the tasks without becoming dismayed by the demeaning labor.

He was initiated into the Order after three years of training and assigned to be Wandering Adara’s Tyro. He has served her for two years now and is closer to graduating to Wandering Knight than he thinks.

Image: Cowan is nineteen, six feet tall, strong and strapping. His blond hair hangs just a little over his hazel eyes, but cut short in the back. He has a youthful charm to his features; Adara has told him,

“You haven’t grown into your face yet. It’s still too big for you.”

Roleplaying Cowan: Cowan is young and idealistic. He believes in the Order and all it stands for (at least, what they tell Poor Knights it stands for). Of course, he is also in love with Adara, a fact that has yet to cloud his judgment. He speaks quickly and with a sharp wit – something he developed with the sailors at the Avalon docks.



Cowan Cooper

Cowan Cooper: Henchman

Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Wits 2, Resolve 2, Panache 2

Reputation: 0

Arcana: Reckless

Advantages: Avalon, Montaigne R/W, Membership (Rose & Cross)

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Sprinting 1, Throwing 1, Leaping 1

Desaix (Apprentice): Feint (Fencing) 1

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 1

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 1

Knife: Attack (Knife) 1, Parry (Knife) 4

Louis-Claude du Sinjin

The man known as Louis-Claude du Sinjin (among at least seven other names) is one of the Order's Invisible Knights. His cover has slipped twice, much to his displeasure, and he intends never to let it happen again.

Louis-Claude's claims to his age are true: he really is over three hundred years old. He isn't immortal, but he isn't aging all that quickly, either. Louis-Claude isn't sure what caused his limited immortality, but it has something to do with a lovely young woman he met three centuries ago. He was only seventeen when it happened. He met the girl in a tavern, got both of them drunk and took her back to his room. The girl, who described herself as a "daughter of Sophia" or some such nonsense, had a flask of "the good stuff" with her that she proposed they toast from. Louis-Claude took a draught, and – much to the girl's obvious surprise – didn't immediately keel over and die. The suddenly-sober girl hastily excused herself and fled; he hasn't seen her since, despite the searches he's conducted. Three hundred years later Louis-Claude still looks no older than twenty-five, and he remains convinced that his accidental benefactress is also alive somewhere in Théah.

Louis-Claude joined the Rose and Cross on the last day of 1599. He rose through the ranks to Wandering Knight where he resided for three years. At the end of that time, he was approached by the Invisibles and invited to join their ranks. That was in 1610. Fifty-eight years later, he's still serving the Rose and Cross... albeit with a bit more discretion than normally suits him.



Louis-Claude du Sinjin



Over the centuries, Louis-Claude has served as counselor, court magician, alchemist and spy for most of the crowned heads of Théah. He has also been a secret lover of so many queens and ladies even he cannot keep count of them all. All of this activity has given him unique insight into Théah's intrigues, insight he shares with the Rose and Cross.

He has also traveled extensively, including beyond the Church barriers into the lands of the Crescent, where he learned many marvelous things. After a close call in Eisen, he spent many years as a devout follower of the Prophets, but that little fling only lasted twenty of his three hundred years.

Image: Louis-Claude appears to be in his mid-twenties. He is not a handsome man, but there is a wicked wisdom in his eyes and in his smile that appeals to the ladies. He is always dressed in the finest clothes and the finest jewelry, and only eats the finest foods and drinks the finest wines. Fortunately, he has the resources to fund his indulgences.

Roleplaying Louis-Claude: Louis-Claude appears to be a bit of a dandy, his voice a sweet tenor that rings through the hallways. However, he is also a deadly Swordsman and a crack shot. He has survived twenty duels, and boasts of the fact whenever he can. Louis-Claude isn't pretending to be a dandy... he *is* a dandy. He's just a dandy who can take good care of himself, thank you very much.

Louis-Claude: Hero

Brawn 3, Finesse 6, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Panache 6

Reputation: 102

Arcana: Lecherous

Advantages: Montaigne R/W, Castille R/W, Avalon R/W, Crescent, Able Drinker, Dangerous Beauty, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Noble, The Secret (Rose & Cross), Rose & Cross Vow

Courtier: Dancing 3, Etiquette 5, Fashion 4, Oratory 3, Diplomacy 3, Politics 4, Scheming 4, Seduction 5, Sincerity 5
Scholar: History 4, Mathematics 3, Philosophy 3, Research 2, Natural Philosophy 4, Theology 2

Spy: Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Bribery 3, Conceal 4, Disguise 4, Read Lips 4

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 4, Throwing 3, Leaping 4, Swinging 3

Desaix (Master): Double-parry (Fencing) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Lunge (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 5

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 4

Knife: Attack (Knife) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5

Valroux (Master): Double-parry (Fencing) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Tagging (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Valroux) 5

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms) 4

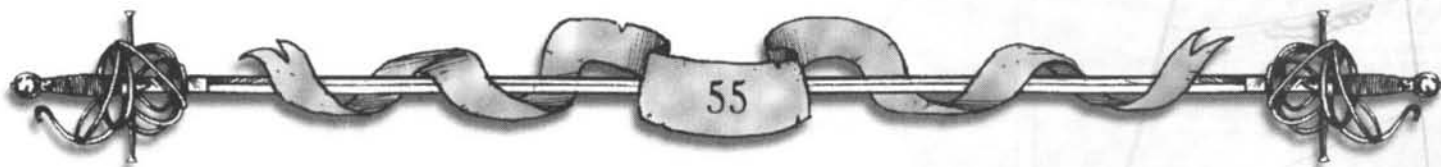
Aindriu McKenna

Born in 1640, Aindriu spent his youth in Inismore, raiding his neighbors' cattle and protecting his own. Eager to get out and see the world, he signed up as a marine with the Sea Dogs. In fact, he was serving aboard ship during the famous battle with the Castillian Armada. It is recorded that he killed six men that day, though he claims that the real number is closer to twenty.

In 1659, Aindriu joined the Rose and Cross as a Poor Knight. He easily endured the indignities of being a tyro, and to this day possesses the record for going the longest time without losing a training bout: 43 months. He claims that the single loss shouldn't count, since it took Sergeant Knight Sprague, the greatest Swordsman in the Rose and Cross, to end the streak.

Goals: He is attempting to develop a style of fighting derived from the Highland Marches Claymore School known as MacDonald (see the forthcoming *Avalon Nation Sourcebook*). So far he has had little success, but he remains hopeful. In addition, he has taken upon himself the responsibility of training a tyro: Rob Smythe.

Image: Aindriu is slightly taller than average, with shoulder-length reddish-brown hair. He typically wears Inismore clothing, though he has been known to wear the latest court fashions when forced. He rarely wears shoes, preferring soft boots when footwear is necessary, and typically slipping them off under the banquet table at formal dinners and other gala occasions.



Roleplaying Aindriu: You believe strongly in the Inish sense of honor, but temper it with a good dose of chivalry. Smile constantly, but grow angry easily, losing your smile only then. When the slight is forgotten, your smile should return. You are very curious, and are easily distracted by simple mysteries or interesting objects.

Aindriu McKenna: Hero

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Panache 2

Reputation: 12

Arcana: Rash

Advantages: Avalon R/W, Montaigne, Castillian, Théan R/W, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Tyro, Rose & Cross Vow

Sailor: Balance 2, Climbing 3, Knotwork 2, Rigging 2

Desaix (Apprentice): Lunge (Fencing) 1

Heavy Weapon: Attack (Heavy Weapon) 3, Parry (Heavy Weapon) 1

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 2

Knife: Attack (Knife) 1, Parry (Knife) 4



Aindriu McKenna

Miles Valroux du Martise

Miles Valroux du Martise joined the Order at the age of seventeen. He spent two years as initiate and three as Tyro before he was permitted to wear the blue tabard. During that time, he proved himself capable enough to earn the nickname "Unshakable." His quick wit and clear thinking helped him rise to the rank of Adept and train to take over the position of Senior Knight in Crioux House, a feat he would accomplish five years later.

Miles spent years creating false documents to mislead the Order's enemies and spent even longer organizing actual documentation procedures. Almost all of the Order's current protocols are due to Miles' efforts.

Ten years after appointing him to the post of Senior Knight, the Order approached him regarding a special duty in the Highland Marches. Would he be able to take on the burden? Without hesitation, Miles agreed to go.

That was fifteen years ago.

Now, after thirty-five years of serving the Order, Miles is its Minister, and is responsible for the two largest secrets in the Order: the location of the Secret Library and Rosenkreuz's tomb. He is the only Knight who knows their location. He is also the only Knight who knows what happened last year.

On the anniversary of Rosenkreuz's death, Miles awoke from a terrible dream that he was buried alive, struggling to get free from his air-tight tomb. He awoke with a voice in his head, demanding he go below to Rosenkreuz's tomb and open it. The old man followed his impulse and when he did, he found the books open, the scales filled with sand and the key broken.

And the body of Rosenkreuz was gone.

The next day, Miles found the secret passage of the library open and books missing off the shelves.

Image: Miles is in his late fifties, but his hair is still jet black and his eyes crystal blue. However, after his recent discovery, he's found a streak of silver hair — not gray, but *silver* — in the forelock. His sure and certain hands have begun to tremble over the last few weeks and his speech comes out in stutters. His fellow Knights are beginning to worry about "Old Unshakable."

Roleplaying Miles: There are moments when Miles is his old self: stoic, stable and unshakable. However, most of the time, he's haunted by the knowledge he carries in his head, a knowledge so dark that it overcomes him completely.

Miles Valroux du Martise: Hero

Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 5, Resolve 3, Panache 4

Reputation: 132

Arcana: Self-Controlled

Advantages: Linguist, Montaigne R/W, Castille R/W, Avalon R/W, Eisen R/W, Vodacce R/W, Keen Senses, Noble, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), The Secret (Rose & Cross), Rose & Cross Vow

Merchant: Calligrapher 4, Scribe 5, Accounting 4

Scholar: History 3, Mathematics 4, Philosophy 2, Research 4, Law 2

Spy: Shadowing 3, Stealth 3, Conceal 3, Forgery 5, Sincerity 4

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 4, Throwing 2, Leaping 3, Break Fall 3

Desaix (Master): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Lunge (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 5

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 4

Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 5

Pugilism: Attack (Pugilism) 4, Footwork 4, Jab 2, Uppercut 4



Miles Valroux du Martise

Sprague

The senior member of the Desaix family, Sprague inherited his position from his father, who taught him nearly everything he knows about fencing. Sprague is generally accepted to be the greatest living Swordsman in the Rose and Cross.

Sprague possesses a heavy oak trunk that he keeps locked (TN 35) at the foot of his bed. There is speculation about

the contents of the chest, with some believing that it contains the secret of his inhuman skill at fencing. The truth, known only to himself, is that it contains small gifts and tokens from every student he has ever taught. Locks of hair and pretty but worthless rings and brooches abound. Some of the items are stained with a small drop of blood, but that has nothing to do with Porté magic. He simply likes to keep track of his students, and when word of one's death reaches him, he retreats to his room for a night of prayer, liquor, and shouted arguments with the dead. The phrase "I should've trained them better" comes through the wall several times before Sprague finally settles down and morosely pricks his finger with a heated needle, letting the blood fall on the token the dead student gave to him. During these times, his students are careful to leave him alone.

Image: Sprague is tall, with an enormous reach thanks to his gangly arms. He has a thin face, and normally has dark circles under his eyes, particularly after one of his "fits" as they are referred to by the other Rose and Cross Knights. Sprague typically follows the Montaigne fashions so long as they keep his arms and legs free of any entangling cloth.

Goals: Ideally, Sprague wants every single one of his students to die a peaceful death at a ripe old age. That's why he drives them so hard. He thinks of them as his children, and every one lost in a bloody duel is a failure on his part to protect them.

Roleplaying Sprague: Make your students hate you by working them beyond what they consider to be their limits. Unless they end the day bruised and bloody, you aren't doing your job. However, send anyone with a legitimate injury out for medical treatment immediately. You want them well-trained, not dead.

Sprague: Hero

Brawn 3, Finesse 6, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Panache 4
Reputation: 112

Arcana: Exemplary



Sprague

Advantages: Montaigne R/W, Castille, Combat Reflexes, Grandmaster, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Noble, The Secret (Rose & Cross), Rose & Cross Vow, Toughness

Spy: Shadowing 4, Stealth 3, Conceal 3, Hand Signs 4

Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 4, Scrounging 3

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 5, Sprinting 4, Throwing 3, Rolling 3, Side-step 4

Desaix (Master): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Lunge (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 5
Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 6, Parry (Fencing) 5

Knife: Attack (Knife) 5, Parry (Knife) 5

Rachel Milligan

Once a very successful burglar, Milligan made her living in Avalon as a "second story man." She gained access to the buildings she robbed through windows, skylights, and other wall and ceiling fixtures that were often overlooked because their owners assumed that there were too high above the ground to be reached.

Rachel grew to love the rooftops, striding silently along them both at night, and during the day. She found that, unless alerted by a sound or a shadow, people just don't look up most of the time. Eventually, she was spotted during a robbery by a Knight of the Rose and Cross. He chased her across the roofs of the town, but slipped and fell to his death when scrambling up the side of a cathedral after her. She felt guilty for leading him to his death, for she knew that the Rose and Cross were good people, and eventually she joined the Order to assuage her guilt.

Image: Beautiful and graceful, Rachel is a short, blonde-haired woman with dark eyes. She dresses in loose, practical clothes.

Goals: Rachel just wants to enjoy life. She takes a particular glee in leaping from rooftop to rooftop, so she volunteered to teach that useful skill to members of the Rose and Cross. As long as her duties don't get in the way of having a good time, she'll stay happy.

Roleplaying Rachel: Sit on the roof when you aren't otherwise occupied. Make fun of taller folks' inability to keep up with you "up above." Smile, laugh, and always try to have a good time. If someone spoils your fun – ditch them on the roofs somewhere.



Rachel Milligan



Rachel Milligan: Hero

Brawn 2, Finesse 5, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 2

Reputation: 45

Arcana: Hedonistic

Advantages: Avalon R/W, Montaigne, Grandmaster, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsmen's Guild), Rose & Cross Vow, Small

Criminal: Gambling 2, Quack 1, Shadowing 4, Stealth 5, Lockpicking 4, Scrounging 3

Streetwise: Socializing 3, Street Navigation 5, Underworld Lore 2

Athlete: Climbing 5, Footwork 4, Sprinting 4, Throwing 3, Leaping 6, Break Fall 3, Swinging 4, Side-step 3

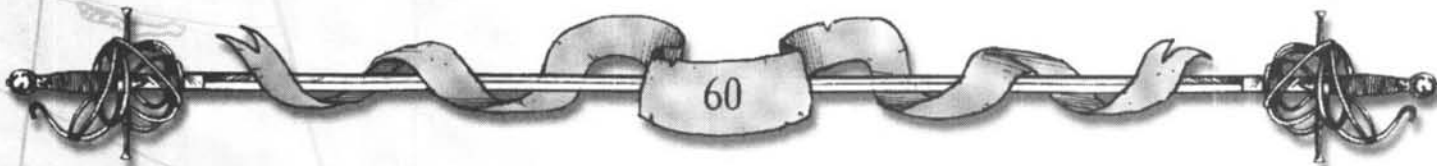
Desaix (Apprentice): Feint (Fencing) 2

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 3, Parry (Fencing) 2

Knife: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 4



Queen Elaine



Queen Elaine (see GM's Guide, p. 32)

Queen Elaine has noticed a certain amount of competitiveness between her knights and the Knights of the Rose and Cross. She enjoys the lengths that both groups go to in order to impress her, and she quietly encourages their rivalry. So far it has remained friendly, and many of the knights from both sides are friends with one another. Still, when Elaine chooses to go to her knights' party over the Rose and Cross party one night, and then has Rose and Cross Knights serve as her bodyguard the next, the knights might be forgiven if their pranks turn a little unfriendly for the next week or so.

Val Mokk (see GM's Guide, p. 98)

Val Mokk wishes to keep the Knights on his side in the Vendel/Vestenmannavnjar civil war, so he provides extremely generously for them. The Knights in Kirk are kept in the lap of luxury – even their tyros have servants, much to the Master's annoyance. In fact, the Master in Kirk has become more and more of a figurehead as Val Mokk has seduced his men with money, wine, and women. Recently, several tyros asked that Val Mokk be allowed to attend their initiation ceremony, although the Master angrily refused.

Evangeline Rois et Reines du Rogné

Six years ago, Evangeline's favorite uncle passed away peacefully in his sleep. This was unusual, since Knights of the Rose and Cross normally die more 'exciting' deaths. However, Evangeline was a loving, dutiful, and – most importantly – rich niece. She approached the Master of the Chapter house of which her uncle had been a member and offered to add two wings to the building. Her sole condition was that the building (then known as the Black Pole Chapter house) be renamed after her uncle – Bellamy Rois et Reines du Rogné. The Master, respectful of Bellamy's memory and eager to have the extensions built, agreed. Since then, Evangeline has become a respected Patron of the Rose and Cross, mostly in memory of her

uncle, but she has begun to see the good works they do as having their own merit as well.

Image: Evangeline is a distinguished looking woman with a classical beauty. She has soft Old Republic features, with dark eyes and hair. In fact, her beauty is so renowned that suitors are often too nervous to approach her.

Goals: Evangeline deals with the Chapter house, not the Knights. She doesn't yet wish to be involved in the day-to-day operation of the Rose and Cross. Heroes running to her asking to be hidden from the authorities are in for a rude shock. Still, her heart is gradually warming towards the Order, so perhaps someday she'll become a more loyal Patron.



Val Mokk

Evangeline Rois et Reines du Rogné

Roleplaying Evangeline: Act naive about several of life's little trials – like getting enough to eat and keeping a roof over your head. When confronted with the lower class, act as though you have just discovered that your dog has soiled an expensive rug. Everything can be fixed with a little money. Once in awhile, though, surprise the Heroes with an uncharacteristically insightful and compassionate remark. You are learning to care.

Don Julio del Bejarano de Castillo

When the Inquisition gained power in Castille in 1666, Don Bejarano began to fear for his life. However, it was well known that the Rose and Cross protects its Patrons. He

agreed to convert a monastery from the Second Prophet's time into a Chapter house, in exchange for two bodyguards to watch over him at all times. The monastery has since become known as Casa de Tarago, and Don Julio is always guarded by two Knights, the assignment rotating on a three-month basis.

Image: Don Julio del Bejarano is a average-sized man who has put on a little weight around the waist over the years. His balding head still possesses the striking gray eyes and (most of) the luxurious black locks that drew so many women to him when he was a younger man. Two of his most distinguishing characteristics are his proud, high nose and his perpetually immaculate clothing.

**Don Julio del Bejarano de Castillo**



Goals: Don Julio del Bejarano wants to live long enough to see the Inquisition destroyed and his son safely installed as the new Don of his rancho. He is frightened of death, and believes that the Inquisition may have learned that he is secretly a member of the Invisible College.

Roleplaying the Don: Act casually. You are no better than anyone else. However, sudden noises or movements startle you, and you have a tendency to put your bodyguards between yourself and anyone you may be speaking with. Wring your hands when speaking with Church Officials, and if you ever see a member of the Inquisition on your land, run for your life.

Duke Douard Allais du Crioux

As their most generous Patron, the Duke du Crioux commands a certain amount of respect from the Rose and Cross. He singlehandedly funded their most extravagant Chapter house – Crioux House. There is, however, a drawback to his largess. The Duke is a man who sees the world as a toy to be bought and played with. When he plays Squares, he plays it with real people in colored uniforms. Once, after reading about a particularly famous battle that occurred near the start of the War of the Cross, he hired an army of Eisen mercenaries to reenact it for him and his two dinner guests. The Knights of the Rose and Cross are often forced to suffer his attentions in ridiculous manners in exchange for his funding. It is mandatory for Knights of Crioux House to put in appearances at the Duke's dinner parties, and once a year, during the spring, the Knights are obliged to put on a parade of their colors for the Duke's private amusement. Needless to say, he is not terribly well liked within the Order.

Image: The Duke is a short man with well-bred features. He has blue eyes and dark hair, typically worn tucked underneath a powdered wig. He wears extravagant, often ridiculously elaborate, outfits, and prefers shoes that give him the impression of being taller.

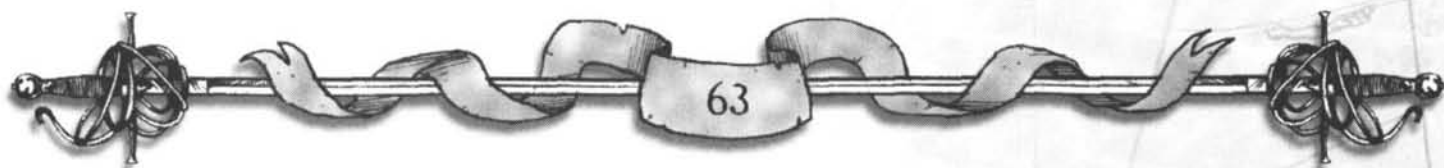
Goals: The Duke simply wants to impress his fellow nobles with his wealth and his close association with the Knights of

the Rose and Cross. However, if embarrassed in front of his peers, he will bring all of his enormous power to bear and utterly destroy the man or woman who caused his embarrassment.

Roleplaying the Duke: Imperiously ignore anyone of lower social status than yourself (almost everybody) unless you are showing them off to your friends. You see *l'Empereur* as an equal, though you are careful not to let him know that, since he is perhaps the one man you fear the most. Threats of violence should be answered with an arrogant order to your soldiers to "Kill that vermin."



Duke Sebastian Allais du Crioux







Drama



This chapter details the new rules in this book. It includes new Advantages, Skills and Knacks, and a new Swordsman School. It also includes "Grandmaster Training," a method for Heroes to increase their Knacks beyond Rank 5, rules for the Heroes' own Chapter house, and guidelines for using the Rose and Cross Vow.

The Desaix Swordsman School

Country of Origin

Montaigne. Any Rose and Cross Knight may pay 25 points for the Desaix school, or 15 if he knows the Valroux school as well. It is only available to Rose and Cross Knights.

