

Montaigne Restoration

Overview

This eBook is designed to give Game Masters and players information on adventuring in Montaigne from the dwindling days of the Revolution and the Frenzy, through into the Restoration of the monarchy under Montegue I. It includes a full adventure which continues from the events of Tower of Faith in the Rapier's Edge sourcebook. There are also new mechanics for Porte sorcery and information on what happened to important characters and locations through the tumultuous years of change in the nation of Montaigne.

This book in this sense picked up from where the almanac sourcebook Montaigne Revolution left off, although unlike that book this one deals only with the nation of Montaigne and mentions events in other areas of Theah only in passing. The first sections of the book detail the events and repercussions of the Revolution and the situation that lead to the bloody and dark days of the Frenzy. Following that the return of Montegue is described in more detail along with the constitution of his new government, which in trying to avoid the excesses of Leon's rule adopted some of the most thoughtful reforms of the Revolutionary movement. These sections should generally be able to be enjoyed by players and GMs alike to give a better feel for what it is like for people living in the nation during this period.

The sections after this are designed for the Game Master, introducing some new rules and also information on running a campaign in Revolutionary or Restoration Montaigne. This

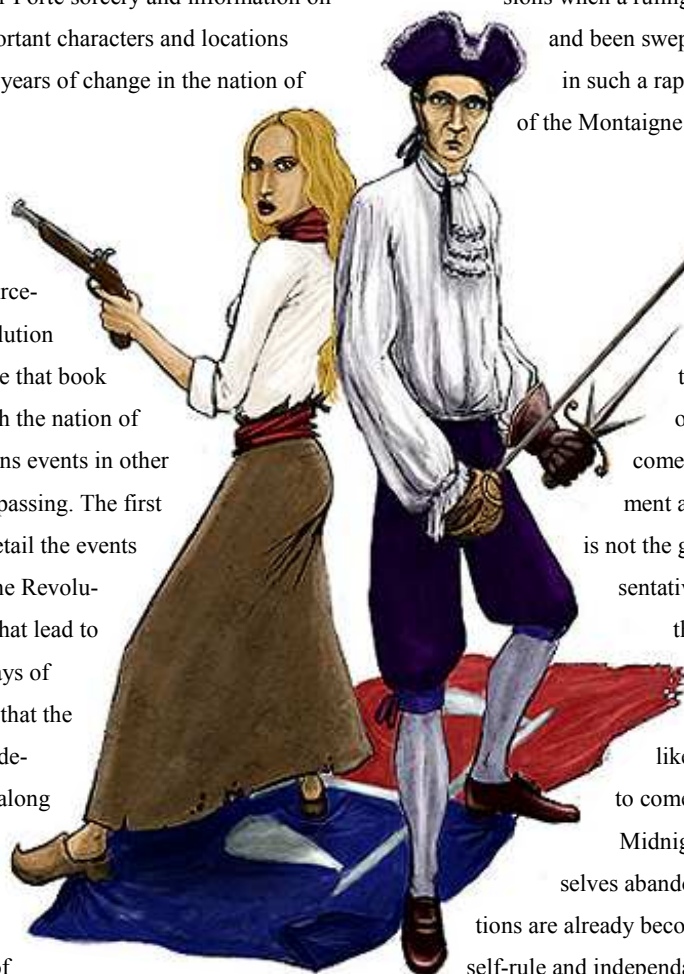
is then finished off with the adventure Smelling Like a Lily written by Dana DeVries, which is given to act as an introduction to the Restoration period and leads up to some of the events mentioned in the Rapier's Edge sourcebook.

A Dynasty Falls

While throughout the history of Theah there has been occasions when a ruling power has fallen from grace and been swept aside, none have gone down in such a rapid and violent manner as that of the Montaigne dynasty during the Revolution.

The event sent shockwaves through the ruling powers of the entire of Theah, showing what happens to rulers when they abuse and ignore the needs of their people. While the outcome of the Revolutionary movement and its descent into bloodshed is not the greatest advertisement for representative government, it can be said that the political structures of Theah will never be as they were and the effects are likely to be seen for many decades to come. Indeed, small colonies in the Midnight Archipelago who see themselves abandoned by their distant home nations are already becoming hotbeds for discussion of self-rule and independence.

