

Rinaldo degli Prupi

The Worst Swordsman in Vodacce

Rinaldo is something of a legend in the Swordsman's Guild, and Vodacce in general. While the greatest swordsmen come and go, Rinaldo has been consistently regarded as the worst swordsman in all of Vodacce for the past twelve years. It is said he once lost a duel to first blood against a six-year-old armed with a toy sword.

The most amazing thing is that the stories are true.

Rinaldo is truly horrendous with a blade — and pretty bad at most everything else — yet he still refers to himself as THE Master Swordsman and acts accordingly. People constantly debate which is greater: his incompetence or his ego. He will happily walk up to any swordsman and begin criticizing his technique. He crashes parties and tries to flirt with any lady who catches his fancy without regard for the husband/brother/father sitting next to her. He makes outrageous bets and invariably loses, then makes obnoxious remarks to the other bettors. He claims to speak fluent Montaigne, which to him means speaking Vodacce with a horrible Montaigne accent. Learned professors at Dionna University shake their heads and wonder how he has managed to stay alive and why he insists on aggravating everyone around him.

This sad state is actually the result of Rinaldo breaking the heart of a precocious student at the Dilettante. The young strega cursed the lad to “Never realize his skill.” However, she meant the vaguely worded curse to actually work, Fate seized the opportunity and ran with it. Rinaldo believes he is as good a duelist as a person can be. He has never practiced because, honestly, why would he need to? How much better could he get? This attitude has carried over to other areas of his life. In other words, Rinaldo is a crashing boor and egomaniac. He feels he knows all he needs to know, and will expound on that to anyone bothering to listen. If someone takes offense, well, they are free to test the steel of the finest swordmaster in the land.

There are a few reasons Rinaldo is still among the living. First is his devoted manservant, Jeeves (pronounced “Zhivs” by Rinaldo). Jeeves is a valet beyond compare, skilled in the Great Game even though he is a Highlander by birth. Jeeves goes about steering Rinaldo away from situations

where he could get into serious trouble, and cleaning up the fallout when Rinaldo gets in trouble anyway. The adept valet has defused dozens of duels through conversation, reason, bribery, blackmail, distraction, and food poisoning. As a last resort, he actually is a Swordsman in the MacDonald tradition. Several angry young Vodacce have challenged Rinaldo, and then backed down when Jeeves began polishing his claymore behind his employer's back.

Jeeves is assisted by Rinaldo's sister Mina, a full-blooded strega and favored by fortune (her betrothed died while saying “I do” during the ceremony, and the families are so busy arguing over whether the marriage actually occurred that she is largely ignored). Although she cannot break the curse, she attends the duels that Jeeves cannot get Rinaldo out of and makes sure Fate lends a hand. Often, she will find out which strega are supporting the opponent and have Jeeves take them out first. Through constant practice protecting Rinaldo, Mina has quickly risen to be a mistress of Sorte but has had to hide this from her brother, who would be enraged by her assistance. (The fact that she could probably beat him up is never discussed.)

Mina and Jeeves have formed a close friendship, and often drink tea together (an herbal blend that's good for heartburn). Both will attest that there have been times when their combined efforts could not save Rinaldo from himself, yet each time, he somehow survived through sheer coincidence and luck. Both feel that these incidents prove the saying “Fate favors fools and young children.”

Lastly, Rinaldo's own reputation nowadays ensures that many Swordsmen just do not want to fight him. It's too much embarrassing trouble, and besides, what would be gained? Many Vodacce inflict Rinaldo on their enemies instead, by pointing out that Marco over there is looking for a tip on his fencing. They then sit back with a glass of wine and watch Marco try to get away.

Rinaldo travels frequently, so he may be found nearly anywhere. Whenever it looks like a difficult situation has arisen in Vodacce, his family sends him away on a “important errand,” always accompanied by his faithful valet



and devoted sister.

The Game of 20 Questions

Country of Origin

Vodacce

Recurring mannerisms

Arrogant and foppish enough to make Léon himself seem staid.

Main motivation?

What motivation? He is the best swordsman in the land — that should be enough for anyone.

Greatest strength? Greatest weakness?

His greatest strength is that, deep down, he is actually a decent human being and adheres to a gentlemen's code. Jeeves and Mina are certainly helpful, though. His greatest weakness is that he is basically borderline bonkers.

Least and most favorite things?

His favorite thing is the time leading up to a duel, when he visualizes his own prowess. His least favorite is when an opponent backs out at the last minute.

NPC's psychology?

Delusional, and warping his perceptions to fit that delusion.

Single greatest fear?

He is relatively fearless. His greatest fear is that his sister will come to harm by following him on his adventures.