Grandmaster Training

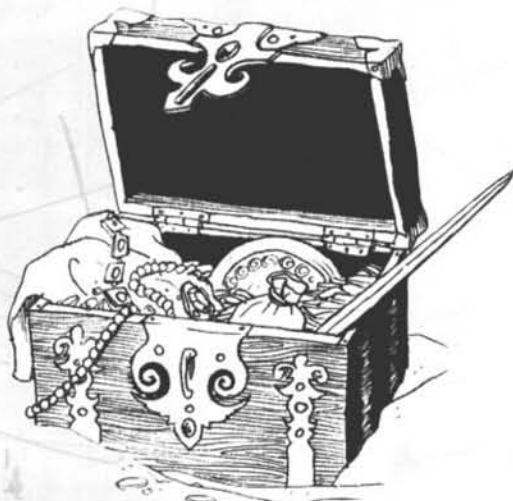
It is possible to reach a Rank 6 in a Knack under certain circumstances. First, the Hero must have a Rank 5 in the Knack to begin with. Next, he must find a Grandmaster to train under for anywhere from one month to a year (at the GM's discretion). Finally, the Hero must spend 25 XP to complete the process. This doesn't make the Hero himself a Grandmaster; it just gives him a Rank 6. Normally, only NPCs and Heroes retired by their players will ever possess the title of Grandmaster, since the ability to grant others Rank 6 in a Knack can be game-breaking in the hands of a player.

The three Grandmasters of the Rose and Cross teach the following Knacks:

Attack (Fencing): Sprague; The Dungeon

Leaping: Rachel Milligan; Carleon House

Surgery: Marcos San Felipe; San Cristobal Library



Description

Desaix is a style of fighting derived from the Valroux style. It also uses the popular rapier and main gauche combination, but strays from Valroux's defensive focus. Desaix is more serious than its ancestor, lacking the taunts and barbs so common to Valroux. However, it teaches a vicious dual attack that involves both the rapier and the main gauche.

Desaix is an excellent offensive school. The main gauche forces openings for the rapier to exploit, and vice versa. All the while, the student's lightning reflexes react to an opponent's attacks at an instant's notice. Desaix is taught exclusively to Knights of the Rose and Cross by the current senior member of the Desaix family. This duty has been passed down from parent to child for many generations. Happily for Montaigne Swordsmen, students who have already learned Valroux find it particularly simple to learn.

There is a fundamental flaw in the school, however. It has the same weakness as the Valroux school – students are taught to be too aggressive for their own good. A skilled swordsman can lure them into an attack and then strike them down when they take the bait.

Basic Curriculum: Fencing, Knife

Swordsman Knacks: Double-parry (Fencing/Knife), Feint (Fencing), Lunge (Fencing), Exploit Weakness (Desaix)

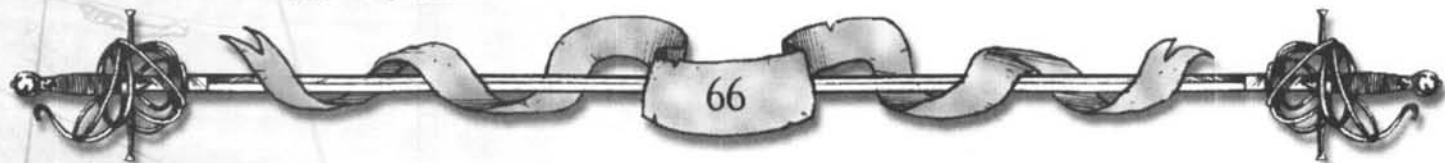




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Apprentice: Learning the Desaix style of fighting negates the off-hand penalty when using a dagger or main gauche, and grants a Free Raise when parrying with one of those weapons in your off hand.

Journeyman: Journeymen of Desaix can spend one Action die to perform two attacks (one using their main gauche, the other using their rapier) on the same target, at a penalty of two unkept dice to each attack's Damage Roll.

Master: Masters of the Desaix style have trained their reflexes to be lightning quick. Once per Round, you may spend one Action to perform an Active Defense using an Interrupt Action.

New Advantages

The Secret (5 Points, Rose and Cross only)

Those of the Rose and Cross know the secret message of the Third Prophet, which enables them to train themselves beyond the normal limits of human potential. This is equivalent to having the Legendary Trait Advantage, which allows one of the Hero's Traits to advance to Rank 6. This can be bought in addition to the Legendary Trait Advantage, but the two Advantages must affect different Traits.

The Vow (1 Point, Rose and Cross only)

Knights of the Rose and Cross have the ability to make a Vow that aids them in upholding the Three Vows they take at initiation. Their extraordinary willpower causes this Vow

to come to pass, although perhaps not in the manner they intended.

In game terms, you must declare your Vow to your GM, and he must approve it before the Vow can take effect. Game Masters may veto any Vow. Some guidelines to follow include:

1. The Vow cannot declare that you will take an action that would lose you Reputation Points (murder, theft, etc.) if it became public knowledge. You cannot make this Vow: "I Vow I will murder the Comte du Torville!"

2. The Vow cannot declare that you will take an impossible action (one that violates physics, such as leaping across an ocean). You cannot make this Vow: "I Vow I will run from Montaigne to Ussura tonight!"

3. The Vow cannot declare that you will take an action that directly or indirectly violates any of the Three Vows of the Rose and Cross. You cannot make this Vow: "I Vow I will rob that poor man of all his possessions!"

4. Your Vow cannot directly affect the actions of others. You cannot make this Vow: "I Vow you will fail to woo her heart!"

In order to make a Vow, you must first pay for it with Drama Dice. At the end of each Story, before you turn Drama Dice into Experience Points, you may turn one or more Drama Dice into Vow Points. These Points are recorded on your Hero sheet. When you have accumulated *twenty* Vow Points, you are eligible to make a Vow. Your GM will determine how the Vow is fulfilled.

You may not build two Vows at a time and you may not make a second Vow until the first is fulfilled.

"I Vow We Shall Be Avenged"
The story of the Poor Knights vowing revenge in Chapter One is clearly folklore. By the rules given here, any such Vow would be rejected out-of-hand by any sensible Game Master. It violates at least two rules: the Knights are making a Vow that has nothing to do with them and revenge is not a very Heroic Vow.

Even though both the King of Montaigne and the Hierophant died soon thereafter, the story is obviously a myth. Obviously.





Dietrich Sword (2 Points, Rose and Cross Only)

The Knight has obtained one of Dietrich's famous swords. When making Damage Rolls with the sword, its wielder re-rolls any 1s that occur. He may continue re-rolling until no 1s remain.

Tyro (2 Points, Rose and Cross only)

The Knight is training a Tyro. The Tyro is considered a 50-point Henchman (designed by your GM, or by you with GM approval) who is loyal to the Knight. He cooks the Knight's food, saddles his horse, and takes care of the minor annoyances that fill everyone's lives. In exchange, the Knight does his best to teach him the ways of the Rose and Cross. If a Tyro should die in the service of the Knight, this Advantage is lost for at least one year (the Order doesn't trust him with another Tyro for quite some time). On the other hand, the Tyro should gain XP at the same rate as the rest of the party, and once he has become a 100-point character, he becomes a Hero and is discharged from the Knight's service, whereupon the Knight gains a new Tyro, and a trusted ally in the Rose and Cross.

Chapter House (Varies, Rose and Cross only)

Heroes may invest up to 10 Hero Points in their Chapter house. These points may be distributed as follows:

Size (Varies)

The size of a Chapter house greatly affects the resources it has to call upon in times of need. Heroes, for the most part, will be unable to draw upon these resources unless they do so in order to perform a mission for the Rose and Cross.

1 Point: Small

- 1 Chapter house
- 1 Master Knight
- 1 Senior Knight
- 1 Adept Knight

- 1 Sergeant Knight
- 5 Wandering Knights
- 5 Poor Knights
- 10,000 Guilders per year

4 Points: Medium

- 1 Chapter house
- 1 Master Knight
- 2 Senior Knights
- 2 Adept Knights
- 2 Sergeant Knights
- 10 Wandering Knights
- 10 Poor Knights
- 12,500 Guilders per year

7 Points: Large

- 1 Chapter house
- 1 Master Knight
- 3 Senior Knight
- 3 Adept Knights
- 3 Sergeant Knights
- 15 Wandering Knights
- 15 Poor Knights
- 15,000 Guilders per year

Leadership (Varies)

A Chapter house relies on its leadership to gain new members, find patrons, and maintain the general welfare of its members.

0 Points: Average Leadership

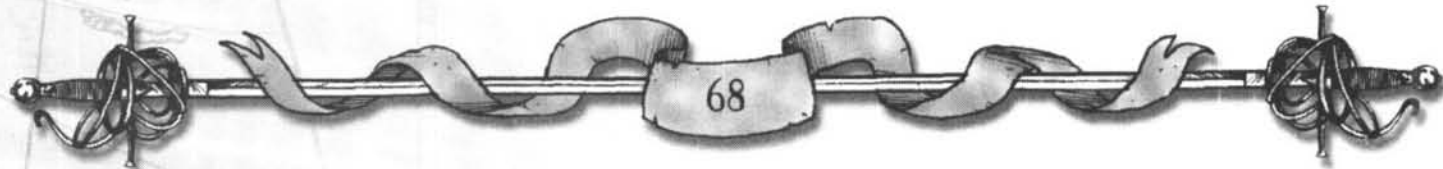
The Chapter house gains 5 new Poor Knights a year.

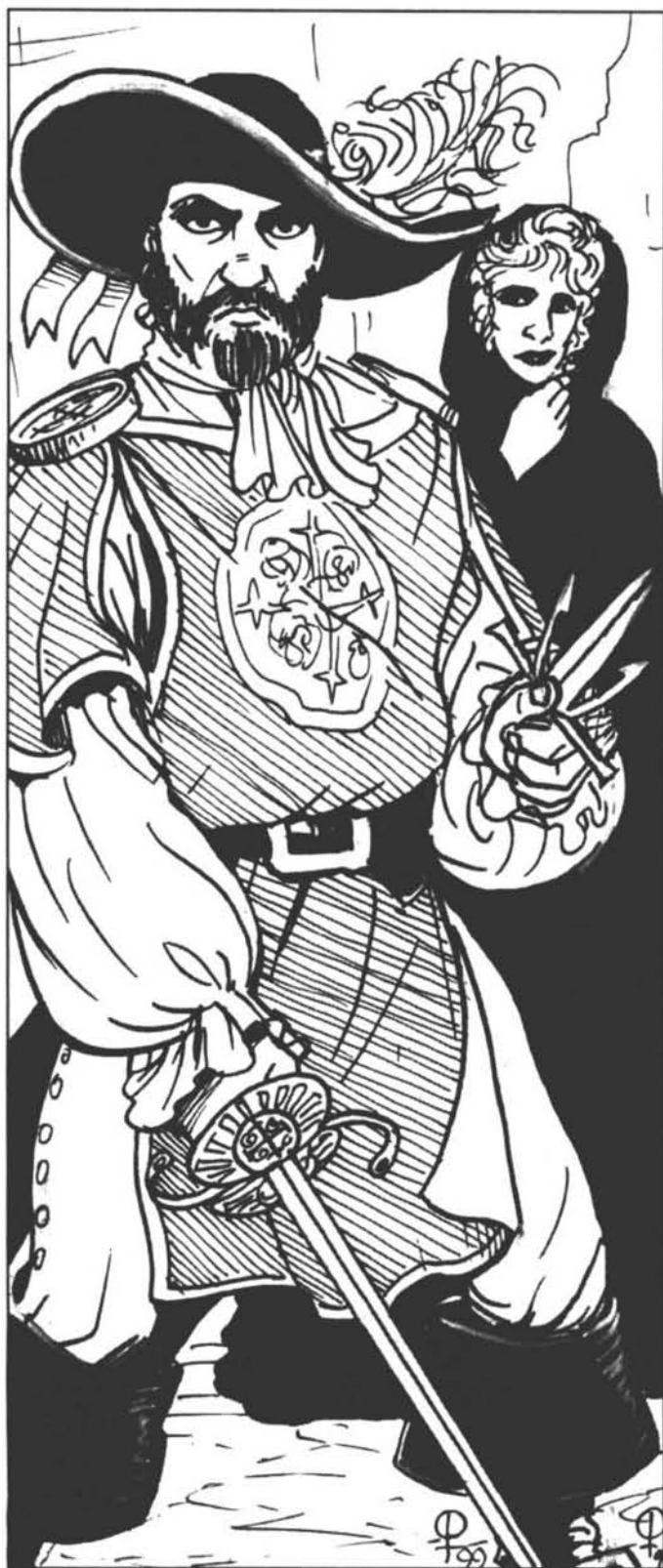
1 Point: Good Leadership

The Chapter house gains 10 new Poor Knights a year, and its yearly income is increased by 1,000 Guilders.

2 Points: Excellent Leadership

The Chapter house gains 15 new Poor Knights a year, and its yearly income is increased by 2,000 Guilders.





Library (1 Point)

If a Chapter house has a library, Knights who train there receive one extra XP (usable only on Civil Knacks) at the end of each Story. Knights cannot receive this bonus more often than once a month, but they may receive it in conjunction with the bonus from a Training Hall. Further bonuses are lost.

Security (Varies)

Rose and Cross Chapter houses are famous for their security. They have well-trained guards, excellent locks, and defensible positions. Of course, some are better defended than others.

3 Points: Decent Security

All Stealth, Climbing, and Lockpicking Rolls made to gain entry to the Chapter house are made with a +5 to their TN.

6 Points: Good Security

All Stealth, Climbing, and Lockpicking Rolls made to gain entry to the Chapter house are made with a +10 to their TN.

9 Points: Excellent Security

All Stealth, Climbing, and Lockpicking Rolls made to gain entry to the Chapter house are made with a +15 to their TN.

Status (Varies)

The fame of a Chapter house affects the Reputation of its members. Those who wear the pin of a Rose and Cross Chapter house normally receive an extra Reputation die, but some Chapter houses are so well- or ill-thought of that they modify this bonus.

Knightly Reputation: 0 Points

Wearing the pin of this Chapter house gives the wearer one extra Reputation die that cannot be used as a Glamour die. (See Other Benefits of the Rose and Cross, p. 70.)

Poor Reputation: -3 Points

Wearing the pin of this Chapter house gives the wearer no benefit. This may not reduce the cost of the Chapter house



Advantage below 0, but it does allow the Hero to spend 3 more Points on this Advantage.

Famed Reputation: 5 Points

Wearing the pin of this Chapter house gives the wearer two extra Reputation dice that cannot be used as Glamour dice. This is instead of, not in addition to, the Reputation die gained from the Knightly Reputation.

Training Hall (1 Point)

If a Chapter house has a training hall, Knights who train there receive one extra XP (usable only on Martial Knacks) at the end of each Story. Knights cannot receive this bonus more often than once a month, but they may receive it in conjunction with the bonus from a Library. Further bonuses are lost.

Other Benefits of the Rose & Cross

In addition to the advantages available above, Knights automatically gain several minor special benefits.

✦ Rose and Cross Knights receive a 2-point discount if they purchase the Indomitable Will Advantage.

✦ Sorte sorcery has difficulty affecting Knights of the Rose and Cross. All Sorte TNs are considered 10 higher when directly affecting a Knight.

✦ Rose and Cross Knights are considered to have the 0-point Advantage "Rose and Cross Patron." This Patron does not provide income, but instead represents the Knight whom the Hero served as a Tyro. He can go to his Patron for advice and spiritual guidance. Occasionally, the Patron might be willing to provide some minor assistance, but it shouldn't become a habit.

✦ Rose and Cross Knights have access to their order's secret library.

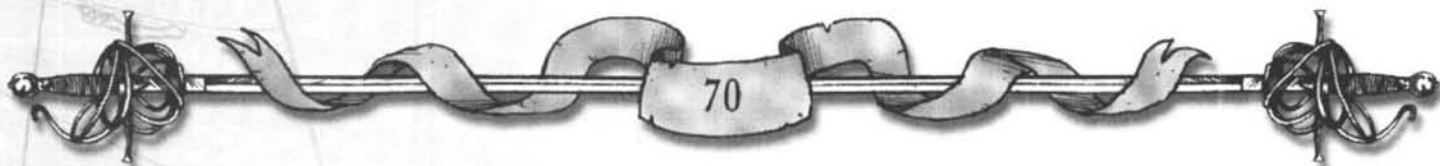
✦ Anyone wearing the pin of the Rose and Cross receives one extra Reputation die to spend per Story. This die cannot be used as a Glamour die.

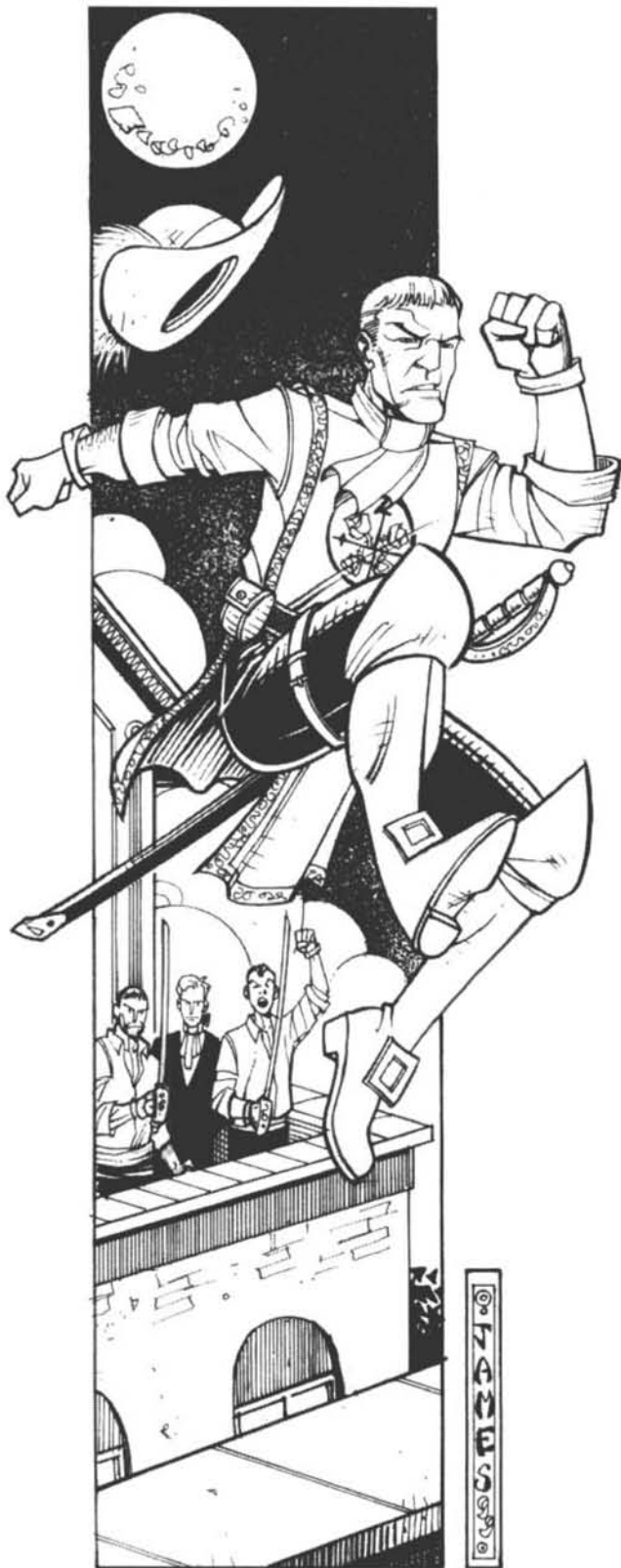
New Background

Black Stone Veteran (Rose and Cross Only)

At some point in the past, the Order had to put down a man or a woman who had become a threat. They gathered in a chapel and drew stones from a bowl: stones to see which one of them would kill in the name of the Rose and Cross. You were among their number; the black stone lay in your hand when you opened it. Now you have killed in the name of the Order, and the memory of it will stay with you forever. You're a little less naïve than your brethren, and the act of spilling blood has hardened you a little. But your dreams are haunted by the thoughts of that night, and you never seem quite as pure as your fellows, at least in your eyes. You may reroll one die during a Resolve check (once per session), but your GM may force a reroll of any Panache check you make (again, once per session).

You and the GM should determine exactly whom you killed and why it was necessary to do so. If you like, you can roleplay the details of that fateful night, and adjust the outlook of your Hero accordingly. Note that this background does not necessarily appear for every Knight who draws the black stone; it simply affected you more than is usual.





Leaping from Rooftop to Rooftop

Heroes, especially Rose and Cross Knights, do a lot of leaping from one building to another. Refer to the map scale to determine the distance between buildings. If it is less than five feet, jumping from one rooftop to another is a free movement if they are both the same height. If the distance between buildings is more than five feet, a Finesse + Leaping Roll against a TN of 15 is required, failure indicating that the Hero falls to the ground. Add 5 to this TN for every additional five feet of distance the Hero is attempting to leap. If the Hero is attempting to leap onto a building that is taller than the one he is currently on, add 5 to the TN for every Level (see Movement During Combat in the *Players' Guide*, p. 192) of difference. If the building the Hero is leaping to is shorter, on the other hand, then subtract 5 from the TN for every Level shorter it is. However, falling damage from the leap does apply.

Example 1: Rodriguez Montello wishes to leap across a 10' gap from one Level 2 building to another Level 2 building. His TN is 20 (base 15 + 5 for the extra five feet).

Example 2: Rodriguez wants to leap across a 10' gap from a Level 2 building across to a Level 4 building. His TN is 30 (base 15 + 5 for the extra five feet + 10 for the extra two Levels).

Example 3: Rodriguez wants to leap across a 15' gap from a Level 4 building to a Level 2 building. His TN is 15 (base 15 + 10 for the extra ten feet -10 for the reduction of two Levels), but he will suffer 2k2 falling damage unless he lands on something soft, or has the Break Fall Knack.

Awnings

All awnings are considered to be a Soft surface for purposes of falling damage. However, when a Hero falls or jumps onto an awning, roll a die. On an even number, the awning



tears and dumps the Hero to the ground below. It still acts to cushion the falling damage he would normally take, but could deposit the Hero in a vat of hot wax or into some equally unpleasant situation. Moreover, if the awning is more than 1 Level above the ground, the Hero must still take damage for the fall from the awning to the ground itself. Lastly, once an awning is torn, it cannot be used to cushion a fall.

Example 4: Rodriguez falls off a Level 6 building onto an awning below. He rolls a die, getting a 6. The awning tears and dumps him onto the fishmonger's cart below, leaving him smelly but unharmed. If the awning had been on Level 3 (three higher than the ground's Level of 0), he would still have taken damage as if he'd fallen off a Level 3 building.

Rose & Cross National Influences

Knights of the Rose and Cross vary from one nation to another. While every Knight is unique, some broad trends have developed among its members, depending upon the country. New players may want some guidance in deciding how to play their Rose and Cross Heroes. We've provided some rough templates for each nation, suggesting the sort of Traits and Skills native Knights are likely to have. These aren't hard rules — the Order has many Knights, after all — but can give you some idea of how its members vary across the face of Théah.