The fall of the Montaigne family and with it the majority of the noble classes was precipitated by a single act of cruelty but built towards for years. Although Leon himself took decadance to a new level, it can be argued that he was simply continuing a trend in the royal court that had been formed and shaped ever since the founding of the Montaigne dynasty from the fracturing of Carleman's empire. From the moment of the Bargain in ancient Numa, the Senatorial



families came to see themselves and separate and superior to those that they ruled. The idea of the Senate being representative of the people of Numa was lost and this corruption lead indirectly to the fall of the Empire. This did not stem the effect however, as the most powerful Senatorial lines moved to their own power-bases in the former provinces of the Empire. The line of Montanus has always been one of the most powerful and also the most cruel, from this bitter seed was the eventual fall of the Montaigne born.

While most people associate the fall of the Montaigne dynasty with the activities of the Jacob's Political Society, from which the Revolutionary leader Arnaud Maximilien du Charouse came, there were a lot of other groups and individuals that worked towards the same goal but either did not take credit or covered their actions. Indeed many nobles themselves had come to the conclusion that Leon Alexandre had become a danger to the nation and steps had to be taken, either from a love of their nation or a sense of self-preservation in what would happen when the situation came to a head. Unfortunately for most of the more liberally minded nobles, the breaking point was reached quicker than most thought and the fall-out became a backlash against the whole ruling class with few of the rich and power escaping the hateful and zealous mobs. With the vast majority of the rural areas close to famine and with the governance of the major cities swept away, it was fairly easy for groups like Jacob's to step in and impose their ideas for the new rule of Montaigne. This great experiment in governance of the people by the people started with lofty goals and good intentions, but as the history books show it lasted little over a year.

In the months leading up to Bloody Feast Day, the Revolutionary movement had showed that the Council of Eight were able through their parlement to rule the nation with wisdom and equality. The famines had been averted by quick action and the freeing of stockpiles that had been assigned by the nobles for their own use or for the military. The end of the war with Castille allowed the soldiers from that bloody war to return and begin massive civil engineering projects that improved the standard of living for many rural communities. Without the fickle taxes and system of favours in the major cities, commerce quickly built up and other nations

that were at first hesitant to trade in Montaigne started to return. Of course, the first outsiders to see the advantage of the new political climate was the Vendel, who having basically overthrown their own noble class could most easily relate to the new Revolutionary government. Since the Vodacce by tradition were used to doing business through the noble families and court system of the old Montaigne, the new nation became yet another battleground in the trade war with the Vendel and one in which the upstart northmen had a distinct advantage. The outcome of this was that Montaigne started to move back towards its former prosperity, although with the wealth more distributed than it had been at any time in its past. That said, the new nation was not a complete social idyll as the rural workers may have been in a better position than in the darkest days of Leon's rule, it was the burgeoning middle classes that most benefitted from the changes. The fall of the nobles gave way to the rise of the merchant classes and the professional politician. New social dynamics developed and the hotbed of politics moved from the Court of the Sun King to the coffee shops and trade guilds of the major cities. It was not long though until hard-liners started to make their presence felt in the political institutions.

After the basic necessities of life had been addressed, many of the most ardent revolutionaries turned their zeal to the entire way of life in Montaigne. The government debated a new calendar and new place names, all in a desperate aim to remove all reference to the old nation and to impress the stamp of their vision for the future of Montaigne. There was even a suggestion to rename the nation to remove its link to the defamed Montanus line, although the furthest that reached was the final design for the revolutionary flag showing the Scales of Justice rather than the emblem of the Sun King. It was in this atmosphere of radical thought and debate that Montaigne loyalsts struck what they would have considered a great victory against the Revolutionary Government, the assassination of two of the Council of Eight. The deaths of Aristede Baveaux and Eugene Suchet du Crieux shook the political structures of Charouse to their core, and also inadvertently tipped the balance in favour of the hard-line factions lead by the quiet and unassuming Arnaud Maximilien du Charouse. The involvement of Arnaud in the complex beaucracy of the government made him the ideal man to lead the nation, but also exposed him to all of the information