Highest ambition? His greatest love?

His greatest ambition is to someday retire to instruct worthy pupils in his fencing style. His greatest love is typically himself, followed by Mina.

Opinion of his country?

He is proud to be Vodacce.

Any prejudices?

Not really, he treats everyone equally annoyingly regardless of origin.

Where do your NPC's loyalties lie?

To his own gentlemen's code of honor, to his family, and to the Swordsman's Guild

Is your NPC in love? Is he married or betrothed?

No

What about your NPC's family?

Mina is devoted enough that she makes an occupation out of keeping her brother alive. Some days she wishes she could take a small break

How would your NPC's parents describe him?

"Oh, Theus! Has he come back already? Tell him we're out. No, we're visiting Dionna... No, we went to Inismore!"

Is your NPC a gentleman?

So much it hurts.

How religious? What sect of the Church does he follow?

He was raised a good Vaticine, for all the good it did.

Member of a guild, gentleman's club, or Secret Society?

He is a loyal member of the Swordsman Guild and will defend his brotherhood in all things (in Vodacce, this is a problem)

What does your NPC think of sorcery?

"Give me a good sword any day"

What advice would you give your NPC?

Get some help. Either that or learn to live as a whole person without Mina and Jeeves to secretly lean on. I would advise Mina and Jeeves to focus on breaking his delusion instead of supporting it.

Roleplaying Rinaldo

Rinaldo is one part Porthos, five parts Inspector Clouseau. He gives his friends heartburn and his enemies ulcers. He met Lady Jamais Sices du Sices a few years ago. Jamais will not speak of the incident but her eye starts twitching when his name is mentioned.

Although Rinaldo does not actually know the Ambrogia school, he thinks he does and fights accordingly. He is not left-handed, but that doesn't stop him from fighting left-handed. He does not actually know how to use the knife. He uses his Dirty Fighting Parry to defend, bolstered a great deal by Mina tugging on his strands (Mina has actually become a very good knife fighter just from the practice she gets



tugging on his strands to get the knife where it needs to be).

He claims to follow the Gallegos style for his footwork; the truth is he just doesn't move his feet. If his opponent backs away, Rinaldo will lower his blades and stroll over to his opponent. He will then double-check his distance, take up his stance, take one or two more practice thrusts, and say "Alright, then. Ready whenever you are." Rinaldo will typically lose a friendly bout, immediately justifying it as the result of a "bad meal" or as a means of actually teaching his opponent a lesson. Jeeves and Mina work to make sure Rinaldo does not get injured, not that he is unbeatable. Mina is trying to get Rinaldo to accept the sword she twisted especially for him, but he refuses to fight with anything except his old epee, which he calls "Frederick."

Quotes

"No, no, no! You never defend with the dagger! Bring up the sword! And stop moving so much!"

"Please, do you realize exactly who you are challenging? No!? Well. I am...<<endless drone>>"

GM Secrets

Some power within the Tessatore wants Rinaldo to live. Somewhere, there is a tapestry that is forcing Rinaldo's Arcana to Propitious instead of his natural Overconfident. They may be interfering in other ways as well. Why is a mystery, but it may have something to do with Rinaldo and Mina being related by blood to Princes Caligari, Falisci, and Mondavi.

Credits

Writing

Mark Annunziato

Line Development

Mark Stanton Woodward

7th Sea System Creation

John Wick, Jennifer Wick and Kevin Wilson

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Rinaldo degli Prufi, Hero (7th Sea™)

Brawn: 2, **Finesse:** 1, **Wits:** 2, **Resolve:** 3, **Panache:** 1

Arcana: Propitious

Advantages: Ally (with obligation); Foul Weather Jack; Membership (*Swordsman's Guild*); Noble; Vodacce Valet; Vodacce (R/W), Montaigne (ACQ)

Backgrounds: Cursed (4)

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

Dirty Fighting: Attack 1, Parry (Improvised Weapon) 1

Fencing: Attack 1, Parry 1

Ride: Ride 1

Rinaldo degli Prufi, Hero (d20™)

Vodacce Courtier 1/Noble 1: CR 2; Size Medium (Humanoid); HD 1d6+1d8+4; hp 15; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC10; Atks: Epee +0 melee (1d6); SA none; SQ Commanding Presence +1, Friends In High Places, Style and Grace, Talent, Wealth; SV Fort +3, Ref +12, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9; AL LG; Skills: Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Innuendo +6, Knowledge (Nobility) +3, Ride +2, Speak Language (Vodacce, Montaigne, {alternately, any two languages from your campaign setting}); Feats: Foul Weather Jack, Propitious (Arcana)