Avalon

The Rose and Cross found refuge on the Glamour Isles during some of the darkest years in its history. Avalon Knights tend to focus more on the hidden side of the order, keeping secrets as their ancestors did in the time of King Robert. Access to Glamour magic and the dream-like

quality of their native land has made them adept at disguising the Order's actions. Missions which involve spiriting people out of the country, hiding important documents, or creating safe-houses that the uninitiated cannot find, invariably have an Avalon Knight connected to them.

Emphasized Traits: Wits, Finesse

Suggested Skills: Hunter, Spy, Streetwise, Archer

Suggested Advantages: Appearance, Keen Senses

Castille

Devotion to the Church has produced an interesting trend in Castillian Knights — they are skilled at recognizing sorcery. Many of the best witch hunters in the order have been Castillian, and some have even demonstrated a resistance to magic that others lack. Castillian Knights readily balance their Vaticine faith with their dedication to the Order, and tend to be energetic in their duties.

Emphasized Traits: Wits, Resolve

Suggested Skills: Hunter, Scholar, Firearms

Suggested Advantages: Castillian Education, Faith

Eisen

This broken nation is not overly friendly to the Knights, but many disinherited Eisen have found new hope amid its members. Eisen knights tend to throw themselves deeply into the trappings of the Order, dedicating themselves body and soul to its workings. They are very self-sufficient, and work long hours with no relief or assistance. Most of the Knights sent into Ussura were Eisen, and Eisen members continue to watch the untamed frontier between those two nations.

Emphasized Traits: Brawn, Resolve

Suggested Skills: Hunter, Sailor, Athlete, Wrestling





Suggested Advantages: Indomitable Will, Large, Toughness

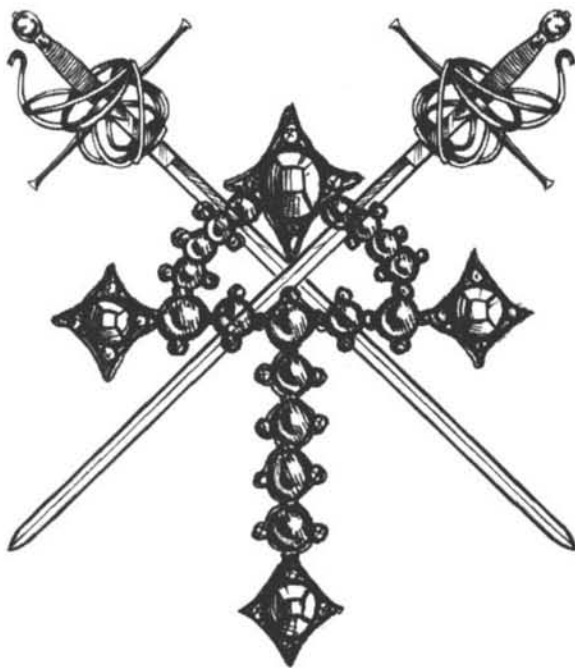
Montaigne

The flash and style of the Order's home nation comes through clearly with Montaigne knights. These are men and women of derring-do, the flashy public face of a hidden society. Montaigne members specialize in the spectacular rescues and impossible feats that endear the Order to others, and add a burst of style to every mission they undertake. Breaking an innocent man out of prison is something any Knight would do; but breaking a man out without smashing a single lock and leaving dozen roses in the prisoner's place? That's a Montaigne Knight's specialty.

Emphasized Traits: Finesse, Panache

Suggested Skills: Courtier, Athletics, Fencing, Riding

Suggested Advantages: Foul Weather Jack, Noble



Ussura

There is exactly one Rose and Cross member in Ussura: an Invisible has managed to infiltrate Matushka's domain. Matushka has strongly discouraged her children from becoming members, so there are no Ussuran Knights at present.

Vendel/Vestenmannavnjar

As befits its mercantile nature, Vendel tends to have more patrons than other countries. They handle the bureaucratic side of the Order quite well — collecting money, erecting Chapter houses, signing on new members. But they also excel at more clandestine activities — forging papers for a hunted noble, for example, or procuring funds with no apparent source. Vendel Knights provide the support network that lets the others do their job, and can bail them out if they get into any serious trouble.

Emphasized Traits: Wits, Panache

Suggested Skills: Courtier, Merchant, Streetwise

Suggested Advantages: Connection, Commission, Servants

Vodacce

The few knights in Vodacce are adept at avoiding attention. The Princes don't like holier-than-thou do-gooders mucking with their affairs, and the Order loses members when it gets too close to some scheme or another. As a result, Vodacce Knights have become excellent observers, noticing everything they see and staying alive long enough to report it. One look is often all they get, and they can learn a lot from the briefest glimpse.

Emphasized Traits: Finesse, Resolve

Suggested Skills: Courtier, Scholar, Streetwise, Dirty Fighting

Suggested Advantages: Connections, Keen Senses





Ancient Training (Players only – Facing page)

Rose and Cross Knights have access to strange and exotic information thanks to their well-stocked library. Occasionally, they come across techniques of mental and physical discipline that prove useful to them in their escapades. Of course, training using only a book isn't the safest thing in the world, as many Knights can attest. Rose and Cross Heroes may choose to roll once on the Lost Arts Table. If they do so, they must either pay 3 HP or roll once on the Injury Table.

Trouble Abroad Table (GMs Only)

Rose and Cross Knights are often called upon to help those in need. When you need a problem for your Rose and Cross players to deal with, but can't think of one off hand, roll on this chart.

- 1. Wild Carriage or Horse:** A carriage with passengers or horse with rider suddenly careens wildly down the street. The passengers/rider might be nobles, a beautiful woman, a bungling swordsman, or even a visiting dignitary. The carriage or horse might threaten nearby pedestrians.
- 2. Cruel Animal Owner:** An ugly man nearby begins whipping his horse or dog and shouting angrily at it. The animals cringes away in pain, but is too frightened to protect itself.
- 3. Dangling Man:** A rooftop or bridge collapses under a pedestrian. He dangles far above the ground, perhaps over swiftly running water or hard cobblestones. He could be an important politician, a powerful sorcerer, or even a traveler being targeted by a sorcerous assassination attempt.
- 4. Woman Screams:** A woman screams from a nearby alley. It could be a robbery, a woman stumbling across a dead body, a monster loose in the city, or even a trap for gullible Knights.
- 5. Falling Object:** While being moved, a heavy object such as a load of bricks falls towards a child playing in the street below. Only quick action can save the child from death. His/her parents might be powerful nobles, or simply poor peasants grateful to the Knight who saved their little boy/girl.
- 6. Pursued Person:** A person in muddy clothes runs past, chased by half a dozen burly men. The person might be fleeing from trouble they didn't ask for, or their actions might have initiated the (justified) pursuit (such as picking a pocket).
- 7. Fire Breaks Out:** A building on the street catches fire. It is close to several other structures, and unless controlled, the fire will spread to engulf those as well. Worse, there might be someone trapped inside the building, or a foolish owner might rush back inside for a pet or prized possession.
- 8. Dying Man:** A man staggers out of a nearby alley, says something to the Heroes, and then drops dead. He could be the victim of a stabbing, poison, or a skulking sniper on a nearby rooftop. The dead man has immediate family who are probably in danger as well, and the Heroes must be on their guard to foil any assassination attempts.
- 9. Lost Child:** A distraught parent asks everyone in the area for help finding their missing child. The child might have fallen in the river, in a well, been kidnapped, dragged off by monsters, or placed under a curse of some sort.
- 0. Two of the Above:** Roll twice on this chart, combining the results. Ignore further rolls of 0.





Lost Arts Table

1. Healing Meditation: You may spend an Action in order to heal yourself of 5 Flesh Wounds. You may do this as often as you like.

2. Resist Sleep: You may stay awake for a number of days equal to your Resolve. Afterwards, you must then sleep for a number of days equal to half your Resolve (rounding down). You may use this ability no more than once a month.

3. Total Focus: You may spend an Action in order to add one Free Raise to your next Attack Roll. You may do this as often as you like, but if you do not use the bonus by the end of the Round, it goes away.

4. Ignore Pain: You may, once per Act, ignore any penalties that you are suffering from as a result of being Crippled.

5. Hold Breath: When drowning (GM Guide, p. 174), your Resolve is considered to be 3 higher.

6. Rage: You may choose to lower your TN to be hit by 5 at the start of any Round. You may do this as often as you like (to a minimum of 5). For every 5 you lower the TN, your attacks this Round do one extra unkept die of damage. These effects expire at the end of the Round.

7. Feign Death: You may appear to cease breathing. Anyone who performs a cursory examination of your body will believe you to be dead. Careful study will defeat the trick, however.

8. Heighten Senses: Once per Act, you may roll and Keep one extra die when making a Perception Check.

9. Ignore Heat or Cold: You suffer one fewer Kept die of damage from weather effects.

0. Endurance: You receive one Free Raise when using Long Distance Running, or otherwise testing to see how long you can continue heavy physical exertion.

Injury Table

1. Slight Limp: You sometimes find it hard to move quickly. Once per Act, your GM may raise your TN by 5 when you are attempting an Active Defense, an Avoid Roll, or a similar check.

2. Weakened Wrist: Opponents receive one Free Raise when attempting to Disarm you.

3. Unfocused Finger: You suffer a penalty of one unkept die to all Perception Checks involving sight.

4. Distinctive Scar: This facial scar cannot be hidden, and makes you very memorable. Anyone using Disguise on you must subtract 5 from their roll.

5. Sore Hip: Salt air and the swaying of ships inflames your hip, making it hard for you to roll with the waves. You are at a penalty of one Kept die when using your Balance Knack aboard ship.

6. Sprained Neck: You have trouble turning your head to the side. As a result, it is somewhat easier to sneak up on you. You have a penalty of one unkept die on all Surprise Checks.

7. Deafened Ear: You suffer a penalty of two unkept die to all Perception Checks involving hearing.

8. Trick Knee: Once per Act, your GM may raise your TN by 10 when you are using an Athlete Knack.

9. Stiff Hand: Your hand stiffens up in cold weather. When you are in weather of 50 degrees Fahrenheit or less, all TNs involving your primary hand (i.e. not your off hand) are increased by 5.

0. No Injury: The Knight managed to learn his Lost Art without sustaining any lasting harm.





Playing a Patron of the Knights

Patrons are not active members of the Rose and Cross. Rather, they pay an annual fee to the Order for protection from their enemies. How much money they pay determines what sort of protection they receive. Heroes may pay for their first year of protection out of their starting money, renewing their membership each year. This does not cost any Hero Points, just cash on hand. If a Patron Knight stops paying his dues, the protection of the Order is withdrawn, and he may no longer call himself a "Benefactor."

For the following fees, the Hero may call upon the listed troops once per season, for a single mission. Troops may be purchased multiple times in order to call upon them on multiple occasions during a single season. In addition, the Patron Knight may be stripped of his membership if he works at cross purposes to the Order. In such an event, his membership fees would be refunded.

100G

1 Tyro Brute Squad (6 members)

Threat Rating: 2

Usual Weapons: Rapiers (Medium)

TN to be hit: 15

Leaping 1, Attack (Fencing) 2, Surgery 1

200G

1 Poor Knights Brute Squad (6 members)

Threat Rating: 3

Usual Weapons: Rapiers (Medium)

TN to be hit: 20

Leaping 1, Attack (Fencing) 2, Surgery 1

500G

1 Wandering Knight: Henchman

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 2, Panache 2

Reputation: 20

Advantages: Membership (Rose and Cross), Combat Reflexes

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Sprinting 2, Break Fall 1, Leaping 2

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 4

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 2

Rider: Riding 4

1,000G

1 Sergeant Knight: Hero

Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Panache 3

Reputation: 40

Advantages: Membership (Rose and Cross), Combat Reflexes

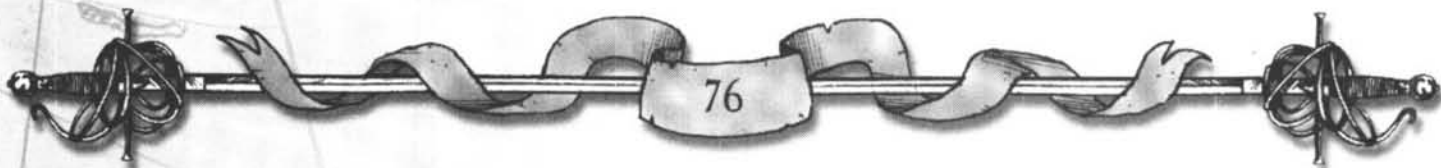
Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 4, Fashion 2, Oratory 2, Diplomacy 1, Seduction 2

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Break Fall 2, Leaping 3

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 5

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 5, Reload (Firearms) 3

Rider: Riding 5





Syrneth Artifacts Held By the Rose & Cross

The Flash Rifle

The Flash Rifle is actually a regular Théan rifle with a hollowed cylinder of a bone-like substance mounted directly on the musket's barrel. A Vodacce tinkerer in the Order has found a way to weld the metal and bone together, although he has so far made fewer than half a dozen. It looks like a solid white or gray alchemical tube on the end of the musket, and does not affect the gun's weight or balance. The normal effects of musket fire include a loud noise and a bright flash of fire. With the cylinder attached, the gunshot is louder and the flash is hotter, larger, longer and brighter. In a crowd this can cause severe panic and fear; it also increases the danger of fire if the musket barrel touches anything flammable immediately after the round is discharged.

The Flash Rifle does an additional unkept die of damage (6k3). In addition, it produces a flame that extends almost a foot from the barrel and at its end is nearly 6 inches wide. The flame is so hot for the three Phases in which it erupts from the barrel that almost anything but stone or metal will catch fire and burn. A Hero that has fired one has his Passive Defense increased by 15 during the next three phases due to the incredible heat produced. In addition, a Finesse + Attack (Polearm) Roll will allow the Hero to attack with the flame like a bayonet. Anyone caught in the flame suffers an unmodified 4k2 damage. After three phases the Flame is gone.

Four of these are known to exist in the Rose and Cross. Since this item is very dangerous, a Knight should have a good reason for requesting one.

Beach Tokens

These tokens come from the sand as if they were clams or crabs burrowing up to swim to the sea. They've been on the shores most every morning since our arrival. At first we thought there to be an unlimited supply, but when summer came, they disappeared. I believe it has to do with the tides: the ebb and flow of the ocean brings them to the surface of the beach. The warm water of the summer I feel somehow inhibits their ability to rise to the surface. Their tendency to point up and to the north indicates that have magnetic properties. We can find no real reason that the Syrne would have buried such an item in the sand, since it moves in such a rectilinear manner, but we have been provided with thousands of samples to study.

— Professor Joseph McTavish, Isle of Syrne Site Director

Varying slightly in size and shape, these “tokens” are nearly flat and have ridges and markings on both sides. The “top” has been designated by the Explorer's Society as that side which contains fewer markings and more “pointers.” The top is also that side which always seems to appear “up” when the item is thrown in the air and lands on the ground. They have an inclination to “point” north.



One of McTavish's assistants, Warren Abbotsford, broke open several tokens and noticed that the markings on the top had a specific direction to them, as if waves had been cut in the token. He also noticed that they always point north, but only when touching ground. On the deck of a ship or against a palm the tokens don't seem to respond in the same manner. These tokens are extremely useful to the Rose and Cross and are found in most every segment of the Society. Heroes may purchase a token for 1 Character Point or for 6 Experience Points.



Metal Rod

The Rose and Cross recently acquired this hard metal rod, about the size of a dagger. When the rod is slapped hard, the ends jut out quickly to a length of 8½ feet and short spikes extend out of the top and bottom. With a Brawn roll at TN 15, the rod can be pushed slowly even into an average-hardness stone; steel and granite are a little harder (TN 25). Once inside the rod will hold firmly for one hour, at which point it folds up to the size of a dagger again and falls to the ground. While extended the metal of the rod is warm (body temperature) and hums softly. Some Knights have reported that the metal transmits an unsettling sensation to their feet when they stand on it.

Gray Powder

The sand on the interior of the island seemed normal enough until someone tried to build a campfire on it. After we discovered what the sand could do (and after carrying away the dead), we began to find an almost unlimited supply of the powder. It seemed that we could use it to help fund our expeditions, but at the same time, if it ever got to the black market, criminals and terrorists would try to use it for less than noble causes. It quickly became evident that the Rose and Cross would be one of only a handful of groups that could be trusted with such an item. Nonetheless, we should still limit the amount of powder we sell to others. And keep a generous amount for study... far from the island, of course.

— Professor Joseph McTavish, Isle of Syrne Site Director

Gray Powder has no scientific name yet; pirates and others that have encountered it a few times know the Powder as “Devil’s Snuff” or “that cursed sludge.” As a result of the “plentiful” nature of this artifact, the Explorer’s Society has strict controls on how it gets shipped off the island, who gets it, and how it is used. Unfortunately, despite their best efforts, the powder has become widely available in underground markets. However, only the Rose and Cross and Invisible College have been able to ascertain the full powers of the Powder.

Without additives, the finely packed Gray Powder has a Explosion Rating three higher than Gunpowder (see GM’s Guide, p. 174). It can be used as an explosive, and in some cases pirates have packed it into their pistols and muskets with devastating effects. It burns quickly and hot, like phosphorus, and explodes in a bright flash of white light.

Weapons kick differently when filled with Gray Powder, and marksmen have noted that it spoils their aim. If used instead of gunpowder it increases the weapon’s damage by 2k1, while increasing the TN to hit the target by 10. In addition, the powder damages the firearm, increasing the likelihood of destroying the pistol or musket when it is fired. The chance to destroy a firearm the first time Gray Powder is used in it is 1 in 10; the second time 2 in 10, and so on. If the Powder destroys the weapon, it explodes in the firer’s hand with a Rating of 4 (4k4 damage, Panache at TN 20 to avoid), instead of the 1 that it would be with a normal pistol.

If Gray Powder is used as a explosive charge in a grenade or keg, increase the Explosion Rating by 3 for an equal amount of gunpowder.

Sometimes the powder is “cut” (mixed) with another substance. Only the Rose and Cross, Explorer’s Society, and Invisible College are aware of the various methods of “cutting” Gray Powder. If it is cut with an approximately equal amount of ash or charcoal, the powder smolders and burns slowly, lasting eight hours for every pound of Gray Powder consumed. The mixture burns slowly and emits gray smoke, lighter or darker depending on the admixture proportions and how tightly packed the powder is. This method of burning gray powder is ideal for keeping warm or sending smoke into the air to alert others of your presence.

Gray Powder can also be cut with talc or chalk. The talc/gray powder combination is strange and benign. Again the powder burns slowly, but with talc it emits a sickly, yellowish-gray smoke with a pungent, bitter odor akin to dirty feet or old clothes; only stronger. When it is inhaled it induces sleep (Resolve Roll at TN 40 to resist) and in some cases nausea. Those that succumb to this powder’s smoke will sleep for 3 to 4 hours. Those that are not affected will



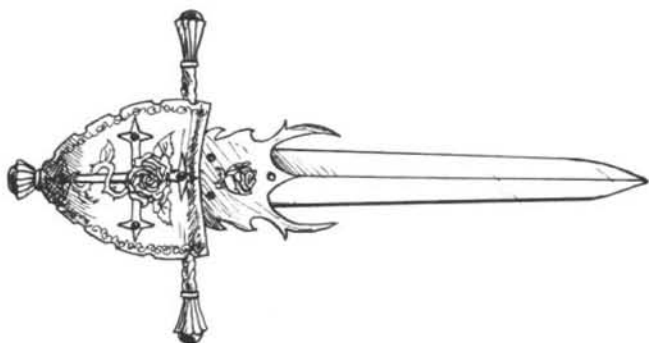
cough and sputter for 1-10 Actions until they acclimate to the smell.

Other combinations are still being studied by the Rose and Cross alchemists, and rumors exist that the Invisible College has been sharing secrets regarding the medicinal benefits of the powder with members of the Rose and Cross. A recent development is the mixture of powdered or ground zinc or sulfur with the gray powder. Few have lived through these concoctions.

On the black market, Gray Powder is 10 to 20 times more expensive than Black Powder. Few black marketeers will sell more than a pound of it. Vincenzo Caligari has a large supply in his home, although he supposedly keeps it far from everything else, in case of "accidents."

The Black Prisms

Made from a very hard, obsidian-like rock, this black mineral actually disperses light, much like a prism (although not all of the colors of the spectrum appear from the Black Prism). The prism emits a low-pitched growl that only creatures with less than human intelligence, and particularly sharp-eared Heroes, can detect. Any creature within 100 feet of the prism (or any Heroes with Keen Senses) must make a successful Resolve roll at TN 30 to resist the fear-inducing effects of the prism. Those that fail must move as far from the prism as possible and may not act, as they cower and cover their ears. It is very useful for getting past guard dogs and when setting up camp. A few dozen of these stones are known to exist and no two look alike; apparently the Invisibles control the supply.



Vivianne's Light

This hot yellow liquid is thick like honey and must be kept in glass jars. Vivianne's Light eats through almost any material given enough time (lead, metal, and stone, for example, are resistant but not impervious), but the effects are so slow that few uses have been found for the liquid. It eats through clothing and skin very quickly and the only way to properly contain it is with glass. The Explorer's Society claims it came from a submerged volcano. The Rose and Cross have developed special methods of carrying and storing it, as many Wandering Knights have a great deal of interest in the "goo" without really knowing what it can do. Vivianne's Light also manifests these notable effects:

- ✦ At night it gives off a soft reddish glow.
- ✦ It radiates a low heat (120 degrees) at all times.
- ✦ When poured over water it floats and steams.
- ✦ It seems to ignore the effects of air pressure and only responds to the direct pressure of stone or some other hard substance.
- ✦ It is very heavy in direct sunlight, but lightweight otherwise.
- ✦ It completely absorbs blood in any form.

Rose and Cross Attitude Towards Artifacts

Some purists believe that Syrneth artifacts are a tool of Legion and cannot honorably be used in the quest for justice. These Knights are in the minority, but they are a large, vocal, and influential minority. Heroes should determine for themselves on a case-by-case basis whether or not they will use artifacts.







Knight

Hunted by the Past, Conclusion

*You can't trust the weather
And you can't trust the sea
Who can you trust, my brother
If you can't trust me?*

— Traditional Sea Shanty

Part Six: Now

Cowan knelt still in the shadows, his heart pounding in his ears. The figures in the doorway shifted in the light, sending beams through the room below him, casting shadows across the artifacts.

Still. Quiet. Don't breathe.

A body was thrown from the doorway and hit the floor hard, tumbled, then was still. Cowan saw the blue tabard and the Seal and the long, black hair and felt his discipline slip. She was motionless.

Still. Quiet. Not breathing.