about supposed seditious activity and royalist plots, which only fed his growing paranoia. In killing the liberal Eugene, the royalists began the greatest crackdown on nobles since the chaotic days following the initial revolution. The formation of the Committee for National Welfare was argued in parlement as a measure against such royalist plots from both within the nation and from bordering nations, but it quickly became the iron fist of an increasingly tyrannical rule by the remaining members of the Council. In a similar way to the Inquisition, the Committee sought people to join its ranks that demonstrated a certain zeal and belief which pushed the organisation further and further away from the views of accepted society. Those few nobles who had returned to Montaigne in the view of the new stability and with assurances from the parlement, now were forced to flee once more or risk becoming a target for a new form of witchhunt.

The Height of Frenzy

It is somewhat of a irony that the Revolution will most be remembered for becoming something like that which it was formed to replace. With the Committee basically under his direct control, Arnaud Maximilien became more powerful than the Council and could easily either bypass or pressure parlement into conceding to his ideas. In this way, the democratic ideals of the Jacob's Society were submerged into an effective dictatorship which if anything was more insidious and dangerous than the careless rule of Leon Alexandre. The only two people that eventually had any influence on Arnaud became Emilie Sausseur and Jean-Marc Navarre. Neither could be argued to be a good stabilising influence on his paranoid personality, with the former being in awe of Arnaud and willing to die for his cause and the priest trying to solidify his own power. Jean-Marc Navarre has also been more affected by the events he has witnessed than he would care to admit, with his own justifications for the actions of the Council against the people turning his sermons more and more into proselytizing of the righteousness of the revolutionary government and the lack of moral fibre in anyone who opposes it. He has taken the restoration of the Vaticine faith in Montaigne and twisted it into a political tool to help maintain control for the Council and also to further his own goals. For this reason, were he ever to succeed in his goal and become the Cardinal for the nation it would be one of the dark-

est days since the death of the Hierophant on his visit to the court of Leon Alexandre.

After the blossoming of trade once more in Montaigne, the onset of the Frenzy saw nearly all foreign nations withdraw from Montaigne for the safety of their own people and in disgust of the persecution and deaths that were occurring on a regular basis. While the exile court in Wische called for other nations to intervene in Montaigne, there was little that the rest of Theah could do but watch with horror as the situation developed. Covertly a number of groups did operate in Montaigne in this time, mainly to get people to safety and try to deflect some of the zeal of the Committee for National Welfare. Two of the groups walking the finest balance in this were the Musketeers and the Rose & Cross, who had been brought together through the leadership and then death of Aristede Baveaux. Ever since the revolution, the Musketeers had been recast as servants of the people and not of the crown, this was a position that was tested to its fullest as their new rulers now became the greatest threat to the people and the justice that they swore to protect. The Rose & Cross with its long ties to Montaigne nobility had always been in a difficult situation following the revolution, but the general love of the common people for their valiant deeds and heroic image had kept them safe. If they were shown to be helping the nobles or working against the Council, Arnaud would be very quick to turn his excellent oratory skills against the group and make them a target of the Frenzy. So both groups came to rely on each other to help mask their activities in the countryside and acting as links to the outside world.

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A great many important figures met a grim fate in the days and weeks following the revolution. Some like that of the Empereur himself are widely known, but others recieved less public announcement. The following list details the outcome of every major figure from the old Montaigne noble families.

The Du Montaigne Family

Leon Alexandre XIV du Montaigne – fled Charouse as the

riots escalated on Septimus 27th, 1668, making for the coast, where he boarded a vessel bound for a safe harbour. The vessel was reported lost at sea. His body was found hanging from a tree near the shoreline on Octavus 12th.

Imperatrice Morella du Montaigne – hanged herself when the mob stormed the Chateau du Soleil on Septimus 27th rather than help her husband.

Remy du Montaigne – shot by the Musketeers while attempting to kill their Captain-General, Jean-Marie Rois et Reines du Rogne, on Septimus 27th.

Cherie du Montaigne – continues to live on the Aldana estate in Castille, married to the elder Don Aldana.

Evelyne du Montaigne – tried and executed on Octavus 4th, 1668, after being discovered stowing away on a ship bound for Avalon.

Rosamonde du Montaigne – arrested after attempting to rescue her twin, Evelyne, Rosamonde was snatched from the executioner's block by her sister, Ysabelle on the morning of Octavus 5th, 1668. Considered one of Montaigne's most wanted criminals by the Parlement.

Miriam du Montaigne – caught and executed by rioting mobs at Chateau du Soleil on Septimus 27th, after returning from Vendel to argue her case with her father over her romantic involvement with Joris Brak.

Lydia du Montaigne – disappeared without trace while investigating the Lockhorn Forest.

Anne du Montaigne – wife of Jean-Marie Rois et Reines du Rogne, Anne du Montaigne is currently the head of the Montaigne Government in Exile in Wische.

Nicolette du Montaigne – hanged on Octavus 11th after attempting to flee Paix to Eisen. The court was convened by Edmond Gatien, calling himself “the Axe”, soon to be Prefect of Paix.

Ysabelle du Montaigne – Pirate, Smuggler, blockade-runner,

and thorn in the side of the Parlement, Ysabelle continues to trouble the new regime.

Dominique du Montaigne – disappeared from her chambers on Septimus 25th, 1668.

Montegue du Montaigne – captured by Fauner Posen in the wake of a gruelling retreat from Ussura at the Battle of Salzsumpf, Corantine 15th, 1668. *L'Empereur* did not wish to pay his ransom, and the Council of Eight could not do so. The populace are informed that General Montegue is dead.

The Allais du Crieux family

Douard Allais du Crieux – hanged from a pear tree on his estate in the earliest days of the Revolution by a mob composed of servants and troublemakers.

Fench Allais du Crieux – caught sneaking out of the Chateau du Soleil disguised as a cook and recognised. Hanged before the city gates on Septimus 29th, 1668.

Julie Allais du Crieux – visiting friends in Vendel during the Revolution. Julie was attacked and killed while walking home on Corantine 25th, 1669. While it appears to be the work of criminals, it is likely that the Committee for National Welfare had a hand in the matter.

The Flaubert du Dore family

Pierre Flaubert du Dore – Pierre's scheme to increase the wealth of his family by converting wheat fields to grazing lands backfired horribly after a bad harvest made matters worse, and famine swept his province as what little was produced was sent to the army in Castille. Pierre was torn limb from limb by starving peasants after his home was pillaged on Octavus 6th, 1668.

Xavier Flaubert du Dore – the ambassador to Ussura was tossed in prison by the Gaius after Montaigne invaded his homeland. He has yet to be released.

Sylvia Flaubert du Dore – the legendary beauty found her suitors more willing to save their own skins than hers, and



was left to the mercy of the mob when they fled. Sylvia was to her surprise unharmed, but has become embittered to the nobility and has betrayed many other nobles to *Le Coiffeur*.

The Riche du Paroisse family

Mariana Riche du Paroisse – hanged by the mob on September 28th, 1668, after lengthy questioning regarding the whereabouts of *L'Empereur*. Mariana knew nothing, but believed her silence and sacrifice would help Leon escape.

Jardin Riche du Paroisse – spirited to Avalon by loyal sailors of the Navy, the retired Admiral now lives in a quiet townhouse on the High Downs of Cardican.

Albion Riche du Paroisse – Albion was able to claim sanctuary within Swordsman's Guild holdings, and now makes a living as a fencing master.

The Leveque d'Aur family

Victor Leveque d'Aur – fought a mob to a standstill while besieged in his carriage en route to Dechaine. He allowed his wife and daughters to escape, and was broken out of prison before his execution by the Knights of the Rose and Cross.

Luc Leveque d'Aur – killed by Castillian sharpshooters from the walls of El Morro two days before the cessation of hostilities between Montaigne and Castille.

Irene Leveque d'Aur – killed by the mob on Octavus 6th, 1668, whilst visiting Pierre Flaubert du Dore.

The Duboise du Arrent family

Samuel Duboise du Arrent – always popular with the peasantry, Samuel Duboise du Arrent was elected Prefect of Arrent after the Revolution by popular acclaim. Samuel sought to serve the people wisely without drawing the attention of the government, and tried to keep Arrent safe during the Frenzy. The Committee for National Welfare distrust Samuel solely due to his leanings, and would execute him if he were not so popular.