The leather of his glove made a soft sound as he wrapped his hand around the hilt of his sword. *We make more blood than justice tonight, I think*, he almost whispered.

Another figure moved from the doorway, this time on its feet. A tall man. A gray man. He should have had a limp, but he did not. He should have been in a black tabard, bearing the Seal, but he was not.

Cowan's eyes narrowed. His fingers tensed again. His muscles bunched, ready to move...

... but Adara moved first.

Small movements at first, her arms and legs pushing against the floor. Corbitt smiled and knelt next to her.

"She's awakening," he called to the doorway. "Get the ropes."

Three large men ran from the doorway with what he requested. Three more walked calmly from the doorway, while a fourth man remained hidden by the light and shadow.

"You have done well, Corbitt. We have what we want and, very soon, you shall have what you want."

Corbitt smiled as he watched the men shove Adara into a sitting position and tie her hands behind her. "It was a pleasure."

The men shoved her to her feet and Corbitt took her face in his left hand. "You shouldn't have spurned me, little girl. I could have done much for you."

Adara's eyes and voice were groggy, but full of hate. "Nothing is done until blood is spilled, old man. Nothing is finished until the last breath is taken."

"Your mother would have been proud of you," Corbitt laughed. "Too bad she isn't here to see you now."

Adara gasped for breath. "She's here," she whispered. "And she sees you for what you really are: a treacherous, old, envious bastard." She smiled. "Did I mention 'old'? And how about 'feeble'?"

His fist slammed into her belly and she bent almost in half. She looked back up at him, her smiling lips twisted and bloody. "I forgot to mention 'sissy', didn't I?"

Corbitt made ready with another punch, but the man in the shadows stopped him with a single word.

"Enough!" he shouted. "Damaging my property will certainly endanger yours, Signore Corbitt."

Corbitt held his fist back and turned to look at the shadowed man.

Step into the light, you bastard, Cowan thought. *Let me get a good look at you.*



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Almost upon command, the figure stepped forward, letting the shadows peel away from his features. Cowan didn't recognize them... but he would if he ever saw them again.

"My daughter," Corbitt said. "Where is she?"

The Vodacce waved his hand, dismissing his concerns. "Do not fret so. She is with me."

"I have been with you all day, Signore," Corbitt whispered, his voice finding an edge. "She is most certainly not with you."

The Vodacce smiled. "Very well. I will show her to you." He walked across the room to a large metal box studded with jewels and carved writing that Cowan could not read. He flipped two locks, put his foot down on something outside of Cowan's vision, then pulled. The front of the box slid down and there, inside, was a young girl. Her eyes were red with tears, her hands and feet bound, her mouth gagged. Cowan thought he saw a trickle of blood under the gag.

"You bastard!" Adara screamed. "You traded one for another!"

Corbitt nodded. "Yes. One of Vodacce's daughters for my own." He stepped forward and took the girl into his arms. "My little one..." he whispered. "I'm so sorry..."

The Vodacce stepped to Adara and knelt down. "It's time to come home, little one. You've been gone for so long."

"I won't be staying any longer than I have to."

The Vodacce shook his head. "No. I think you will be staying for a very long time..." he petted her cheek "...my blushing bride."

"I won't be your wife," she said, her voice loud and resonating, "without a bouquet of white roses." She twisted her hands in the ropes, placing her palms against her hips.

It took Cowan a full heartbeat to understand the signal.

"Of course, my dear," said the Vodacce.

The Tyro bunched his muscles.

"Whatever..."

He leapt high into the air.

"...you..."

He fell on the six men, catching as many he could with his limbs.

"...desire."

Before the Vodacce could turn, all six men lay flat on the ground, bleeding and unconscious.

Corbitt, across the room, pulled the pistols from the belts of two of the three men before him, cocked the hammers, and squeezed the triggers. Smoke and fire streamed up as Corbitt spun about and slammed both pistols into the face of the third. All three men were on the floor, bleeding and unconscious.

The Vodacce looked at both of them with wide eyes. Then he looked down at Adara.

She smiled. "I guess I won't be staying as long as you supposed, my husband." Her legs scissored — one at his shins, the other at his calves — and kicked. The Vodacce fell flat on his face. Adara moved like a whip, on his back in a heartbeat with her bound wrists around his neck, pulling up, bending his back in directions it was not meant to go.

"Good night, husband. Think of me when the nights are cold." She slammed her forehead into the back of his skull. Cowan heard a heavy *thunk* and the man fell motionless to the floor.

As she stood, Cowan gestured to the ropes about her wrists. "Need a hand?"

She shook her head. "No, Tyro," she said. With a single gesture, her hands were free. "I've already got two."

Corbitt stepped over with his daughter in his arms. "Thank you," he whispered. "Thank you both."

Cowan shook his head. "Senior Corbitt, I am glad I discovered your true allegiance when I did. I pale to think what might have happened."

Adara nodded toward the doorway. "We had best leave, my Domini. There will be others here soon."

"Of course. We'll take the rooftops back to the wharf. A ship is waiting for us." He moved to a window and opened it. He paused and turned. "I owe you both more than I can say."

Adara shook her head. "I have repaid my debt to you, Domini." She tapped Cowan on the head. "This is the one you owe."

The old man nodded. "And you shall be repaid when we return to Montaigne, my boy. Be sure of that."

Then, in a flash, the old man and his daughter were gone.

The two remaining Knights walked to another window, opened it, and felt the cool, night air spill in against their skin. Cowan paused and turned to Adara. "You never told me you were married," he said.

She smiled and winked. "Flirting with your Domini is stressful enough. I didn't want to add flirting with a married woman on your conscience."

Cowan felt his cheeks grow hot. "I wasn't flirting with you."

She shrugged. "Too bad. I was going to do something about it as soon as you graduated." And with that, she was out the window.

Cowan felt the words hit him in the chest and he couldn't help but stand there, stunned.

Still.

Quiet.

And breathless.





Like the **Player** and **Game Master** chapters at the end of the two core books, the purpose of this chapter is to pull back the curtain so you can take a look behind the scenes at design and theory.

The first part of this chapter, *Player*, discusses the development of the Order from a Renaissance conspiracy to a knightly order of gentlemen adventurers. We'll also look at a bunch of alchemical symbolism, talk about the Théan code of chivalry and how it relates to the Order, show you how to make your current Knight fit the new rules, see how your Knight gets promotions, and spend some time smelling some White Roses.

The second part, *Game Master*, includes a complete quick-start campaign, complete with a Chapter house that can fit into any nation, the surrounding area, and its accompanying adventure hooks. We'll also spend some time talking about how to make the Order fit into your campaign, give you some advice on how to use the new mechanics, and talk a while about those mysterious Invisibles.



That Infernal Question

Whenever I go to a game convention, I usually run one or two Game Master seminars. Inevitably, I get asked that ever-

popular, ever-hated question: "Where do you get your ideas?"

In this case, it's a long answer, but I think it's necessary to go through the development of the Order from a game developer's point of view in order to explain the Knights. It's not an easy road to walk, but nothing involving gnosticism, alchemy, and the Great Templar Secret is ever easy.

Humble Beginnings

When I was a boy, I wanted to be a priest. I also wanted to be a policeman. I was trying to figure out a way to be both when I saw *Star Wars* and its Jedi Knights.

When I was eleven, I found *Dungeons and Dragons*. As far as I was concerned, Jedi Knights were paladins. I said that to an older boy (he was fifteen, I think), and he said, "No they're not. They're Templars." I asked, "What's a Templar?"

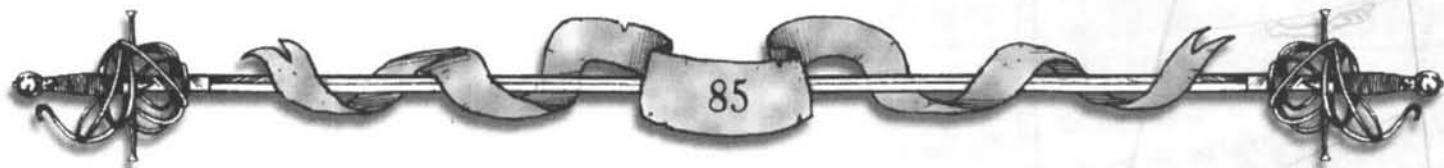
That question led me right into the dark and endless swamp that is conspiracy theory. I learned all about the Bavarian Illuminati, Hassan and his Hashashin, Freemasons, fluoride – and the betrayal of the Templars.

I studied philosophy in college, and the first and most important thing I learned was from Socrates: "Anything worth doing is worth doing in public." What he meant was this: if you do something noteworthy or heroic, do it in as public a forum as possible. Men learn ethics by example. If they see someone else doing something noble, they'll get the gumption to be noble themselves.

The Rose and Cross do their acts in public, wearing the Seal on their chests, because they want to inspire dignity and courage in those around them. The Knights do great deeds so others around them will do the same.

Bringing the Rose and Cross Into It

I didn't make the Rose and Cross up. They've been around for at least five hundred years, maybe (if you believe their press) for thousands more. They've been a part of classic





conspiracy theory, mingling with Templars and Illuminati, for just as long.

Originally, the Rose and Cross – historically known under many names, all involving those two symbols – was about alchemical secrets and moving unseen among the populace. They distributed fliers in city streets, claiming to know secrets that were deliberately hidden from common man. They urged those around them to look at the world, to *really* look at it, and to see all the delusions and distractions that authoritarian figures imposed on it. By recognizing the lies, one got closer to the truth. Since then, the rose and cross have taken many manifestations. This one, *our* interpretation, differs slightly from the classic presentation.

When we first started developing *7th Sea*, we needed an organization that would allow characters of different national backgrounds to adventure together; an organization that bound men and women together for a higher purpose. So we invented the Brotherhood of the Coast.

Unfortunately, that solved only half the problem. We still needed to take care of land-based adventures. One day, during the development of the secret societies, the idea of a “gentlemen adventurer’s club” came up. Right next to my computer sat two books: *The Rosicrucians* by Christopher McIntosh and *The Templars: Knights of God* by Edward Burman. I knew exactly what to do.

Conspiracy theorists have tried for centuries to connect the Rose and Cross with the Templars. I thought I’d try my hand at it, to see what kind of connections I could make in Théah that didn’t exist in Europe.

Templar Treasure and the Golden Soul

Historically, the most important part of Templar conspiracy theory has been their “lost treasure.” Speculations on this treasure have run the gamut from gold to the Holy Grail to the location of Atlantis.

Théah’s lost Templar treasure wouldn’t be a physical object; it would be a hidden truth. In fact, why stop there? Let’s make it The Big Truth: the hidden power of human will.

So Théah’s Templars discovered that the human soul had power. However, the soul needed to undergo a spiritual trial in order to tap into its power. It needed to transform.

That’s where the Rose and Cross come into it.

The Rose

The rose is a powerful symbol in the western tradition and has been interpreted in many ways. Rose and Cross initiates are taught the first meaning: that the rose is a symbol of devotion. Devotion to the Order, devotion to training, and devotion to one’s fellow man.

The phrase “The rose blooms because it is dying” is important to the Order because of its connotation of spiritual awareness. Strength comes from awareness of self, the realization of true, hidden potential. We are most beautiful when we realize our own capabilities.

Finally, the symbol of the rose obscures its true meaning and relationship to the Order. The word for “dew” in Old Théan is “*ros*.” In the oldest alchemical texts, dew was considered the purest element. When alchemists tried to transform base metal into gold, they believed the primary catalyst was dew.

The Cross

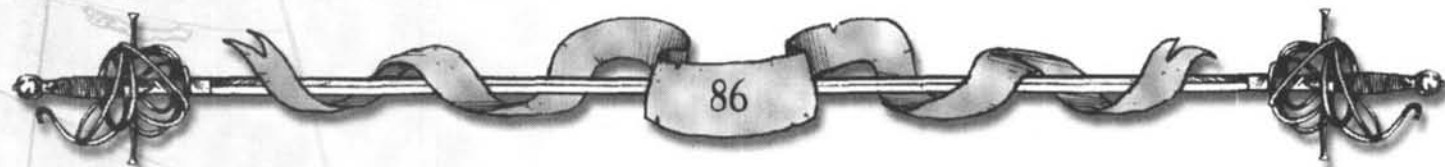
Like its counterpart, the symbol of the cross has always held special significance for mankind. Long before the cross became associated with the Church of the Prophets, it was a symbol of good luck. Avalons believe that crosses guard them against the Unseelie; hence their ubiquitous knotwork patterns containing them.

But just as the rose hides one of Rosenkreuz’s Great Secrets, so does the cross. The Old Théan word “*crux*” is the root for the modern word “crucible”, the place where metals transformed.

The Rose and Cross

Not “rose”, but “*ros*.” Dew. Purity.

Not “cross”, but “*crux*.” Crucible. Transform.





The Knights are indeed performing alchemy – but not with metals. They are changing the base, impure, leaden soul into gold. They are revealing mankind’s hidden potential.

That is the Great Secret they hold. That is the Third Prophet’s message to mankind. *“You have your own sorcery. You do not need to bargain with Matushka or the Sidhe or Lilith or anything else to unlock hidden potential. You are the key to the lock.”*

The question naturally arises: “Why don’t the Knights just reveal the message?”

They tried that, and they got burned at the stake. The time before that, they were hanged. The Knights are not revealing the Third Prophet’s message to the world at large because that gets you married to the ropemaker’s daughter. They’re going about it with discretion.

Concept Into Mechanic

With all of that concept and world history, we sat down to come up with mechanics that would reflect these ideas. That’s where the Secret comes from. That’s where the Vow comes from.

“The Knights know that human will is the most powerful force in the world, and they know how to invoke it.” The concept was great, but how do you make it a game mechanic that doesn’t knock everything else out of whack?

The greatest concern about the Vow was how easy it would be for a player to abuse it: “I Vow I will see Erich Sieger as Hierophant before I die!” The point is well-taken. But as Smilin’ Stan Lee once wrote, “With great power comes great responsibility.” Knights must never use their powers for selfish reasons. They never use the Vow for evil.

Of course, it would be *so easy* to fall into the trap of using it once, just once, for selfish reasons. And that’s exactly how Villains get started. One little step in the wrong direction.

Grand Finale

So, that’s where my ideas come from. That’s the long and winding road to the Truth.

One last thing. Remember Socrates’ “Do things publicly” bit? Put down this book and go turn on the six o’clock or ten o’clock news. When you’re done, come back here.

* * *

Back already? Okay, tell me what you saw. Better yet, I’ll tell *you* what you saw.

You saw murder, bloodshed, tragedy, injustice, and at the very, very end, you saw puppies: a few moments of something cute and cuddly and completely inconsequential. After all that, how do *you* feel about courage and the nobility of the human spirit?

We need heroes. We need the Knights. We need them out there, wearing the Seal, protecting people who can’t protect themselves, bringing justice to the unjust and maintaining the dignity of their own. We need heroes.

And they’re all around us. It’s just that the news doesn’t like to show them to you.

Every day, how many firemen put their lives on the line to protect people’s lives and property?

Every day, how many cops put down drug dealers who are enslaving children with narcotics?

Every day, how many teachers do their best to educate our youth who are fed ennui and antipathy by that very television you just watched?

Every day.

There are heroes all around us. Real-life, modern-day Knights.

And you don’t have to be invited in order to join them.



The Code of Chivalry

A reading from *The Graal*:

The Creator made all men equal. In time, some men became corrupted while others gained strength from purity. Soon it became necessary to protect the weak from those who would take advantage of their strength. Thus there is the Knight.

The Knight must be a man of virtue. He must be without fear. He must be modest. He must be generous. He must be merciful. He must hold his temper with iron will. Above all, he must have the conviction to do good where others have done evil.

Those words were written in 1470 by Tómas Malreaux, a Montaigne monk attempting to collate all the Graal romances of Avalon. In its pages, Malreaux explained in detail the duties and philosophies of the Knights of Avalon and the code they followed. He called this code “*chivalrie*.”

The Order has adopted many of its sentiments as a code of conduct for their Knights. The men and women who wear the Seal are expected to follow the code and let it guide them through morally dark regions.

Just a Moment of History

Chivalry found its birth in the Middle Ages, after the fall of the Old Empire. Feudalism was the social system, a system that involved only three classes: nobility, clergy, and peasantry.

The nobility held all the power without question. However, that power was granted by the clergy. The peasantry had no power in any way, shape, or form; they were simply the victims of an unjust system ruled by unjust men.

This is the world that chivalry was born out of. In many ways, it's miraculous that it thrived in such a world. It's even more miraculous it wasn't drowned at birth.





Right Makes Might

Because a Middle Ages knight was the equivalent of a Sherman tank, noble knights ruled the world. Théah's attitude toward ethics boiled down to "might makes right."

Chivalry broke that rule. The most important concept behind chivalry was the idea that virtue made a man mighty and great. The best knights in the world were the best because they had virtuous hearts. Therefore, the law of the land transformed from "might makes right" to "right makes might."

The concept of *noblesse oblige* ("noble obligation") came out of chivalry. This concept, that the mighty have a duty to protect the weak, caught on like wildfire throughout the medieval world and was captured in the romantic stories of knights and ladies. These stories were recorded and collected by our friend Tómas Malreaux in his famous work *The Graal*. These tales sum up the concept of chivalry and present Théah with a distinct code of conduct for men and women who wish to claim the benefits of "a noble heart."

It is this code that the Order of the Rose and Cross teaches its Knights, and it is this code that the Knights are expected to follow.

The Code

The following is an excerpt from *The Graal* used in Rose and Cross initiation rituals.

"I swear I shall protect the weak. I shall show mercy to a defenseless foe, keep guard against treason in my own heart and in the hearts of others. I shall hold a passion for justice in my heart, show humility before the Creator and his Work, and give aid to any man, woman, or child, friend or enemy, without thought to reward or compensation."

The six holy virtues espoused in *The Graal* — courage, justice, generosity, mercy, modesty, and temperance — are the bread and butter of chivalry. Knights are taught that if they hold these virtues close to their hearts, they are *better* than other men. Because he is able to control himself, a Knight is *civilized*.

"You Have My Word As a Gentleman"

This phrase has fallen from common parlance because of a few modern conventions, chief among them photo identification and credit checks. However, in Théah, the phrase "a man is only as good as his word" is more true than you may realize.

This entire reputation system comes directly out of chivalry. Knights were noble lords and ladies, and in a world full of robbers and brigands, the only thing of any value was a lord's promise. You could count on that, because if he went back on his word *no one* trusted him. It was simply too costly to break a promise.

Remember, there are no ATMs, no driver's licenses, no social security numbers in Théah. There is absolutely *no way* to keep track of someone in Théah, let alone double-check their honesty. So, when a gentleman comes to a shop to make a purchase, tells the good shop keeper, "I shall have payment for you on Amordi next," and seals the promise with "You have my word as a gentleman," the shop keeper knows the money is as good as in the bank.

A noble lord or lady's reputation is never questioned because they go to such lengths to maintain it. Much of Théah's nobility lives on credit. If word gets out that a lord went back on a *single* promise, all of those creditors would come calling for immediate payment. After all, if you're going to default on *one* debt...

Courtly Love: Sauvage and Amour

One of the most controversial themes in *The Graal* is the ongoing conflict between duty and love. While we covered this subject briefly in the *Game Masters' Guide*, let's spend a few moments on it here as well.

As far as chivalry is concerned, there are two kinds of love: *sauvage* and *amour*. *Sauvage* is nothing more than simple lust; it is the longing of flesh for flesh. *Amour*, on the other hand, is "noble love", or to put it into a more modern context, "respectful fascination." When a knight took a vow of celibacy, he didn't take a vow against *amour*, he took a vow against *sauvage*.





Knights of the Rose and Cross do not take vows of celibacy, nor are they actively dissuaded from pursuing the “vulgar” form of love, but the concept of *amour* remains forever in the forefront of their minds. Not every Knight may find *amour*, and those who do are among the most fortunate in the world.

Our Knight – let’s call her Rachel – has her eye on a handsome fellow named Roland. She spends some time at a party speaking with him and discovers that our gentleman friend is not only handsome, but clever, witty, courageous and kind as well. A fine prospect for *amour*.

As per the rules of *amour*, the lovers must go through the following process:

Hey! Wait a Second! Romance!?!

All right, so some of you are probably asking yourselves, “Hey, isn’t this love stuff a little silly?”

Well, honestly, yes. Then again, so is sitting down at a table with paper, pencils, and dice and pretending to be someone else for a few hours. The fact of the matter is that romance is one of the most important elements of the swashbuckling genre.

Those who wish to pursue *amour* must follow a strict code of rules, a code that many consider to be even more demanding than the code of chivalry. Like chivalry, these rules were derived from *The Graal* and are as highly regarded.

Make no mistake! The rules of love are taken *very* seriously by the nobility of Théah. Those who publicly break these rules are shunned by polite society and are not invited to parties. They are also likely to get the cold shoulder from women and may even get a glove thrown in their face by a few men.

Let’s follow a single Knight’s pursuit of *amour*, and for a change, let’s assume that he’s a she.



Love: A Dangerous Idea

Sounds silly, doesn’t it? How could love be a dangerous idea? Dangerous to whom?

The fact of the matter is that our concept of love – from a wide-angle-lens point of view – is brand new idea. The Greeks had their own ideas about love that were drastically different from our own. Roman love was equally... curious. It wasn’t until the Arthurian romances that the concept of romance was born. That’s when love was first seen as a healthy emotion. Until then, love caused nothing but disaster. Look at the *Iliad*. Love caused all that bloodshed. In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus isn’t trying to get home to his wife (despite what modern interpretations tell you), he’s going home because the suitors are trying to steal his property!

It isn’t until Arthur, Gwenevere, and Lancelot that we start to see what we think of today as “love stories.”

Step One: Declaration of Love

First and foremost, Rachel must declare her intentions to Roland. She informs him that her attraction to him is not simple desire, but a deep admiration for his quality and character.

Traditionally, Roland must reject Rachel’s declaration, informing her that she must prove her devotion is not something more carnal. After all, he is a gentleman and deserves to be treated as such. And what wouldn’t a Knight do to prove what she says is true?

Rachel swears her devotion is true and is willing to do anything to prove it.

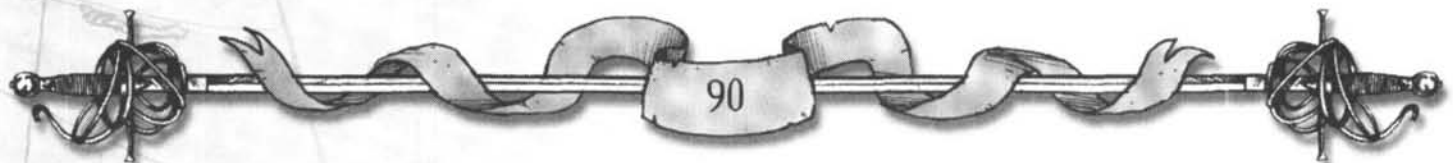
Which leads us to the next step...

Step Two: Proving Worthy

The Knight has given her word that her devotion is true and is willing to do anything to prove it.

This is the fun part.

In the Middle Ages, ladies would send knights out to guard bridges, force them to joust without armor, make them wander the countryside for years searching for some lost handkerchief, and all other kinds of nonsense to prove their worth.





Things haven't changed much in Théah since the Middle Ages.

Roland begins testing Rachel's devotion. With each test, she proves herself more worthy of Roland's love. Roland's tests include fetching a handkerchief he "accidentally" gave to the wrong lady, requests for poetry (with his name hidden somewhere in the poem, of course), and standing guard over his favorite elderly aunt – while she baked cookies and told Rachel all about her delightful and handsome nephew.

Step Three: Acceptance and Reward

Rachel's labors are not without reward. For each successful test, Roland allows Rachel a "favor", a small token of affection. Sometimes it is as innocent as a handkerchief, but as the successes grow, they can lead to such scandalous activity as a kiss from Rachel's *amour* on the small of her neck.

Of course, *amour* can, and usually does, lead to full-fledged love affairs. Often times, the affair is kept discreet, for in seventeenth century Théah, many men and women practicing the fine art of *amour* are either engaged or already wearing a wedding band.

Which leads us to our final step...

Step Four: Ending the Affair

How many different ways can a love affair end? Two. Cleanly and poorly.

Those who end their affairs cleanly are regarded as lovers of the highest caliber. The two lovers have played out their game, exchanged favors (innocent and/or otherwise), and ended the affair with loving glances and soft goodbyes. Such are the affairs of legend.

Amour that ends badly usually involves a third party's discovery of the affair, be it a husband, wife, or even a

jealous party who wishes the affair to end so he can get on with wooing one of the lovers. Either way, whenever the *amour* is forced to end against the wishes of the lovers, it is considered a tragic love affair.

Lovers who end affairs badly can suffer dire consequences in Théah's courts. In fact, too many tragic love affairs can scar one's reputation permanently.



Just Say No

Anyone who finds herself the subject of *amour* isn't obligated to go along with the game. In fact, it is considered *more* honorable to make plain your rejection than to string the poor Knight along!

So, if you suddenly find yourself on the other end of the romance game and you can't bring yourself to play, just make your objection up front.

Fitting Your Knight into the Order

Since you may have been playing your Hero for some time before purchasing this book, you might be wondering how to explain all these newly gained abilities. After all, your character is suddenly resistant to *Sorte*. What if you've already been

affected by *Sorte* in your campaign?

Don't panic.

One of the simplest methods to explain why you are suddenly gaining all these abilities is to say that your Hero, much like yourself, has only recently learned the Secret of the Rose and Cross. Like an onion, the Rose and Cross have several layers of membership. Even Knights who believe they know the Order's most intimate secrets are often shocked when they find out the truth.

The Poor Knights of the Order don't know the Secret, but they can still be treated like ordinary members, particularly toward the end of their initiation. Roleplay going through the initiation ceremony and becoming a Wandering Knight, if you like. During the ceremony, your Hero feels the power



of the Vow for the first time and begins to understand some fundamental truths about the Order. The Master then takes the Hero aside and explains many of the other things described in this book.

Afterward, you have the option to purchase any of the Rose and Cross Advantages (including the Desaix school) for three times their HP cost in XP. Thus, if you want to purchase the Vow Advantage, you must pay 3 XP.

Your Hero is now a full member of the Rose and Cross.

Promotion Within the Order

Promotion within the Order is not easy. We've provided you guidelines below for when a Knight may be worthy of obtaining the next Rank, but these are only guidelines. Just because a Knight shows he has the *skills* does not mean he has the maturity of mind or spirit to be given more responsibility. Judge your Heroes carefully. If a Knight has the Skills to reach Sergeant Knight but not the attitude, he does *not* deserve the promotion.

Another important point to remember is that there are *always* exceptions to the rule. However, don't let the exceptions *become* the rule.

Initiate

Requirements: Servant Skill

There are no specific Skill requirements for initiates, but they *will* learn the Servant Skill before their time is done. The training period for initiates is anywhere between a year to two years.

Poor Knight

Requirements: Fencing, Athletics, Servant

Wandering Knight

Requirements: two Traits at 3; Fencing (Attack) 3, Leaping 3, Surgery 3

Sergeant Knight

Requirements: three Traits at 3, Master Swordsman, Athletics 5, Surgery 5

Adept Knight

Requirements: three Scholar Knacks at Rank 3, Accounting 3

Senior Knight

Requirements: Accounting 3, Diplomacy 3, Etiquette 3, Law 3, Mathematics 3, Oratory 3

Master Knight

Requirements: Diplomacy 5, Etiquette 5, Oratory 5

White Roses

To a Knight, a white rose means "I need information." However, the Knights also use a white rose to indicate that a possible dangerous situation is brewing. "We need more white roses there" is a common phrase used for hot spots across Théah.

What follows are the Order's official positions on some of Théah's more controversial subjects. These come down directly from Martise.

Remember the Third Vow, Knights.

The Vodacce Situation

Number one on the Order's White Rose List is Giovanni Villanova. The man has made a career of building his reputation, and the Rose and Cross intends to show him the consequences of doing so.



The Villanova family has always had a foul reputation, but Giovanni makes his predecessors look like amateurs. The Order can't get close to Giovanni without using Invisibles... and the Vodacce seems to be able to sniff them out as well. The Order has to be patient with Villanova for the moment, but one day he'll get careless and let his guard down.

The other problem in Vodacce is Juliette's smuggling operation. The Rose and Cross knows Villanova's favorite mistress is smuggling fate witches out of the country, but hasn't revealed that knowledge to her yet. It also knows that two of the Princes are aware of the problem but haven't identified its source.

The Order has mixed feelings about the situation. The subjugation of fate witches in Vodacce is a problem, but then again, they are souls who have been corrupted by sorcery. Hughes du Sices has gone on the record announcing that Knights are not allowed to assist Juliette with her covert activities... for the moment. Many Knights disagree with Hughes' orders, but follow them nonetheless.

Others, however, have been less than agreeable.



Empereur Léon

Many view the rule of Léon XIV as a reign of terror. The abuses and indignities his people go through are inexcusable. The Rose and Cross has observed the situation and determined that little can be done without getting blood on the Order's hands.

If there is anything the Order has learned over the years it is that Théah takes care of her own. *L'Empereur* is an aging man. He cannot live forever. Sooner or later, his throne will be vacant and another will take his place. Currently, Léon has no sons, only daughters. The closest thing he has to a son is Montegue.

A man without sorcery.

Rest assured the Knights have approached the young general. So far, he has refused membership in the Order on two occasions. When he returns from his campaign in Ussura, the Order will make the offer a third time.

Val Mokk

Make no mistake, the Order is very aware of what's going on in 1st and 5th Street House. Val Mokk has been petitioning for membership in the Order for years, and now it looks as if he's purchased the right to wear the Seal.

So if the Order knows about the problem, what does it do about it? That's the real question. How do you bring justice to a man who hasn't broken any rules? How do you protect men who are fully capable of protecting themselves?

So far, Val Mokk has done nothing to offend the Order other than provide them with a luxurious and hospitable home. The money he's donated to the Order has done a great deal of good in Théah. When he oversteps his boundaries, the Order will do something. Until then, sit back and enjoy the comforts of the greatest and grandest Chapter house in Théah!





The Tyranny of the Sidhe

Queen Elaine is a *very* lucky woman. She is also a very *clever* woman. But luck eventually runs out and the clever always end up fooling themselves.

The Queen of Avalon is playing a dangerous game. She's freed her people from the tyranny of the Montaignes... and put them under the tyranny of the Sidhe. Her allies are a madman who claims to be the immortal figure of Inish legend and a Highlander pretending to be a sophisticated nobleman.

The Order doesn't trust the O'Bannon one little bit. He's a reckless, ruthless lunatic who does what he wants when he wants without regard to consequence. The Inish people believe he's the reincarnation of their ancient hero — some of them even believe he's the *original* O'Bannon — and will follow him all the way to the edge of the Abyss. If he told them to, they'd probably jump right off the edge, screaming war cries, cursing Legion itself as they fell instead of the man who ordered them to jump. Even so, the O'Bannon, whatever he is, is a slave to the Sidhe just as the rest of them are.

The Order supports MacDuff in *L'Empereur's* court, but the Montaignes think of him as little more than an uncultured barbarian in a skirt. He's asked for more support from the Rose and Cross, but the Order has to protect its own positions; it can stick out its neck only so far before some opportunistic enemy decides to take a whack at it.

Still, the Order owes the Highlanders more than it can ever repay. Some in the higher echelons of the Order say they must support the MacDuff's claims, no matter the price. Others are more reluctant.

The Ussuran Gaius

If the O'Bannon is a self-absorbed lunatic on a patternless rampage, then the Gaius is a self-absorbed lunatic on a deliberate rampage. The Order does not see much difference between the two monarchs, although the Gaius represents a much more dangerous threat. While the

O'Bannon is a lunatic, pure and simple, the Gaius is a lunatic with a plan.

And a mean streak.

It is very fortunate that Lady Katerina was married into the Gaius' family. It placed an Invisible right in the heart of Ussura. Someone very close to Katerina is watching every move the Ussurans make. It's the Order's first successful venture into Matushka's land, one that is watching, listening, and waiting.

El Vago & the Inquisition

Much like the MacDuff, El Vago is a man the Order would like to help more than it currently does, but the dangers are too great. The Inquisition has come dangerously close to recognizing the Order's ties to the past on three occasions — three occasions too many for the Order's tastes.

However, the Invisibles have reported many successes in dealings with El Vago. The Vagabond works well with the Order, even if Knights must keep their activities secret.

Eisen: A Basket of White Roses

The Mud Nation does not tolerate foreigners and it does not tolerate the Order. The Rose and Cross is based out of Montaigne, the nation that the Eisenfürsten despise above all others, a fact that doesn't help the Order's cause in Eisen.

However, the Order's first foothold in Eisen, Freiburg, has been very successful. The Master of the house has spoken with Fauner Pösen on many occasions, and the Iron Lady appears to be sympathetic to the cause — as sympathetic as an Eisen can be. She refuses to sponsor a new Chapter house, however, claiming that her tiny principality doesn't have any excess resources to spend. If the Order is going to expand in Eisen, it will need foreign funds to do so.

On the other hand, Stefan Heilgrund has actively sought to have the Order establish a Chapter house in his lands. Three high-ranking Knights visited him for a week. They





returned with dour looks. "Heilgrund is not interested in advancing the Order's causes," the Master Knight reported. "Only his own."

The Brotherhood of the Coast

The Order has spent a long time considering its position on the pirates calling themselves "the Brotherhood of the Coast." These words come directly from Martise himself.

... the pirates are still that: pirates. Those who steal from others, be it by stealth or force, are thieves. The men and women who are the victims of their crimes are victims because of their creed. It is clear Allende has chosen his prey selectively. Montaigne is the focus of his wrath, while Avalon and Vodacce are incidental to his cause.

The Order will not stand by blindly and allow his activities to continue, no matter what his cause may be.

Last Word

One last note for all you Knights out there.

We put the Vow in the rules so you could use it for dramatic effects. We did *not* put it in this book so you could have fun at everybody else's expense. We put it in the book so you could – at the dramatically appropriate moment – grab a whole bunch of Drama Dice and do something so cool that you're talking about it ten years from now.

That's it. That's why we did it. So you could have fun with it. If you don't like it, it's modular. You could throw it out without even a second glance. That's up to you and your GM.



Quick Start Campaign

This next section is a complete quick-start campaign for Game Masters. It includes a brand new Chapter house (the Order's fifteenth) and its surrounding environs.

The Chapter house has been populated with a Master, Senior, Adept, and Sergeant Knight and a small section of a generic city full of adventure hooks. All you have to do is drop the environment in a city anywhere in Théah, throw in a few Hero Knights, and *bang!* you've got an instant campaign.

Some buildings on the map have been left blank so you can fill them with specific material (Hero Backgrounds and such), but most of the areas and structures are detailed below.



The Man in Brown (A Story in One Act)

This Story opens just as the Heroes arrive at their new Chapter house. A powerful noble and his wife are finishing a tour of the recently finished building (the public rooms only, of course). They are climbing into their two-horse covered carriage just as the Heroes are assembled out front for their orientation. The House's Sergeant Knight, a large and grizzled man, speaks loudly to the Heroes.

"Welcome to your new home. Training begins every morning at sunrise. Meals are taken at noon and sundown. Give me any grief and I'll snap you over my knee. Any questions?"

As the Heroes start to respond, there is a woman's scream and a gunshot. The horses hitched to the nobles' carriage rear up, and a man in a dark brown cloak yells and whips them into motion.

The Sergeant Knight curses and leaps onto one of two nearby saddled horses to chase after the carriage. He yells at the Heroes, "Follow the carriage, I'll head them off!" and gallops off in another direction.

The only nearby forms of transportation are a saddled horse (with the seal of the Rose and Cross on its saddle), a mule, and a two-horse cart bearing a pile of hay and a beautiful statue of a woman. The statue is standing upright in the rear of the cart amid the hay and has its arms raised over its head, making for a tall object apt to destroy or be destroyed

by low-hanging obstacles. Four Heroes can fit in the back of the cart, with two up front. Another Hero could fit in the back if they took the time to remove the statue (3 Actions each from Heroes with a total Brawn of 5 or more); otherwise the Heroes in the back are going to have to keep a close eye on the fragile statue, which is worth about 1,000G.

The chase proceeds west from the Chapter house (area 41), with the unknown kidnapper attempting to make his way towards the road out of town. Check the map descriptions below for italicized text, which indicates events that can take place if a carriage chase moves through the area described. The first time the carriage gets close to escaping the town, the Sergeant Knight does indeed head them off, bursting out of a side road on his horse and firing his pistol at the kidnapper. He misses, but the noise spooks the horses and they gallop into whatever part of town you'd most like to conduct the next part of the chase in.

The End of the Chase

Eventually, if his escape is foiled at every turn, the kidnapper will abandon his attempt to kidnap the nobles by grabbing onto a low-hanging branch or similar overhang. If captured, he puts up no fight, but refuses to reveal his name. The carriage continues to careen wildly through the streets without a driver. If the Heroes rescue the nobles, they'll be happy to give the Knights a reward of 250G. Considering the damage they may have caused during the chase, the Heroes are probably going to be on the Sergeant's bad side for awhile.

As for the unnamed kidnapper, after spending a week in jail, he disappears under mysterious circumstances, leaving two guards dead of knife wounds, and possibly returning to haunt your Heroes in the future.

Area Descriptions

The following is a description of the area surrounding the Chapter house. The text in italics explains what happens if the carriage chase comes barreling through the area.





1. Cathedral

Currently being remodeled and enlarged, this massive cathedral is surrounded by scaffolding. A large force of craftsmen scurries about its business — erecting new columns, walls, and buttresses. Ladders are leaning against the scaffolding, and pulleys bearing buckets of mortar, pallets of bricks, lumber, or even tools overhang the surrounding streets and make passage perilous for both the workers and pedestrians.

The street south of the cathedral is often congested with supplies and materials being carried across from the warehouses on the river (see #2).

At this point, the new main hall is merely two rows of huge columns and buttresses supporting the vaulted roof. Wall construction has just begun, and the area is littered with piles of bricks and tubs of mortar.

Flanking the front steps are two dry fountains depicting the first two Prophets. The Third Prophet is slated to be depicted on the front of the cathedral in an enormous stained glass window. The remodeling is scheduled to be complete in another three months.

A cemetery lies northeast of the church. An iron fence about 3 feet high surrounds it. Within the fence are various stone headstones, statues and a few mausoleums.

Should the chase stray near the church, the statue in the hay cart would be threatened by overhanging scaffolding. Worse yet, workers are raising the new stained glass window into place to test the fit. It's not going to be actually installed until the last week of construction, but the Heroes might (by accidentally knocking over a few workers holding ropes) destroy the 1,000G window.

2. Warehouses

Located south of the cathedral, two large warehouses (A and B) lie along the river. There is a small dock here as well, where workers are loading and unloading cargo.

A number of crates, barrels, and boxes are in the yard, filled with building supplies and other goods destined for



The Carriage Chase Map and Redirecting Traffic



















This map of a section of a city can be placed in just about any metropolitan area in Théah. Some buildings have been left blank and can be filled in with whatever the GM wishes.

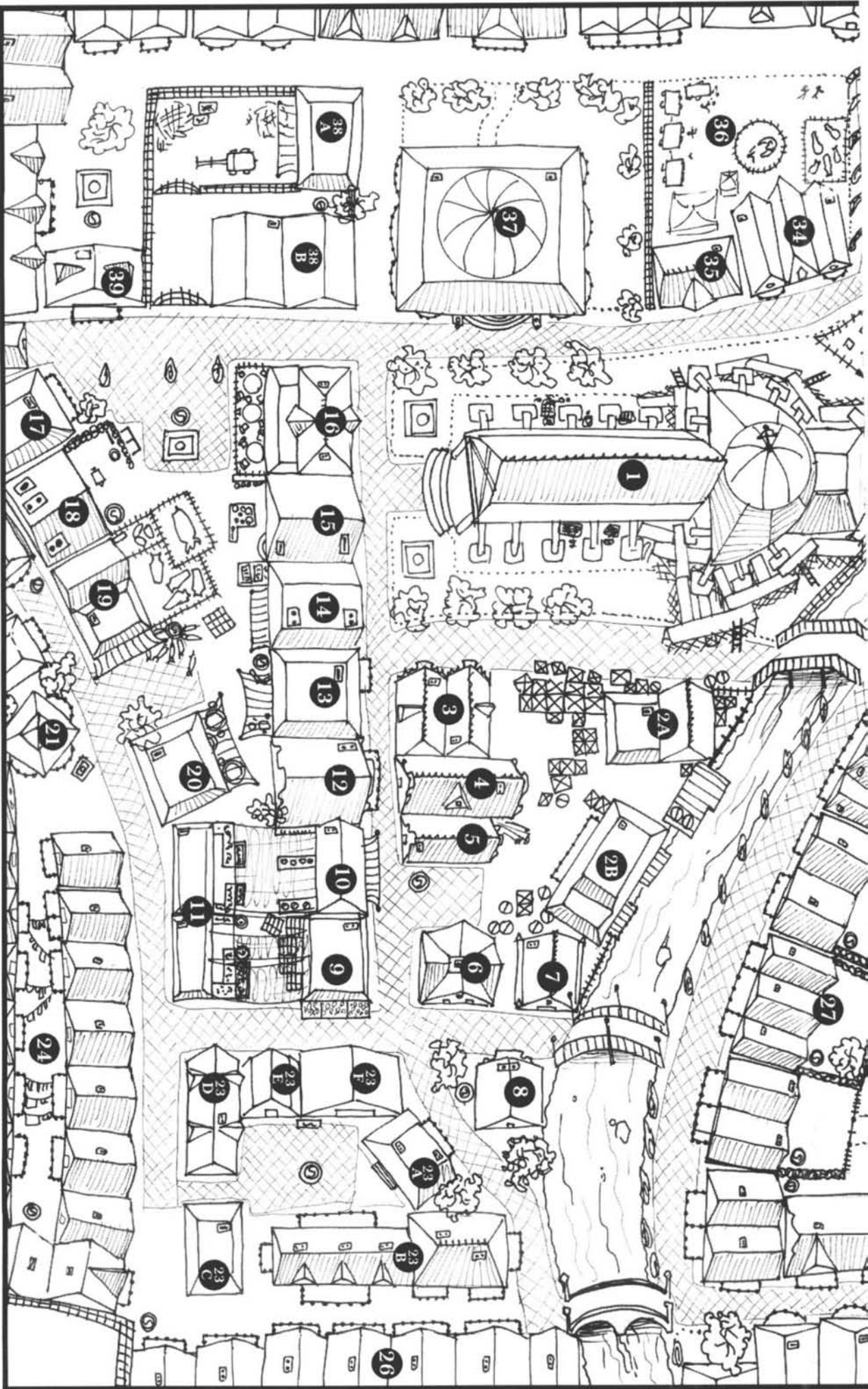
Note that during the carriage chase, most exits from the map area have been effectively blocked, but there is one escape route in the upper left corner. If possible, direct the action so the chase runs through other parts of the map before finally leading out of the area.

Below are a few ideas to “block” passages and redirect the flow of the chase.

1. A small parade with horses, a few carriages, musicians, banners, etc. People will be gathered along the streets to watch.
2. A marching regiment of guards, soldiers, musketeers, or other “law enforcement” types.
3. A herd of livestock clogging the avenue.
4. An overturned cart of goods blocking the street.
5. A crowd of people gathering around some spectacle — a fight or duel, a preaching zealot, or an important personage.
6. A cart bearing barrels of water, wine, fish, manure, etc. Some may be carrying flammable contents — oil or gunpowder. The cart is blocking most of the avenue.
7. A fancy carriage carrying a wealthy noble and his family.
8. A group of ragged children playing tag in the streets.
9. Balconies that are draped with laundry, rugs, vines, etc.
10. A drunken old man staggering across the street.