Anne Duboise du Arrent – Anne was tossed in prison in the early days of the Revolution, and was never released by the Parlement for fear that doing so would inflame the people against them. However, she had never done anything wrong and was never executed. Anne is still wasting away in a prison cell as the Frenzy reaches its height, old and forgotten.

Georges Duboise du Arrent – see “Tower of Faith”.

Guy Duboise du Arrent – a renowned astronomer and mathematician, Guy was captured while attempting to escape to Vendel by *Le Predateur des Mers*, Admiral Valoix's flagship. He has since found himself pressed into service assisting the Navy's explorations and cartographical endeavours.

The Valroux du Martise family

Madeleine Sabine Valroux du Martise – smuggled to the Eisen border by members of her family, Madeleine now attends the Court in Exile, liasing with the Wische authorities.

Victor Valroux du Martise – used his underworld connections to “disappear” when the Revolution began, and now runs one of Montaigne's most extensive smuggling cartels from the shadows.

Sebastien Valroux du Martise – escorted his grandmother out of Montaigne, and has sworn his blade in the service of Queen Anne. Serves as part of the Queen's personal guard.

The Bisset du Verre family

Claude Bisset du Verre – Claude dodged the first wave of bloodshed only to be executed on the testimony of five Vaticine priests who accused him of provoking the war with Castille in order to bolster his family's finances, on the 3rd of Tertius, 1669.

Maurice Bisset du Verre – Maurice quietly handed his vast fortune over to the Parlement simply to spite his relatives, and has spent the time since travelling the country with the solid fearlessness possessed only by the very old.

Paulette Bisset du Verre – Paulette was arrested by *L'Empereur's* men after publishing a particularly critical work, but the Revolution brought her out of prison before she could be tried, and she was brought into the service of Hubert du Gloyure, for whom she works as a pamphleteer.

Yanick Bisset du Verre – shot dead by Private Jerome in the events that sparked off the Revolution.

The Etalon du Toille family

Tristan Etalon du Toille – Tristan died of natural causes three days before the beginning of the Revolution. After his death, his nephew Philippe came to Charouse to present himself to the *Empereur* as the new head of the family.

Philippe Etalon du Toille – after distinguishing himself in battle against Castille, Philippe was caught in Charouse at the time of the riots. *L'Empereur* commanded him to take what troops could be summoned out against the mobs, but Philippe refused, gallantly claiming that he had not fought for a year in order to spill his countrymen's blood. He was killed by Remy du Montaigne at *L'Empereur's* command.

Marie Etalon du Toille – Marie fled to Eisen as soon as the fighting spread through Charouse and the Provinces, though unlike her contemporaries, she fled to Heilgrund at the invitation of the Eisenfurst there. She is currently a prisoner of fear and shadow, and would dearly love to leave Heilgrundstadt but finds herself afraid to do so, lest she should be hunted down.

The Praise du Rachetisse family

Aurore Praise du Rachetisse – Aurore escaped the clutches of the mob through her Porte sorcery, but was unable to escape from Die Kreuzritter. Her body was found near the border with Eisen, lying with an expression of terror and no visible wounds.

Alasaiz Valoix Praise du Rachetisse – Admiral Valoix turned renegade before the Revolution, and was able to parlay his control of the fleet into a continued tolerance of his nobility and his return to the position of High Admiral. Ever

an astute observer of the political climate, Admiral Valoix put to sea for an extended period after Bloody Feast Day, and was able to prevent himself from being swept away in The Frenzy.

Hughes Praise du Rachetisse – Hughes was one of the crop of powerful Porte sorcerers who vanished like smoke in the wind when the Revolution struck down *L'Empereur*. Rumours persist that he made a deal with the beings on the other side of the Portal to escape, and is now able to see again, though at a terrible price.

Rois et Reines du Rogne

Therese Rois et Reines du Rogne – Therese strode forth to confront the mob storming the Chateau du Soleil on Septimus 27th, scolding them for daring to defy their *Empereur*. The mob was silent for a moment, but a shot was fired from somewhere within the crowd, Therese fell, and the spell was broken. The mob roared forward, and the patriarch of the Rois et Reines family vanished from history.

Gerard Rois et Reines du Rogne – spotted battling agents of the Inquisition among the deserters who accompanied the General, Gerard disappeared along with the General, Orduno, and the rest of the crew of the *Grenouille de Grace*. Much to Admiral Valoix's chagrin, Gerard received a pardon from the Council for defying the orders of *L'Empereur*.

Jean-Marie Rois et Reines du Rogne – Jean-Marie serves as Captain-General of the Musketeers at Wische and husband and confidant to Queen Anne.

The Gaulle dul Motte family

Vincent Gaulle dul Motte – pronounced dead when his estate burned to the ground, Vincent continues his research under the auspices of Die Kreuzritter at Altamira.

Simon Gaulle dul Motte – Simon maintains his art as a bladesmith, and currently crafts the blades issued to the Musketeers. His connections to the Musketeers preserved him from the Frenzy.



Jeanne Gaulle dul Motte – Jeanne found herself in the Dore prefecture, instituting a drainage and replanting project designed to alleviate the problems that Pierre Flaubert du Dore’s greed brought to the land. When the Frenzy took hold in Charouse, Jeanne left the country, and found a welcome home in Wische, where she has found fulfilment attempting to repair the damage wrought by three decades of war.

The Sices du Sices family

Jamais Sices du Sices – see “The Lady’s Fate”.

Louis Sices du Sices – participated in the attack on San Cristobal. Currently serves as part of Admiral Valoix’s handpicked crew.

Diane Sices du Sices – Diane fled to Avalon, and currently instructs in philosophy at the University of Kirkwall, which is oddly receptive to her radical atheism.

The Michel du Gloyure family

Jean-Paul Michele du Gloyure – Jean-Paul began his career in the new government by turning five wanted royalists over to the mob, and ascended to accept a position as Intendent with the Committee of National Welfare. He is now feared by those who once sneered at him, and he has assured the Michel du Gloyure line.

Pierre Michele du Gloyure – Pierre has remained in business as a merchant, and he rarely has trouble with his cargoes. Even at the height of the Frenzy, the cargoes bearing his family seal are considered to be beyond reproach. Pierre has used this covertly to smuggle nobles out of the country for a suitable reward – business is business, after all – but if his father were to find out, it would no doubt mean Pierre’s head.

Alice Michele du Gloyure – Alice works for the Committee of National Welfare, tracking fugitives from Montaigne justice with her father. She joined out of the same desire for revenge that drives her father, but it is less deep-seated with her, and she is unsure of the Committee, though she keeps

this to herself.

The Deneuve du Surlign family

Lilian Deneuve du Surlign – fled the Embassy at Paix on Octavus 10th, 1668, leaving Nicolette du Montaigne to the rioters. Though she made it to Avalon, she blamed herself for Nicolette’s death. Took her own life on Quartus 5th, 1669.

Cedric Deneuve du Surlign – was coerced into tracing bloodlines for the Parlement, in order to eradicate any trace of Du Montaigne blood. Cedric refused, on the grounds that his actions would endanger the lives of innocents. A concerted campaign to break his will instead resulted in breaking his mind, and Cedric has escaped from prison irrevocably mad, scouring the countryside for a saviour that he believes will come to end the tide of blood that engulfs Montaigne.

Georgette Deneuve du Surlign – Georgette managed to reach the border with Wische safely, although she found the Konigreich boring and has decided to travel the world, looking up her web of contacts from Paix.

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Razor Sharp Oalliance

The structure and whims of the royal courts is detailed in the *Noblesse Oblige* ebook, but certain affectations of the nobility can be taken up by others and continue through time. One of these is the use of the simple fan in social situations which is shown in greater detail here.

The History of the Fan

In the warm lands of Castille, Vodacce and the Crescent Empire, women have used fans as a means to cool down for centuries. As corsets and heavy fabrics became fashionable, the women of other countries found a need for them as well. So much so, that in modern Théah the fan has become an es-

sential part of a woman's wardrobe, and has even been adopted by the men of certain countries as well. So in the secretive lands of Théah, it is no surprise that such a commonplace item should become a tool for clandestine communication, and also a weapon.