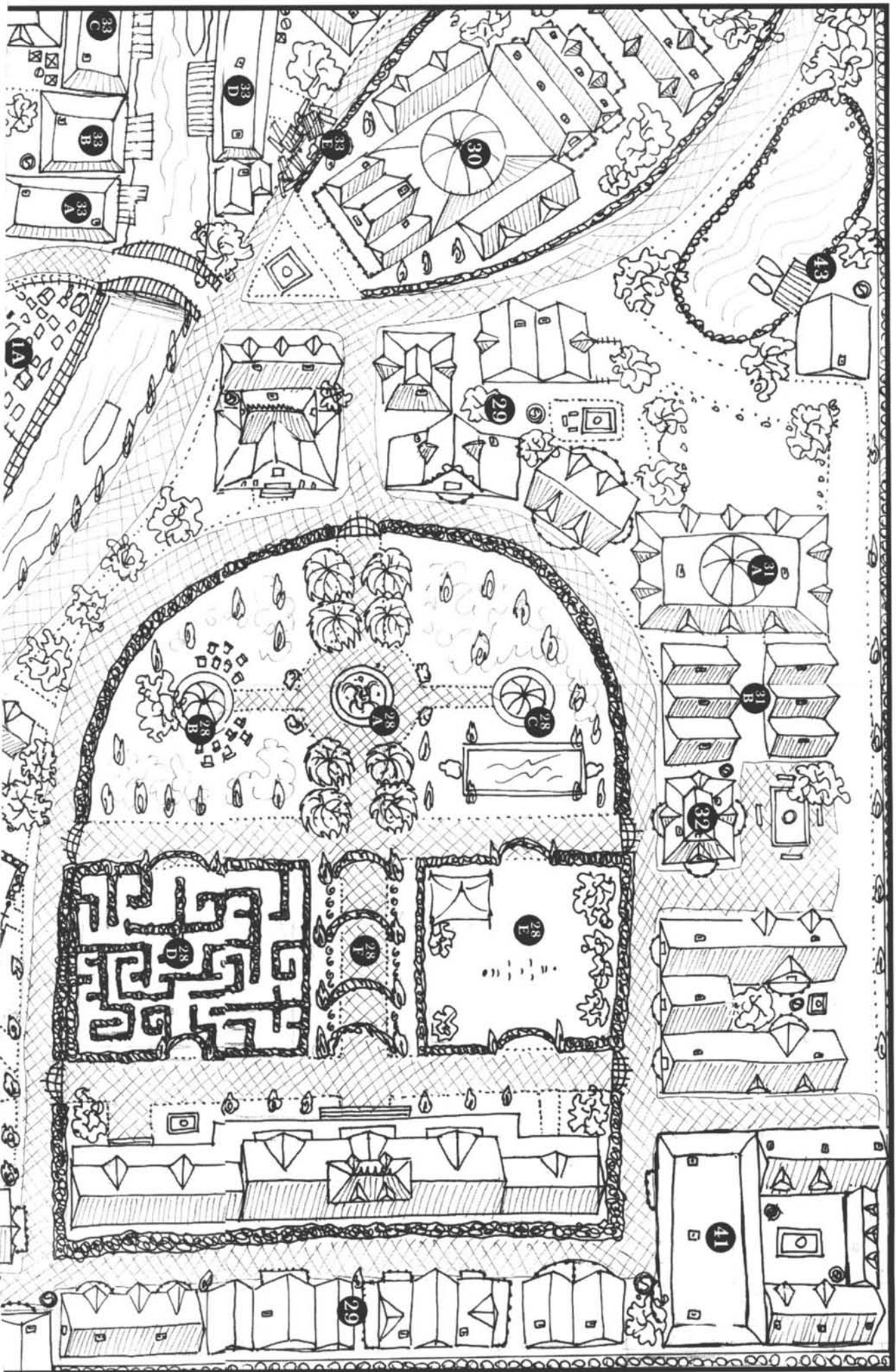


-  fountain
-  trees
-  awning
-  brick wall
-  fence
-  edge of grass lawn
-  crates
-  barrels
-  dock
-  tarp
-  scaffold and ladder
-  hedge
-  well
-  croquet course
-  balconies
-  cobblestones
-  sewer grate
-  tapestries



Permission is granted to photocopy these pages for personal use only.

Carriage Chase Map



the town's marketplace. A carriage knocking them over could result in damages up to 100G.

3. Tailor

This tailor's shop is an elegant establishment that caters to the fashion needs of the elite. Its owner and clientele will not be amused by unruly Rose and Cross Knights.

A well-dressed patron who is splashed with mud or mortar will be outraged and demand payment for the outfit (20G).

4. Haberdashery

This shop sells hats of all shapes and styles, as well as other accessories necessary to the well-dressed Knight or noble. If the chase passes through the warehouse yard behind the haberdashery, an employee bearing an armful of hat decorations will have to jump for cover, sending up a flurry of plumes and feathers (5G of damage).

5. Tapestry Shop

This shop specializes in expensive rugs and wall hangings.

Several rolled-up tapestries are lying in the yard behind it, ready to be carried inside. If they are run over or splashed with mud, the Order can expect a bill for 50G.

6. Cobbler

The owner of this shop makes and sells shoes, boots and other leather goods.

The chase hurtles past recklessly close to a display of new leather shoes. Upsetting them could cost the Heroes another 50G.

7. Wine Seller

This store sells wine by the barrel and bottle. Several very good brands, including Falisci, are available here.

Several crates and barrels of wine sit out in the yard behind the shop. As the kidnapper rides past, he knocks a barrel over into the street. A single, unhitched horse could jump it, but a wagon or cart will have to stop and move it aside (3 Actions from Heroes with a total Brawn of 3 or more).

8. Doctor

The local doctor treats wounds, administers poultices, and cares for the sick. He has the First Aid and Surgery Knacks at Rank 4, and charges 2G per visit.

A man on crutches is crossing the street just as the chase rumbles past. If knocked down, he insists on being paid 5G for his suffering.





Marketplace

9. Poultry and Eggs

This shop sells chickens and eggs. A large outdoor display of eggs sits on the street south of the shop. To the west are stacks of chicken coops. These are made of wood and wire and can be climbed on, but they are not particularly sturdy, and the chickens will cause a ruckus. The coops have Action Levels of 2-3. In addition, two fabric tarps are stretched from the roof of the poultry shop to the roof of the produce vendor across the street. Treat these as awnings.

Driving a carriage or cart through will result in smashed coops, panicking poultry, and damages of up to 75G.

10. Glass Shop

This shop makes and sells blown-glass items: glasses, bottles, vases, etc. One large fabric tarp is stretched from the roof of the glass shop to the roof of the produce vendor across the street. Treat this as an awning.

Three tables with displays of delicate glassware are out front. The owner of the shop is a very nervous man, and if destruction befalls his establishment, he faints and the doctor must be summoned. The Order will wind up paying 50G in reimbursement.

11. Produce Vendors

Two shops here sell vegetables and fruits. Two fabric tarps are stretched from the roof of the produce vendors' stalls to the roof of the poultry shop and the glass shop across the street. Treat these as awnings.

Large bins and barrels out front are filled with goods. Knocking over a barrel of apples or oranges will make for treacherous footing (Finesse + Balance, Riding, or Carriage Driving against a TN of 15 to avoid a fall/crash). If the chase participants cause mass destruction, shoppers may begin throwing tomatoes and cabbages in anger, much to the produce vendors' dismay. Between these two events, the Order will be presented with a bill for 25G.

12. Seamstress

This shop specializes in clothing repairs and alterations. The shop keeper has several vats of dye smelling up the shop at any given time.

Several newly dyed pieces of clothing are hung across the street on a line. Heroes may find themselves suddenly changing color if they carelessly drive through.

13. Baker

This shop sells delicious pastries and other baked goods.

A rack with cooling sheets of delicious-smelling fresh baked breads and muffins is out front. A Panache + Riding or Carriage Driving roll against a TN of 20 would allow a Hero to grab a roll or muffin while racing past (good for a Drama die), but failure to leave payment would certainly result in the loss of a Reputation Point or two.

14. Butcher

Several sides of fresh beef hang in front of the shop, and a few live animals are tethered here, awaiting their fate. Behind the counter the butcher works with his huge cleaver.

The butcher is known for his quick and violent temper, and if his displays are upset, he will not hesitate to let fly with the razor-edged cleaver (Attack Roll 3k1, Damage 3k2).

15. Potter

In front of the potter's shop is a display of crockery and tableware. If anything is broken, the elderly female proprietor will burst into inconsolable tears.

16. Tavern

This tavern has a slightly raised patio terrace out front so customers can enjoy the fresh air and the hustle and bustle of the marketplace. The terrace is about one foot high and enclosed by an iron fence about two feet high. On the patio, three tables and several chairs are set out. Several patrons are in their cups and will not take kindly to a careening vehicle interrupting their drinking.





17. Tavern

This tavern has a full kitchen and two rooms for rent upstairs. The tavern may be safely passed during the chase without incident.

18. Blacksmith

The smith's workshop has a small wood fence along two sides of its yard. A hitching post is stationed in front of it, and a horse or two is usually tethered here. Within the fence is another post used for shoeing, a water barrel, and an anvil. Another, larger water barrel is near the door. The front of the workshop is open and the burly smith can be seen just under the eaves, hammering away at his forge. His twelve-year-old apprentice, a strapping lad, is there as well, scurrying about fanning embers, handing over tools, and working the bellows. He is very fond of horses.

If the horses are upset, the blacksmith will run out to chase off the troublemakers with a glowing poker (Attack Roll 2k1, Damage 3k1).

19. Livestock Vendor

This shop has a large yard out front surrounded by a wood fence. The largest section has several cows that are for sale. A smaller area has a mud pit with hogs wallowing in it. The other section houses a huge bull – the most ornery in the county. Thus far it has not been sold, because anyone who comes near it is in danger of being gored by the temperamental beast. Several goats are also tethered outside the fence. Near the livestock vendor is a rusted grate that leads to the sewers. The locals know not to tread upon it.

If the fence is damaged the bull will escape, causing untold havoc. He may even break free on his own if the marketplace is in an uproar.

20. Candlemaker

Under the awning in front of the candleshop are several vats of hot wax, heated by coal pits. Next to the wax cauldrons are barrels of cool water. Hundreds of candles hang from the awning and ceiling.

Heroes who knock over the awning into the coal pits may well have to stop and put out the resulting fire or else pay for several thousand guilders worth of damage later.

21. Jenny's House

This house of ill repute is highly regarded in this part of town and does a brisk business. It is rather lavishly appointed, and trellises bearing vines and thorny roses line the walls and balconies. If there is a disturbance outside, the girls will rush to the balconies and windows to see what the fuss is about.

An unusual scene will inspire screams, laughter, and chiding. Some may throw flowers or kisses down upon those below.

22. Tavern

This tavern has several musicians hired permanently to entertain the clientele.

A cellist crossing the street with her instrument drops it and dives for safety. The cello, if run over, is valued at 50G.

23. Inn

This inn (and its several outbuildings) is run by the innkeeper and his half-blooded sorcerer wife, as well as three saucy barmaids. The robust smell of frying potatoes fills the air.

Should the chase pass this inn, the patrons will all rush outside to see the spectacle, and barmaids will cheer the noble Knights onward.

24. Lower-class Row Houses

This area is filled with rows of connected houses. They are rundown and crowded, and laundry lines stretch across the dirt road from balcony to balcony. Ragged people go about their business here. Here and there, fires are lit in the streets, dirty children run playing, and mongrel dogs and tomcats chase each other about. If the chase passes through here, it may attract an entourage of excitable canines.

25. Restaurant

This restaurant specializes in foreign cuisine. The house special is stew, which is both rich and savory.



An enormous pot of stew is simmering outside the restaurant, waiting to be knocked over in order to provide a feast for stray dogs. The Rose and Cross, of course, will foot the 10G bill, obviously a grossly inflated figure.

26. Lower-class Neighborhood

The people who live in this row of ramshackle houses have yet to surrender themselves to despair. They keep the streets well swept, and their houses clean. They work hard to make ends meet, but they live full, pious, and productive lives.

A charming young girl races out into the street to save her only friend, a yellow and orange tabby cat. Reckless Knights must swerve aside or trample the unfortunate animal.

27. Upper-class Houses

Across the river from the Poor Quarter the houses become much grander and more ornate. The balconies here are adorned with flowers, vines, and hanging plants. Long



draperies with tasseled cords often flank doorways onto the balconies.

Since the church is being renovated, a wedding is being held in this scenic spot. The buffet table, loaded down with rich food, and an enormous crystal punchbowl (valued at 800G) are dangerously near the cobbled street.

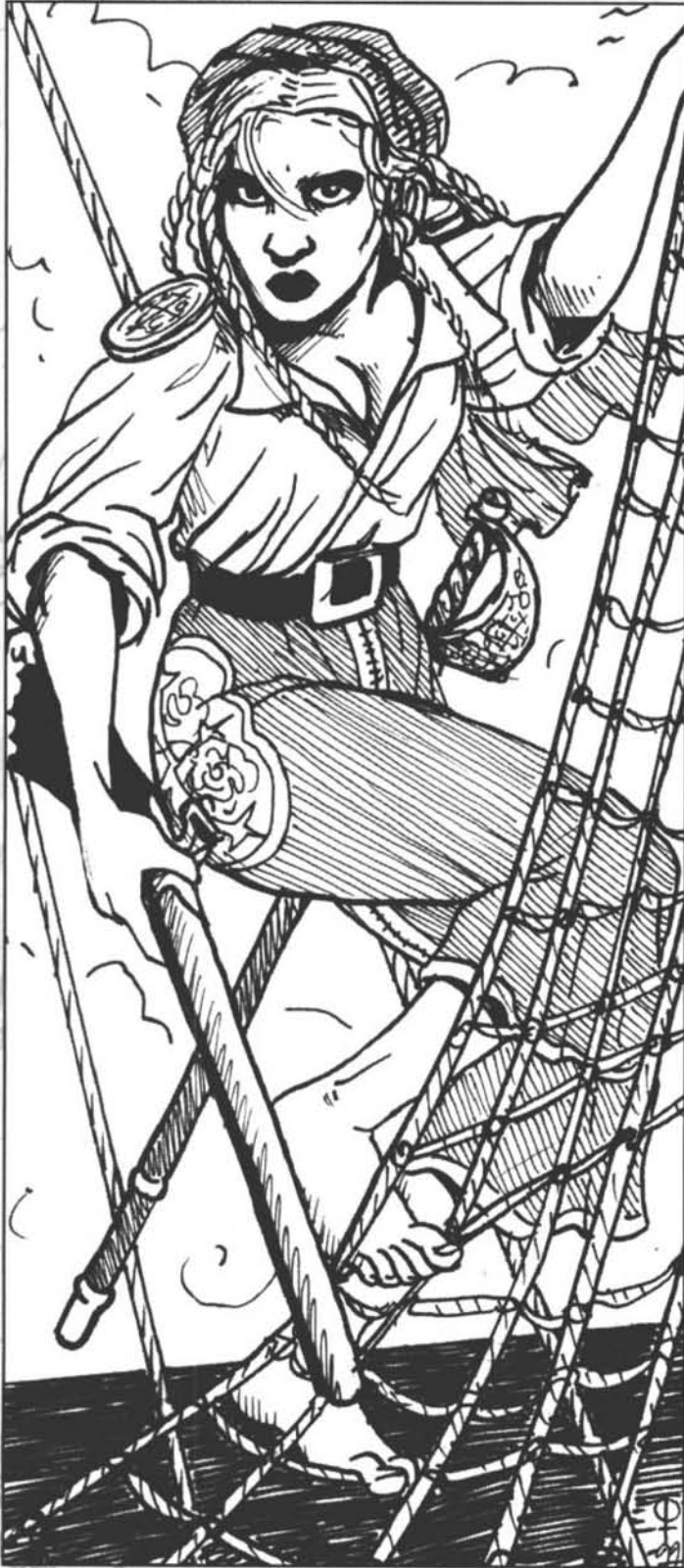
28. Manor Grounds

This estate belongs to the wealthiest noble in the city. Eight-foot-tall brambly hedges and ornate iron gates surround it. A wide tree-lined path (F) leads from the north gate to the manor steps. The trees are weeping willows, left to trail low, and the flexible branches will obscure vision and give stinging lashes. In the center of the path is a large fountain (A) with a marble statue of the founder of the town. Four more statues surround the fountain. To the right and left are gazebos (B & C) overlooking the well-tended gardens. Gardeners often work here, cultivating the lush flowerbeds. Further down the path is a crossroad. On one side is a hedge maze (D). The hedges are about six feet tall.

On the other side is a hedged yard with a tent pavilion and croquet course (E). The hedges are about three feet tall and can be jumped by an athletic or frenzied horse. The pavilion houses a large table and chairs where tea and hors d'oeuvres are typically served to those observing the game in progress. Between the maze and the croquet yard, the main path continues, lined with arbors that overhang it. The tops of the arbors are about seven feet off the ground (low enough to be caught by the statue in the cart) and are made of flowered vines twining around flimsy wooden frames.

The hedges cannot be jumped, but they can be barreled through, though anyone in front will likely suffer minor cuts and scrapes (3 Wounds), as well as a leafy covering of clinging foliage. The gates are another matter, however. They are sturdy and cannot be jumped or smashed open. On the other hand, frantic calling to the gate attendants may get them opened in time.

The owner of the estate is entertaining a large party of important visitors this day, and well-dressed nobles are wandering about the grounds enjoying various leisure



activities. An interruption of their pastimes will send them scurrying for cover, shrieking and uttering well-turned oaths. In one gazebo, a string quartet is playing for a group of visitors seated in lawn chairs around it.

The lord or lady of the manor, who is showing off the beautiful gardens to a company of high-ranking social elite, currently inhabits the other gazebo. That person will be extremely dismayed at any intrusion and will summon personal guards immediately to pursue the invaders. Lastly, a bevy of young ladies is playing croquet and will erupt into a chorus of high-pitched shrieking and fainting if the chase runs through the field.

29. Wealthy Neighborhood

These are large houses where minor nobility live. Disturbances here are unusual. Cautious nobility will carefully peer out their windows as the chase rushes past, but will do nothing to interfere.

30. Town Hall

The mayor, who can often be found here, is fat and jovial. He's always willing to lend a hand, but when disaster strikes, he will trail around after anyone who looks like he knows what he's doing, and wait for him to restore order.

Racing past the town hall will result in an irate visit from the mayor at the Chapter house later, never a welcome occurrence.

31. University

These vast and dusty halls (A) are filled with the wisdom of the ages. Classes are held daily. The headmaster is a crotchety old man who has come to hate the delighted laughter of the students, who live in the dorms (B).

Chasing through or around the university adds a visit from the grouchy headmaster to the list of the Heroes' woes.

32. Meeting Hall

Hewn from rough wood, this hall is filled with wooden benches. A nearby tocsin may be struck to alert the town to impending disasters.



This area may be safely passed during the chase without incident.

33. Warehouses

Lumber and other building supplies are typically stored in these warehouses (A–D).

The street between the Town Hall and the warehouses is blocked by the wreckage of a cart collision (E). A large load of lumber headed for the cathedral building site has been scattered across the road, making carriage passage impossible.

34. Gallery

Various works of valuable art are displayed here for the public to view.

An enormous painting (valued at 300G) is being carried across the road by two men.

35. Library

This library is a repository for books of all sorts. It is watched over by a kindly old librarian who insists on absolute silence in “her” library.

The library may be safely passed without incident.

36. Circus

In the yard behind the library and gallery, a traveling circus has set up its tents and ring. A train of carriages is lined up along the wall, and dancers, sword-swallowers, fire-jugglers, and animal trainers are performing for a fascinated crowd. Across the lawn, a temporary corral houses the circus’ draft horses. The circus is due to leave in a month.

In the tent, a knife-throwing act is in progress. A disturbance could cause a disastrous break in the thrower’s concentration, while running into the fire-juggler will cause the carriages to catch fire. This will cause great alarm, for the library is mere feet away. There is also a huge strong man who will not take kindly to destruction of the circus’ property or harm to any of the performers or viewers.

37. Theater

Run by a screaming, nervous wreck of a theater manager, this troupe is constantly beset by misfortunes, ill-fated love affairs, and fathers looking for the man who has been seen with their daughters. Scarcely a day goes by without some kind of catastrophe for the manager to deal with. The whole thing would come apart if not for the ravishing and witty lead actress.

The street in front of the theater is clogged with people arriving for performances and milling about.

38. Stables (A) and Coach House (B)

Attended by an earnest and fresh-faced stable boy named Casey (who would be more than eager to join the Rose and Cross), this stable offers housing and fodder at reasonable rates. The orphaned lad is poor but honest, and works to support his two sisters.

When the kidnapper races past in his carriage, the stable boy is knocked aside and breaks his leg. His sisters are left bereft of support for several weeks while his leg heals.

39. Tavern

This dark and dreary tavern has seen better days. During the evening, a shadowy figure can often be found drinking in the corner booth with his back to the wall.

A chase past this tavern won’t even rate a glance from the regulars.

40. Inn

While the furniture is scarred and worn, this cozy little inn is always lit by a warm fire. The grizzled old innkeeper claims to have served in the War of the Cross and fills the evenings with tales of his supposed adventures. Regulars listen with bored amusement and tell newcomers to humor the old man.

The inn’s clientele come out to watch the chase, but does not otherwise interfere.



42. Decorative Pond and Boathouse

The local well-to-do residents can come here to take a boat out on the pond and drift among the resident swans. The pond is shallow and it would take a truly heroic effort to drown in it.

The River

The river is crossed by several stone bridges, most of which will support the weight of a racing carriage. If the carriage ends up in the river the chase ends. The river is no more than twenty feet at its deepest and the current is sluggish.

A Sample Rose and Cross Chapter House

The Rose and Cross Chapter houses are typically well-known buildings where those in need can go to petition for aid from the Order. They are divided into two sections, one of which is accessible only to a member of the Order wearing his signet ring. These private rooms are capable of supporting their inhabitants for several months without the signet door ever being opened, making it difficult for the Chapter house to be seriously damaged during riots and other disturbances.

Sample NPCs

This is a new Chapter house, and its senior Knights have been drawn from the membership of several other Chapter houses. These officers have still not gotten used to one another, so there is some friction between them. The Sergeant and the Senior, in particular, have come to blows on more than one occasion already. The Master has been attempting to act as a buffer between them, but he is not a good disciplinarian.

Master Knight

Promoted from his position as a Senior Knight, the Master assumed he'd be happy to be finally free of that odious duty. His temperament was much better suited to the less stressful position of Master Knight, after all. He'd attend parties, put on public appearances, and dodge assassination attempts. Simple. Unfortunately, he has been placed into the uncomfortable position of mediator between the Sergeant Knight and the Senior Knight. The Sergeant thinks that the Senior is grossly irresponsible, and the Senior thinks that the Sergeant is a militant zealot unfit for authority. The Master thinks they both need to relax and stop bothering him so he can enjoy his job, which is otherwise very agreeable to him.

Still, the Sergeant has one good point. He accuses the Master of being too sentimental. The Master has seen this in himself as well, and is trying to develop a more practical attitude so that he can be a balancing factor between the overly distant Sergeant and the overly sentimental Senior.

Image: The Master is an older gentleman with graying hair. Most of the Knights see him as a grandfatherly figure. He has strong smile lines, and prefers neat, durable clothing, wearing uncomfortable courtly attire only when his position demands it.

Goals: The Master just wants to enjoy his later years in peace, dance with some young ladies, and take lots of naps. Unfortunately, thanks to his Sergeant and Senior, his current goal is just to make it through a single week without having to listen to one of their inane arguments.

Roleplaying the Master: Sigh and rub your forehead a lot. Look pained whenever yet another argument is brought to you for resolution. Skip out of your office to go to the theater (or anywhere, really) if you hear a loud argument approaching down the hallway. When in more pleasant circumstances, smile and laugh a lot.

Brawn 3, Finesse 3, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 3

Reputation: 99

Advantages: Montaigne R/W, Castille, Noble, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Rose & Cross Vow



Courtier: Dancing 2, Diplomacy 4, Etiquette 4, Fashion 2, Oratory 4, Politics 3, Sincerity 3

Scholar: History 3, Law 2, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 3, Research 2

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 3, Leaping 3, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2

Desaix (Journeyman): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Lunge (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 4

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3

Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 3

Senior Knight

The Senior Knight is reckless. He takes stupid chances with his own life simply because he enjoys the rush that accompanies the danger. His subordinates are constantly worried that he's going to fall off a rooftop and break his fool neck. The Senior laughs off their concerns and continues to carry on the same way he always has. The men wouldn't care if he was a cruel or callous man, but he shows genuine concern for every Knight serving under him. The Sergeant considers him to be too sentimental and too close to the men. He feels that the Senior is sullyng his office by taking away from its aura of authority and detachment. The Senior feels that the Sergeant's detachment from the men is harmful to morale, and that he would do better to use a bit more carrot and a lot less stick.

One day the Senior walked in on a training session to find the Sergeant dueling one of the Poor Knights. The two were using blunt foils, but whenever the Poor Knight would make a mistake, the Sergeant would smack him with his "main gauche" (a belying pin). The Poor Knight was bloody, bruised, and barely able to stand. The Senior stepped between them, disarmed the Sergeant barehanded, and then gave the man the thrashing of his life in front of the house's Poor Knights. This has created a rift between the two that likely will never heal. The Senior feels that his performance in the fight with the Sergeant proves his point: cruelty is unnecessary to train a man to defend himself properly. His own Sergeant never once beat him with a belying pin, insulted him, or otherwise made him feel inadequate, but he still demolished the Sergeant

barehanded, while the Sergeant had a "foil" and a "main gauche."

Image: A lopsided grin and an errant lock of hair are the Senior's trademarks. He dresses flamboyantly, but likes to conceal lockpicks and other useful objects within his clothing. If he has ever experienced fear, you couldn't tell it by looking at his face, which is always calm and confident.

Goals: The Senior wants to be everyone's friend. Everything he does simply works towards this simple goal.

Roleplaying the Senior: Be the Heroes' friend. If they need something, try to get it for them, even if you have to bend the rules a bit in order to do so. You don't mind being taken advantage of if it wins you friends. However, you do reach a point where you refuse to associate with people who consistently rely on your good nature for unreasonable favors.

Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Panache 3

Reputation: 86

Arcana: Reckless

Advantages: Montaigne R/W, Vodacce R/W, Noble, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Rose & Cross Vow

Courtier: Dancing 2, Diplomacy 3, Etiquette 2, Fashion 4, Oratory 4, Sincerity 3

Criminal: Gambling 2, Lockpicking 4, Quack 1, Shadowing 3, Stealth 3

Spy: Conceal 4, Shadowing 3, Stealth 3

Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 4, Sprinting 3, Throwing 2

Pugilism: Attack (Pugilism) 4, Footwork 4, Jab 3

Desaix (Master): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 5, Feint (Fencing) 5, Lunge (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 5

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 2

Knife: Attack (Knife) 2, Parry (Knife) 4

Sergeant Knight

The Sergeant Knight is a distant, troubled man. He hates the Senior Knight with a passion bordering on obsession. The incident which caused this enmity has been blown all out of proportion in his mind. He traces even the slightest discipline problem among the Poor Knights back to the loss of respect he suffered at the hands of the Senior. This has



driven him nearly homicidal with pent-up rage. The Sergeant refuses even to say the man's name, and has forbidden its use by his students in his presence. Always detached, the Sergeant has developed an active dislike for his students, and sees value only in those who might be useful in a plot to assassinate the Senior. The others live in a constant sea of misery brought on by overly harsh training. However, since the Senior's order against injuring the students was handed down to him, he has instituted a new type of training that he likes to call "Field Work." Essentially, he and his students go out into the woods for a week and he separates from them, giving them a head start and orders to reach the Chapter house before him. Should he catch up to any of the students before they make it back, he lays into them with all his might, typically leaving them laid up or even permanently injured. The Poor Knights have learned to fear "Field Work" more than anything else.

Image: Tall and muscular, the Sergeant has a healthy physique and large muscles. His short cropped hair and tight clothes prevent his opponents from getting a solid hold on him.

Goals: The Sergeant wants to see the Senior dead. Nothing else particularly matters to him since his (perceived) loss of respect among his students. The Sergeant tries to avoid becoming attached to his men, since they could die at any time.

Roleplaying the Sergeant: Yell a lot. Raise your fist as if about to strike anyone who has impugned your honor. When talking about the Senior, never use his name, but always work yourself into a rage at his mere mention.

Brawn 3, Finesse 4, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Panache 2

Reputation: 52

Arcana: Cruel

Advantages: Montaigne R/W, Castille, Noble, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Rose & Cross Vow

Hunter: Stealth 4, Survival 3, Tracking 4





Athlete: Climbing 2, Footwork 2, Long Distance Running 4, Sprinting 4, Throwing 1

Desaix (Journeyman): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 4, Feint (Fencing) 4, Lunge (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Desaix) 4

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 2

Knife: Attack (Knife) 4, Parry (Knife) 2

Adept Knight

The Adept Knight regrets accepting her promotion from Wandering Knight to Adept; she misses the excitement and derring-do found in the streets. She has become very displeased with her lot in life, and tremendously dislikes the records she is required to keep. In fact, she dislikes this assignment (and the Sergeant and Senior's endless arguments) so much that she's been attempting to get into trouble with the Master so that her new job will be taken away and given to someone else. As for the Master, he's too busy dealing with the Sergeant and Senior to realize that she's crying out for attention.

Image: The Adept is an attractive woman with medium-length hair and sparkling, mischievous eyes. Her slight build is matched by her gracefulness when she moves.

Goals: She wants to have her rank reduced back down to Wandering Knight. In addition, she has a strong crush on the reckless Senior Knight, and she wouldn't mind getting to know him better.

Roleplaying the Adept: Continue to cause problems for the order until you are busted back down to your original rank. Grumble and complain constantly about the records you have to keep, but secretly enjoy the attention you get from your superiors for the problems you're causing.

Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 2, Resolve 2, Panache 3

Reputation: 10

Arcana: Rash

Advantages: Montaigne R/W, Noble, Membership (Rose & Cross), Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Rose & Cross Vow
Courtier: Dancing 2, Etiquette 2, Fashion 1, Oratory 1

Scholar: History 1, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 1, Research 3

Athlete: Climbing 3, Footwork 3, Sprinting 2, Throwing 2

Desaix (Apprentice): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 1

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3

Knife: Attack (Knife) 1, Parry (Knife) 4

The Public Rooms

These rooms are open to the public at all times of the day, although only one Knight is found here at night. During the day, anywhere from two to five Knights can be found here.

1. Greeting Room

This room is designed to allow the Knights to greet visitors in a setting that evokes awe. It is lavishly decorated, showing off the Knights' great wealth to good advantage. Sculptures and paintings by well-known artists are a common fixture in greeting rooms across Théah, as are large mahogany desks embossed on the front with the seal of the Rose and Cross. There is always a Knight seated at this desk.

2. Interview Room

When the Knights wish to interview a visitor in private without allowing him access, they retire to this room. Like the greeting room (1), it is designed to intimidate and awe the visitor. The interviewing Knight sits on a tall, comfortable chair behind an imposing desk, while the visitor is seated in a short, plain chair out in the center of the room. While interviews are being conducted, the stout door is locked (TN 25), sealing all sounds within.

3. Smoking Room

This room is designed to allow Patrons of the Rose and Cross to gather and be seen publicly associating themselves with the Order. Several large, comfortable chairs are scattered around the room, and complimentary drinks are served to Knights and Patrons. If there is a local newspaper, a copy of the most recent issue can typically be found on one of the small tables here.

The Private Rooms

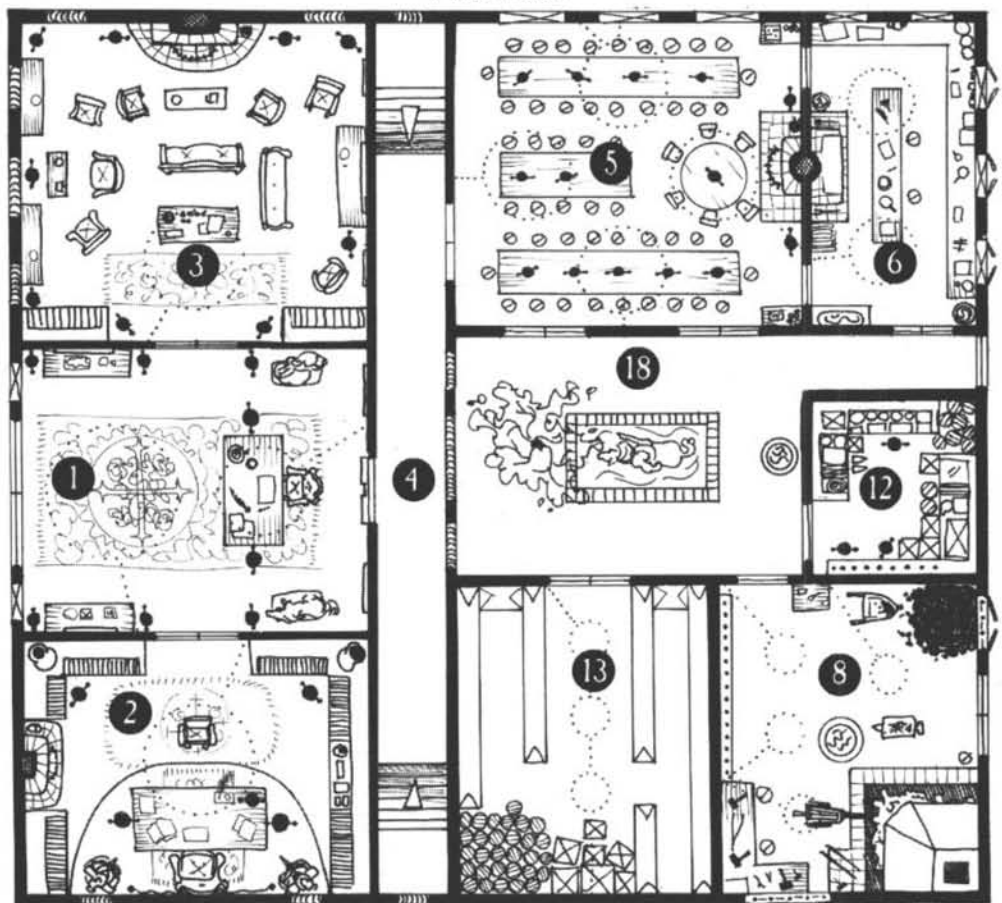
These rooms can only be entered through the signet door (4). These are the private quarters of the Knights, and as



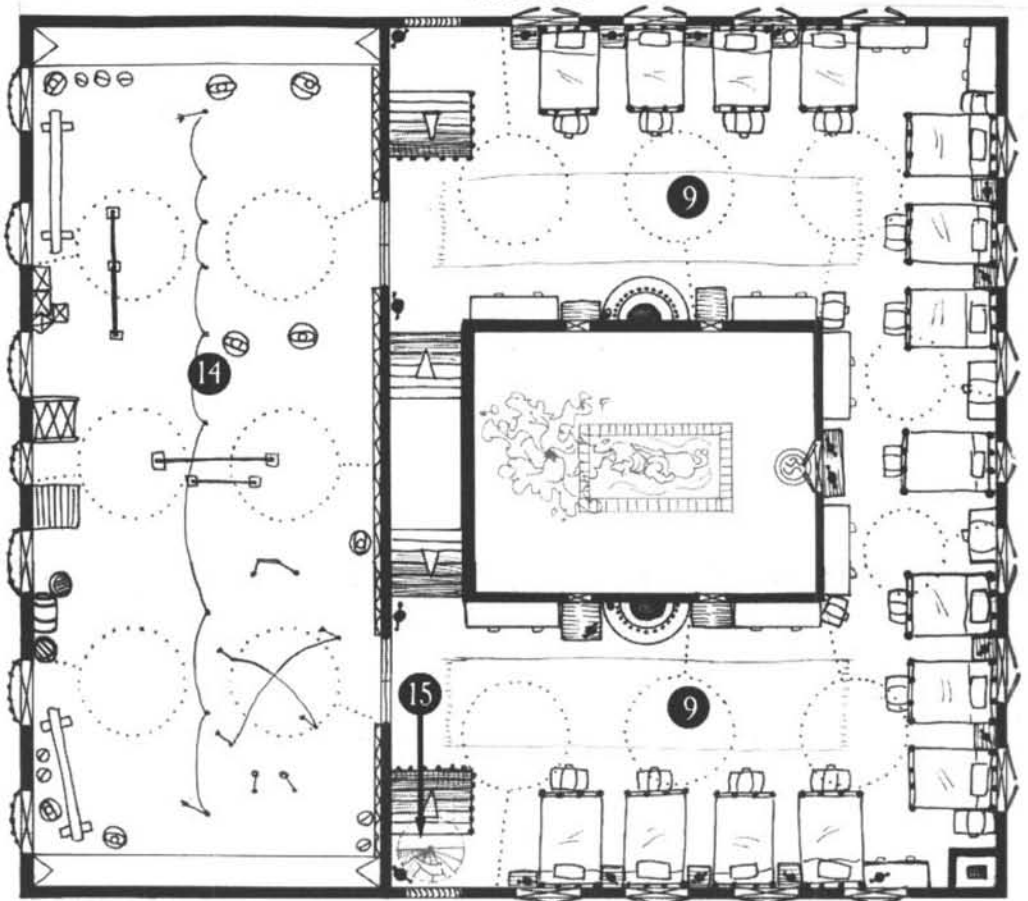
Rose and Cross Charter House

- 1 Greeting Room
- 2 Interview Room
- 3 Smoking Room
- 4 Signet Door
- 5 Common Room
- 6 Kitchen
- 7 Meditation Cells
- 8 Forge
- 9 Living Quarters
- 10 Chapel
- 11 Library
- 12 Supply Room
- 13 Armory
- 14 Training Hall
- 15 Secret Exit
- 16 Sergeant Knight's Chamber
- 17 Senior and Adept Knight's Chamber
- 18 Courtyard
- 19 Terrace
- 20 Chapel Garden
- 21 Chaplain's Chamber

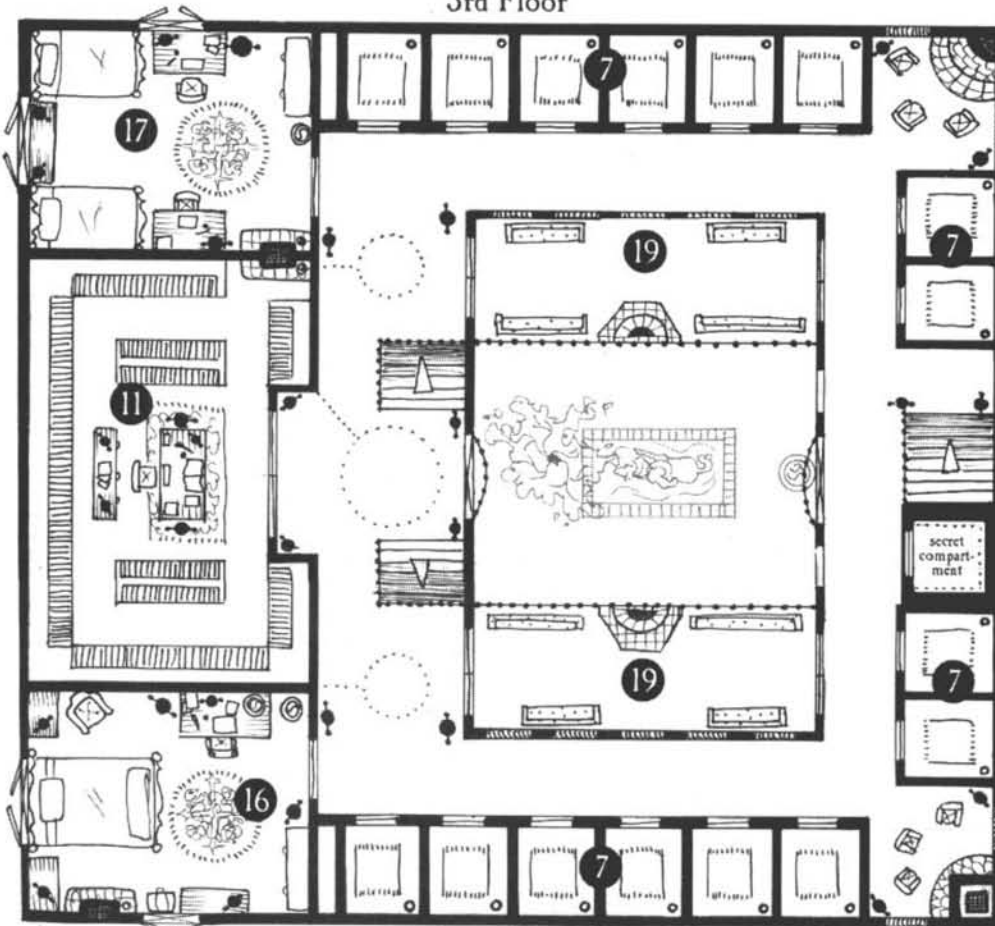
First Floor



2nd Floor



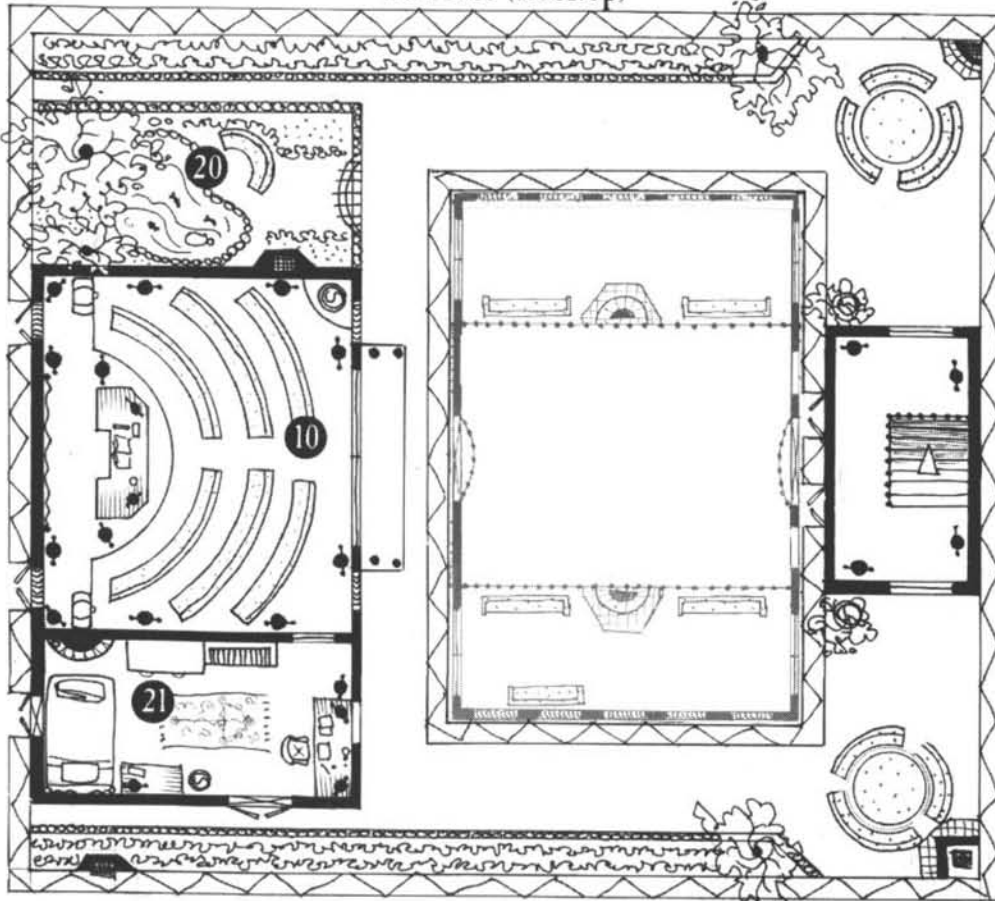
3rd Floor



Symbol Key



4th Floor (Rooftop)



Action Level Guidelines

- ① floor level
- ② 2-3 feet above floor (chairs, tables, crates)
- ③ 4-6 feet above floor (cabinets, stairs, statues)
- ④ 7-12 feet above floor (chandeliers, balconies, rooftop walls)



such, are off limits to the public – even to Patrons of the Rose and Cross!

4. Signet Door

These heavy oak doors are sealed with a special lock (TN 45) that can only be opened with the concealed keys built into the signet rings that are issued to every Knight. On the front of the door is the seal of the Rose and Cross, and a concealed spyhole is built into the seal. There is always one Knight on guard behind the door, and he can open the door if it appears that a Knight known to him is in dire straits outside. Ordinary attempts to destroy a signet door would take at least an hour using even the heaviest of axes, although a ten-pound or heavier cannon could most likely make kindling out of it with a single shot.

5. Common Room

This room is large, with enough seating for 50 people. Here is where meals and meetings are held. Most of the Knights sit at long benches on stout wooden stools, but the highest-ranking members of the Order sit at a round table up in

front known as the Master's Table. There is room at this table for up to six Knights, and for a lower-ranking Knight to be invited to dine with his superiors is a great and rare honor.

6. Kitchen & Pantry

Tyros prepare food for the Knights here. A common meal normally consists of fresh-baked bread, stew, and a piece of cheese. Any Knight present is permitted to share in the meals, which are served twice a day (although the morning meal typically consists of the reheated leftovers from the night before). On special occasions, a roasted ox and other delicacies might be served as well. Meals are served in the Common Room (5). The pantry usually holds enough food to feed 30 people for four months.

7. Meditation Cells

These small (5' x 5'), plain rooms have padded mats for Knights to kneel on while they meditate upon the teachings of their order. Initiates typically spend half of their time in these cells, while Knights only spend an hour or so per day here. A steady murmur of voices can usually be heard coming from the cells during the day, with that dwindling to one or two disobedient Initiates at night.

8. Forge

This small forge is typically worked by only the most loyal of the Knights – one who has been trained in Blacksmithing. This Knight is in charge of preparing metal items such as swords and signet rings for the members of the Chapter house, and it is his duty to protect the secret of forging the signet rings, even if threatened with death.