Even before the invention of fans, people in warm countries knew enough to waft themselves with large stiffened leaves or wickerwork representations of suchlike. However, it is the Crescents who first manufactured fans for the express purpose of cooling themselves. These first fans were no more than wooden lacquered boards with a handle. They began to appear in the Crescent Empire in the Caliphate era around 210 AV, when the peace between tribes brought a new era of art and design. Like so many things from the Crescent Empire they were crafted with pride and artistry, making them very popular objets-d'art. However, they didn't begin exporting them to Théah until 297 AV when the newly formed nation of Castille resumed formal diplomatic ties to the Empire. The Crescents sent fans as small wedding gifts, for such was a tradition among their people. They were unprepared for the demand that ensued, and amazed that such simple and obvious items were unknown in Théah. A booming market very quickly developed, especially in the new republics of Vodacce and Castille. As the amount of Crescents living in the area increased, Castille began producing its own fans. Soon after, especially as their construction was not complicated, most other nations began to do the same.

In cooler nations, the fan still caught on. They were found useful as fire screens. Ladies and gentlemen in their winter castles in front of roaring log fires would use the fan to shield their faces from the heat. However, their popularity had more to do with their design as pieces of art and nobles clamoured to own the very best. They became a display of wealth and style. Men adopted them as much as women did, often having them painted with the crest of the noble in question. This allowed them to be used for bidding or gambling by holding them aloft to stake claims or wager. In battle it was not uncommon for them to become a small personal standard and a means for signalling to troops. Men's fans were often painted with more masculine subjects such as horses, battles, weapons and family crests, but also the de-

piction of insects and bugs in the design designated a masculine fan. Ladies fans most often depicted flowers, but also showed scenes of nature, birds and lace patterns.

However, for all their popularity in Théah, the next development would come from Cathay. In 1567, Marcus Paulos (a noted Vodacce explorer, and an admirer of Cristóbal Gallegos) decided that if he couldn't travel the great western ocean, there was plenty to discover in the opposite direction. He managed to bargain access to Cathay and travelled the land having many adventures for around twenty years. One of his last adventures occurred in 1585, when he managed to meet Princess Shan Qui Ling, youngest daughter of the Emperor at the time. As a gift Marcus presented her with a Théan fan, which she found very amusing. The Cathayans had seen such things many years before and had since then improved on the design. The Princess presented Marcus with a new folding fan, built out of slats of wood connected by paper or decorated silk. Sadly it is the only thing Marcus was allowed to return home with. They had allowed him to come as a guest, but they wanted their secrets to remain. The Cathayans confiscated everything he had collected, including his journal before they allowed him to leave. However, they could not take the fan from him as it was a gift from a royal princess.

Marcus returned to Vodacce dejected, having left many wonders behind and unable to remember every detail of his journeys. However, the one gift he had come back with was an instant success. It made a few people believe his wild tales, but more importantly created another explosion in the design and artistry of the fan. Theans took the new folding design to heart, and experimented feverishly with new materials and forms for the device. They began with the Cathayan design of paper linking wooden slats. However they soon moved onto designs using lace or silk to link metal, ivory, bone and even feather slats. The more expensive versions added inlay of tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl and even precious stones. These new types of fan fell open and closed far more easily. They were not as simple to paint designs on as wood or paper, but could become far more elaborate constructions.

In 1670, this is the form of the modern fan. It is still used

for cooling down, but it has also developed a secret language all of its own.

Fanology

The fact that fans had been used on the battlefield as a signalling device was not lost on the people of society. Over time, a signalling language has developed to allow whole conversations to be carried out across a ballroom during parties and state affairs. As you might expect, such conversations are usually for the purpose of arranging secret liaisons of a romantic nature. However, with there being so many secret societies in Théah, quite a few have added new codes of their own. This is especially useful, as everyone in society knows the fan code, so people observed using it to communicate during social affairs are usually assumed to be pursuing a romantic conversation rather than a political one.