9. Living Quarters

There is bedding for 30 Knights in this communal dormitory. There are always two Knights on guard duty at night here, to protect against nocturnal assaults. Although the Knights are not expecting such an attack, they keep the guard out of tradition, and it has served them well on past occasions when an enemy has expected to finish off a Chapter house with a few well-placed dagger strokes.

10. Chapel

The chapel is used for common prayer and general announcements. It contains five pews, each large enough to hold ten men. At the front of the room, a lectern sits on a dais. Behind the lectern is a banner bearing the Prophet's Cross entwined with roses. To the left and right of the lectern are small chests that contain incense and robes for the Knights attending the house's chaplain. The chaplain's quarters are in the back of the chapel.

11. Library

The library is not the largest room in the building and it shows. The books are crammed into the shelves, kept in the best order the librarian can maintain with his limited space. Knights must sign for each book they take from the shelves and they are allowed only one book at a time.

12. Supply Room

The Knights keep their miscellaneous supplies here, such as rope, oil, tools, containers, and other useful goods. Only the Master and the Quartermaster of the Chapter house have the key to the door (TN 20).

13. Armory

Here is where the arms of the Chapter house are kept. Typically, a Rose and Cross Armory contains 20–30 pistols, 20–30 muskets, 20–30 fencing weapons, 30–40 daggers and main gauches, and enough shot and powder to fire approximately 3,000 rounds (the gunpowder for this amounting to 10-20 small kegs). Only the Master and the Quartermaster of the Chapter house have the key to the door (TN 30).

14. Training Hall

Here the Initiates are trained in swordsmanship and acrobatics. There are wooden training dummies, gymnastics equipment, and other such items. The beginning students train with blunt weapons, but later move on to real rapiers and main gauches. During the day, six to twelve students will typically be found training here, but there is usually no one here at night unless one is being punished for misbehavior by being forced to practice all night without sleep.





15. Secret Exit

The secret door (Perception check against TN 30 to spot, Finesse + Lockpicking against TN 45 to unlock) to this underground exit can be opened only by a Knight's signet ring. The tunnel leading out of the Chapter house always diverges in three directions, with Knights splitting up if forced to flee this way. One exit usually comes out through a secret door in the basement of a nearby house, preferably the home of a Patron of the Order. Another exit typically empties into the sewers of the city through another secret door, and the last one could come out anywhere.

Adventure Hooks

Throughout this book, we've given you adventure hooks, some a bit more obvious than others. Let's take a moment and look at each one. We'll talk about the possibilities and all the different directions you can take each one.

Chapter Houses

Each Chapter house is its own adventure hook. In this section, we'll take a look at each one and give you some ideas on how to use it in your campaign.

Carleon House (Avalon)

In Avalon, everything is bigger than life, even the majestic Queen Elaine. As an amusement, she's been playing her own knights off against the Order's Knights, a little game that has built a friendly rivalry between the two.

- The Order Knights discover a plot against the Queen at a party. They try to get close to the Queen to let her know, but her knights won't let them get within shouting distance; they're still playing the game. The Knights have to find a way to warn the Queen before it's too late.
- Jeremiah Berek comes to the Chapter house for help. Celedoine has been captured by the General, who plans to

hang her as soon as he returns to Montaigne. Of course, Berek knows it's a trap. He needs the Knights to help him free his Lady Celedoine.

- Rachel Milligan wakes one of the Knights in the middle of the night, urging him to remain silent. She leads the Knight down the dark halls of the Chapter house to a tiny broom closet. Within it is one of Elaine's knights, drunk and unconscious. She says that he has to be back in the Queen's castle before he's missed ("by dawn"), and she needs his help to sneak him back in. Of course, she also urges the Hero to demonstrate his great tact and discretion to keep the scene a secret...

Monastery of St. Brigid (Highland Marches)

The body of Rosenkreuz is missing. The secret library has been compromised. But why?

- Perhaps Marcos is sleepwalking. One night, he wandered into the tomb and discovered it empty. He walked back to his bed where his unconscious chewed on the concept. The next night he walked back to the tomb, broke the key, spilled the scales, and threw around the books. On the third night, he went into the library and threw books behind the shelves. Of course, this answers the question of "What happened to the tomb?" but it does not address the more important question: "Why is the tomb empty?"
- A second possibility is that Rosenkreuz has awakened from his slumber for some reason. Perhaps it is to prepare for the Fourth Prophet. Perhaps it is because he knows his Order is in danger and hopes to save them from themselves.
- Another possibility is that the tomb has *always* been empty. The story of Rosenkreuz's death is folklore, handed down to those who needed to believe. Perhaps he is still alive, wandering the countryside. Perhaps he is still serving the Order as a Knight... or an Invisible.

The House of the Seven Crosses (Castille)

Are the monks below truly the monks who saved the Knight's life so long ago? The story is true, but what do the monks want? The monks appear and knock on the door. The Knights send an initiate down to answer it. This is





clearly a rite of passage for the youth, but what happens when he opens the door?

- The door opens and the monks stand there, waiting. If the initiate asks any questions, they do not answer, only turn away and walk into the mist. They are waiting for someone to invite them back into their home. If the initiate's first words are "Come in and be welcome" or "Welcome home" or some similar sentiment, they step through the doorway and disappear. From that moment on, the initiate *always* has at least one Drama Die at the beginning of each scene.

San Cristobal Library (Castille)

The most important book in the library is, without a doubt, *The Book of M*. So what happens when...

- The Inquisition has sent a spy into the Order to look at the Library. Someone mentions *The Book of M* and the spy steals away with it. Can the Knights retrieve the book before Verdugo gets his hands on it?
- Tired of waiting, Francisco de la Rioja has decided to take the initiative. He tells the Knights to break into Verdugo's chambers and discover what he knows about the Order.

Casa de Tarago (Castille)

Who was the man that Florenza San Gustavo met?

- The man was the ghost of Rosenkreuz. There are dark times ahead, and he hopes to aid his Order by showing them the people that will be important to the Order's destiny.
- The man was an Invisible hoping to stir emotions of confidence in the Order. Unfortunately, the Heroes discover a secret passage in the chapel and find evidence showing them that the spectral figure was only flesh and blood. Should the Heroes share their discovery (behavior worthy of champions of truth) or keep it to themselves?

Don Juan House (Castille)

Oliver's handprint is *still* on the window. No soap or solvent can wash it away. The Senior Knight in the



Chapter house wants to know why. The most intriguing aspect of the event is that Oliver was a Poor Knight, uninitiated in the Vow. How was he able to make it, and why did it leave a permanent mark?

- The Knights are ordered to locate and bring the Invisible College to the Chapter house to observe the phenomenon. The Knights set out on their task, but when they find the College, they also discover that the Inquisition has located their headquarters. They are on the move. They can help the College escape, or they can leave every man for himself. Which do you think the Knights will choose?

- On the anniversary of Oliver's Vow, his ghostly form appears in the sunlight shining through the window. One or more of the Knights stands watching the event when Oliver's ghost turns and sees them. "Make your Vow when you can," he tells a Knight with pressing problems (a lingering Background perhaps). "It's *always* later than you think." Then, he disappears.

Freiburg House (Eisen)

- The most obvious source of adventures for Freiburg House is its master, Dietrich Proust. Every Knight in the Order wants to prove himself worthy of a Dietrich sword. What will your Knights do to prove themselves?

- Mattias Lieber stayed here for a short period of time and left behind a journal. What would happen if that journal were stolen?

- Alternatively, who would know of it and ask to see it? What would they be willing to do to spend just a few hours in the library perusing its pages? The list is substantial, if not endless.

The Shackles and Chains (Montaigne)

A connection through the sewers to the Montaigne dungeons is a whole tackle box of adventure hooks.

- Prison breaks are the easy answer. Pick a nation, pick a relative, and pick a crime: instant adventure. Of course, breaking said relative out of prison is the easy part. Getting

him through Montaigne into Avalon/Castille/Eisen is the hard part. Which leads us to another possibility...

- Someone (pick a Background, any Background) wants to set the Knights up. He frames someone close to the Order, knowing they will break him out of the prison; they break everyone else out, after all. Then said enemy sets up an ambush *outside* the prison walls to catch the Knights in the act. Now, not only do they have to go *back* through the prison to the secret entrance, but they have to carry a starving, dehydrated, tortured, and exhausted friend with them.

Bellamy House (Montaigne)

What do the Tyros see at midnight on the anniversary of the betrayal?

- Fire. Knights screaming as their blood boils under their skin, blistering and peeling. As they sit and watch the horrible sight, the Domini tells them, "This was the betrayal. This is what they did. Not because we were evil or wicked, but because they wanted money." The Domini forces the Tyro's eyes open. "Remember this. This is what they will do to you. This is our fate if we are not united and strong."

- The ghosts of the fallen Knights step forward through the darkness, each of them whispering the same words over and over again. "You won't live forever, so live a life that will never be forgotten."

- Through a hazy mist, the Tyro witnesses his own death. If he asks, "Is this true?" his Domini shakes his head. "It is now. Tomorrow, it may not be."

- After viewing the painful death of the Knights, the Tyro is approached by one of them. The Knight tells him, "I know the future and can answer one question. Ask now." There are many ways to handle this scenario; here are two. First, the Knight truthfully answers any question the Tyro asks. Second, the question is a test. If the Tyro asks a question, the Knights shakes his head and disappears. If the Tyro replies with an answer remembering the sentiment



“No man is free to make his own destiny,” the Knight smiles, nods, and informs the Tyro that he has passed the test.

Forty-Second Street House (Montaigne)

“Okay,” you ask. “What’s in the cage?” Well, let’s open it up and take a look.

- First, *not* knowing what’s in the cage is ten thousand times more horrible than knowing. Your players’ imaginations will summon beasties in their own heads so awful, any description you give them will pale in comparison. However, there are ways to *suggest* what’s in there. Use conflicting terms. Notice that on some days the thing “squirms and oozes and screams”, while on other days it “howls and rakes its claws against the bars.” Does that sound like two different beasts to you? The more contradictions you give, the more awful it becomes.



- Faith d’Arrent has a wound from the creature that bleeds every full moon. Not only that, she suffers from severe nightmares that involve teeth and tentacles, drowning and being eaten alive. She’s a shell of a woman, almost broken by the thing in the basement. What Knight wouldn’t do anything he could to save her from her torment? Obviously, the Knights must go to its home (the Montaigne sewers) and discover the origin of the thing. Perhaps there’s an antidote. Or perhaps they have to kill the creature in order to cure her. There may even be more of them down in the sewers; who knows how many helpless Montaignes these things have fed on over the years?

- The creature cannot be killed by mundane means. If it gets out of the cage, consider every attack it makes to be 7k7. That’s for To Hit rolls, Wound rolls, etc. The thing *cannot* be harmed by the Knights in any mundane way. And may Theus help them if they decide to throw it into a Portal...

Criex House (Montaigne)

- Someone has broken into the Criex House and stolen records! Well, not really. But in order to maintain the illusion that is the Chapter house’s main function, the Order must send someone to recover the documents. To make it a convincing pursuit, why not use some young Knights who don’t know that it is less than critical?

- *L’Empereur* is getting to be a bit of a pompous ass and demands that that his good friend the Grand Master have a proper honor guard at all his parties. Aristide has better things for his Knights to be doing, but it could be a good opportunity for visiting Poor Knights to learn the ways of the court... at least until a permanent guard can be arranged.

- Enemies of the Order have fixated on *The Quill* as a weakness to be exploited. After stealing all the work for the next month’s worth of sheets, the Villains set fire to the press. The Knights must put out the fire, save the notes, and bring justice to the unjust. All in a day’s work.



The Dungeon (Montaigne)

- The rivalry between the Knights and the musketeers turns ugly. Four members of the Lightning Guard challenge high-ranking members of Sprague's school to duels. The Knights need to sweep the gathering crowd, watching for treachery and crossbows.

House of Nine Keys

- Even the Rose and Cross has to face some of Montaigne's more mundane dangers. A ranking Knight has been pickpocketed by a pro. Among the filched items is one of the house's nine keys. Time to turn the city's underbelly upside down!

- Paix is also home to the many ambassadors to L'Empereur's court. The most exotic of them is an Ussuran boyar, who has come to trade. The customs and social pitfalls have driven him into such a rage that he has persuaded every bird in the compound to target his hosts and fellow guests with droppings. The situation is coming apart, and thanks to typical Ussuran secrecy about their magic, no one even knows why the birds are misbehaving.

1st and 5th House (Vendel)

- A Wandering Knight has gone missing. Has he fled with the secrets of the order, wooed by Vendel wealth, or is he in desperate trouble?

- The Senior Knights in Vendel know that they have been exposed to Vendel intrigue, but there are others who would use the weakness of the house to discover the Rose and Cross secrets. Insert a very clever *non-Vendel* infiltrator to take advantage of the Knights' distraction.

- The Vestenmannavnjar are determined to drive off the Vendel's "allies." A Lærdom master has set up shop nearby and showers the house with hard weather and occasional lightning!

Lucani (Vodacce)

- In finest Vodacce tradition, if you can't pull the threads, poison them. *Slowly*. The Master Knight has been poisoned

and only the merchant princes have the antidote. Can the Knights somehow acquire the elixir before it's too late?

- A Vodacce church scholar (with no ties to the Inquisition) discovers the connection between the Order and the Poor Knights. This information could destroy the Order if it makes it into Verdugo's hands. There are too few Invisibles in Vodacce to act in time. Someone else may have to commit the order's greatest sin: silencing an innocent scholar.

Using the Vow

Take a look at the rules for the Vow. Now consider how many ways a player could find loopholes and abuse them.

Keep the players mindful that abusing the Vow is abusing *everything* the Knights stand for. A Knight who uses the Vow for selfish/evil reasons is no Knight at all. In fact, we give you permission to strip all of his Knightly abilities from him. Immediately.

Of course, there are more subtle ways of making a player pay for abusing the rules...

Certainly, a Knight could say, "I Vow that I will see Erich Sieger become Hierophant of the Vaticine Church!" But would he really want to?

There are at least two ways to handle a player who uses the Vow like that. The first method is for you, the GM, simply to say "No. The Vow doesn't work like that. And if you try that again, you will regret it."

The second method is what I like to call "Walking Blindfolded into Monkey's Paw Territory", or "Invoking Rod Serling's Law." Both of these pretty much sum up to the same thing: "Be careful what you ask for because you just might get it."





Good Vows

“I Vow I will protect you from your Villainous husband.”

A perfectly good vow. Even if the Knight is hoping for (or already has) a romantic involvement with said wife, he's not Vowing to win more favor, he's vowing to protect her.

“I Vow I will save you from this burning building.”

This Vow involves only the Knight's own actions (a Knight's Vow can't directly influence the actions of others) and doesn't guarantee his own safety, only the outcome.

Bad Vows

“I Vow you will fall in love with me.”

Vows cannot influence the actions (or, in this case, emotions) of others.

“I Vow I will kill you.”

Knights *never* murder. They use their skills in self-defense or in the defense of others. They kill *only* when there is no other alternative.

“I Vow you will die a horrible death.”

This Vow has nothing to do with the Knight making the Vow, so it won't work. Also, it's wishing harm on others, something a Knight just doesn't do.



This fellow's Vow makes Sieger the Hierophant. Well, guess what? Sieger's first act as Hierophant is to declare all Knights of the Rose and Cross heretics and burn them at the stake. That includes the guy who made the Vow. Guess it's time for him to make a new character, huh? Now *nobody* will ever make a Vow again... because there aren't any Knights to do it.

In short, the Vow is a powerful tool. But it's a tool that has to be used responsibly. Your players know that; we told them all about it in their Player Section. If they ignore the warnings, let them reap the whirlwind.

The Invisibles

The Invisibles are the Order's espionage force, their spies and infiltrators. Silent and faceless, they serve the Order in ways the Knights cannot. They keep a covert eye on the Order's enemies because the Knights are just a little too conspicuous for that kind of activity.

There are currently only eleven Invisibles in the Order and their names are known only to one man: Martise. Even the Invisibles are unaware of each other's identities. Each Invisible only knows one other: his Master.

The Fraternity of the Sword (remember them from Chapter One?) is only a part of the history of the Order. The Invisibles are also a part. Their rites and rituals have been around for almost two thousand years, and unlike the Fraternity of the Sword, their heritage never went into hibernation for centuries at a time.

When the Fraternity fell, the Invisibles survived.

When the Poor Knights were betrayed, the Invisibles survived.

Now the Rose and Cross prospers. So do the Invisibles.





Life as an Invisible

As Initiates and Poor Knights prepare for their Knighthood, they are watched by their Domini and Sergeant Knight to see if they are worthy of wearing the Seal of the Order.

So do Invisibles watch for potential candidates. They wander the cities, waiting to catch a glimpse of a potential Worthy. When they spot one, they go their own Master and inform him of their find. The Master then watches the potential Invisible and agrees or disagrees. If he disagrees, nothing comes of it. If he agrees, preparations are made.

It usually takes a year or two after recognition before they approach the possible recruit. The Invisibles alter the circumstances in his life to ensure a smooth transition from mundane life to a life of espionage. Sometimes the Invisibles approach a recruit without preparation, knowing that when he is asked, he will agree to join.

Once he agrees to join, training begins. It usually takes a year to finish the training. Often, recruits already have skills and talents the Invisibles are looking for, but some finishing is required.

When training is finished, the recruits spend a probationary period on rigorous and dangerous missions. The most common mission is called a "pick-up." Invisibles steal

nautical charts, scholarly journals and other materials that serve the Order's needs. Weeks later, they return the items, sometimes before the owner even knows they were gone.

Once recruits prove their skills, they become known as "Worthy." Like a Knight's title, the Invisible is addressed by those in the know as "Worthy Jane" or "Worthy Stephen."

Worthies are allowed only on pick-up missions. Once they have proved their skills there, they are ordered to perform their first "crucible" mission.

Crucible missions are exactly what you suspect they are. When the Order cannot get at an enemy through conventional, honorable means, the Order turns to the Invisibles. The Invisibles eliminate the enemy, one way or another.

Crucible missions don't necessarily always include killing the target, but they *always* involve the Invisible crippling his ability to harm the Order. Invisibles employ any and all means to achieve their missions, including blackmail, extortion, and – when necessary – murder.

A crucible mission is invoked only when absolutely necessary. When an enemy has taken steps to ensure that the Order cannot honorably approach him, a crucible mission is ordered. When an enemy's villainy is so devious and depraved that conventional methods will not suffice, a crucible mission is ordered. Invisibles undertake crucible missions so their brother Knights do not have to.

After his first crucible mission, he is no longer a Worthy, but is promoted to full-fledged Master Invisible.

Using the Invisibles

Your player Knights have heard of the Invisibles. Undoubtedly, they will ask you if they can play one in the game.

Invisibles were designed to be NPCs *only*. However, if you want, you can allow your players to have Invisible Heroes. There are both advantages and disadvantages to this decision, however.





Invisible Training

The Invisibles demand the following Skills from their students.

Potential Invisible

(All Skills with 2 Knacks at Rank 2)

Courtier
Criminal
Hunter
Performer
Spy

Worthy Invisible

(All Skills with 3 Knacks at Rank 3)

Courtier
Criminal
Dirty Fighting
Hunter
Any Weapon Skill
Performer
Spy

Master Invisible

(All Skills with 4 Knacks at Rank 4)

Commander
Courtier
Criminal
Dirty Fighting
Hunter
Any 2 Weapon Skills
Performer
Spy

A player character Invisible is a tricky proposition. Invisibles do things that Knights cannot. That means they do things that usual Heroes cannot. Heroes usually don't go around stealing, committing robberies and — *gulp* — committing murder. Invisibles do these things so Heroes

don't have to. If you are comfortable having such a character in your game, go for it. However, realize that he's going to be doing all the things that Heroes can't do.

However, unlike a Villain, he's not doing them for selfish reasons. In fact, an Invisible is one of the most selfless characters on the block. He's doing all the nasty stuff so his Hero buddies don't have to, knocking his own Reputation in lieu of their own.

Another problem with allowing a player Invisible in your group is the fact that he can't let anyone else know that he's an Invisible. At the very least, it's breaking the rules. The Invisibles don't take kindly to their secrets being doled out, even to life-long best buddies. In other words, if you allow an Invisible in your group, he's going to be doing nasty things *and he can't let his friends know why*.

Now, literature and films are filled with guys like the Invisibles letting their buddies know exactly what they are. Your Heroes are those exceptions to the rule. However, the more exceptional they become, the less important the rule is. The best analogy is a male fate witch. One male fate witch has the potential to be a world-shaking story hook. A whole group of player characters who also happen to be male fate witches is just silly.

However, there are ways to let your Hero Invisible let his buddies know his true colors. The best way to do it (from one point of view, anyway) is as a test. The Invisibles are interested in the *whole party* becoming Invisibles and your one Hero Invisible is watching them to see if they're worthy. As they progress through their adventures, they prove time and time again that they possess the kind of characteristics the Invisibles are looking for: courage and loyalty.

However you choose to handle it, handle it carefully. There are only eleven Invisibles in the entire world. They are *very* selective about whom they allow into their Ranks. Heroes are good candidates, but not always the best ones.



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Traits

- Brawn ○○○○○ ○○
- Finesse ○○○○○ ○○
- Wits ○○○○○ ○○
- Resolve ○○○○○ ○○
- Panache ○○○○○ ○○

Character Information

Name _____

Player _____

Nationality _____

Profession _____

Memberships _____

Experience _____

Backgrounds

Arcana _____

Advantages

Membership: Knights of the Rose and Cross

Reputation

Total Dice _____



Civil Skill

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_____ ○○○○○ ○ _____

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Civil Skill

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Equipment



Traits

Brawn	○○○○○ ○○
Finesse	○○○○○ ○○
Wits	○○○○○ ○○
Resolve	○○○○○ ○○
Panache	○○○○○ ○○

Defense Knacks

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Wounds

Flesh Wounds	Dramatic Wounds
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Crippled: _____
Knocked Out: _____



Swordsman School
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Mastery ○○○

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Mastery ○○○

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Special Abilities/Advantages
Membership: Knights of the Rose and Cross

Action Dice



Traits

Brawn ○○○○○○ ○○
 Finesse ○○○○○○ ○○
 Wits ○○○○○○ ○○
 Resolve ○○○○○○ ○○
 Panache ○○○○○○ ○○

Character Information

Name _____
 Player _____
 Nationality _____
 Profession _____
 Memberships _____
 Experience _____

Backgrounds

Arcana _____

Advantages

Membership: Knights of the Rose and Cross

Reputation

Total Dice



Sorcerous Heritage

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Mastery ○○○

Civil Skill

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Sorcerous Heritage

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Equipment