As fans are more popular now among women rather than men, much of the code is designed to allow a lady to reply to a paramour. In such a way she can talk to a gentleman and maintain an image of chastity. However, in many countries the gentleman will be carrying a fan as well, allowing the conversation to be conducted exclusively by signals. A character's knowledge of the fan code is governed by the Etiquette knack (or skill for D20™). However a roll and keep GM who wishes to restrict this knowledge may add 'Fanology' as a separate knack in the courtier skill. You may wish to add 'Fan Crafting' as a knack to the Merchant skill (or as an option for the craft skill in D20™). This ability governs the ability to construct fans in many different styles out of a variety of materials, but any painted designs would need to be added by a skilled artist.

There are a few general rules to the fan code. On the whole, the fan on the right indicates an affirmative answer, whereas the left means a negative one. This need not mean just the hand it is held in, it may be (for example) the side of the face it is touched to as well. An open fan suggests the bearer is inviting conversation or assignation, but a closed fan asks to be left alone. Finally the faster the movement of fanning is made, the greater the passion or ardour on the bearer. Meaning slow and languid fanning signifies boredom and disinterest. There are a huge amount of other signs, which are broken down below into three categories.

Fan Placement

The simplest signals are based where and how the fan is held.

Fan held in front of the face in the right hand - "Follow me."

Fan held in front of the face with the left hand - "I am desirous of your acquaintance."

Fan held closed over the left ear - "I wish to get rid of you."

Holding the fan half open across the face (as if shading oneself from the sun) - "I don't like you."

Letting the fan rest on the right cheek - "Yes."

Letting the fan rest on the left cheek - "No."

Resting the fan handle against the lips - "I want you to kiss me."

Resting the fan blades against the lips or chin - "I don't trust you."

Resting the fan near the heart - "You have won my love." Or even "My love for you is breaking my heart"

Carrying the fan open, in the right hand - "You are too willing."

Carrying the fan open in the left hand - "Come and talk to me."

Carrying the fan closed, hanging from her left hand - "I'm engaged."

Carrying the fan closed, hanging from her right hand - "I want to be engaged."

Also, the number of blades on the fan opened out can show the answer to a numerical question, such as "At what hour?"

Fan Movement

The next level of fan language involved specific movements of the fan, and often indicates replies to questions. Facial expressions can add emphasis to just about all of these signals.

Fanning yourself slowly - "I'm not intrigued by you." (lack of interest)

Fanning yourself quickly - "I want you." (passion)

Running her fingers through the fan's ribs - "I want to talk to you."

Twirling the fan in the left hand - "We are being watched."

Twirling the fan in the right hand - "I love another."

Drawing the fan through the hand - "I hate you!"

Drawing the fan across the cheek - "I love you!"

Drawing the fan across the eyes (as if wiping a tear) - "I am sorry."

Drawing the fan across the forehead - "You have changed."

Opening and closing the fan several times - "You are cruel."

Quickly and impetuously closing the fan - "I'm jealous."

Hitting her hand's palm - "Love me!"

Abrupt threatening movements with a closed fan - "Do not be so careless or hasty."

Presenting the fan shut - "Do you love me?"

Passing the fan from hand to hand - "I see that you are looking at another woman."

Dropping the fan - "I belong to you." also "I give up, I am yours."

Complex Movements

The last category combines both of the above, and is reserved for the advanced student.

Touching a closed fan to the right eye – “When may I be allowed to see you?”

Pressing a half opened fan to the lips – “You may kiss me.”

Clasping hands together while holding an open fan – “Forgive me.”

Covering the left ear with an open fan – “Do not betray our secret.”

Hiding the eyes behind an open fan – “I love you.”

Shutting a fully opened fan slowly – “I promise to marry you.”

Touching a finger to the tip of the fan – “I wish to speak with you.”

Tapping the fan ribs with one's index finger when it is closed - “We have to talk.”

Opening the fan wide - “Wait for me.”

Placing the fan behind the head - “Do not forget me.”

Placing the fan behind the head, but with finger extended - “Goodbye.”

Fanning herself with the left hand. - “Don't flirt with that woman!”

The lady appears briefly at the balcony, slowly fanning herself, and returns inside, shutting the balcony door. - “I can't leave to meet with you.”

The lady appears briefly at the balcony, excitedly fanning herself, and quickly goes inside, leaving the balcony door open. - “I will be able to leave and meet you soon, but not yet.”

Brushing her hair away from her forehead. - “Don't forget me.”

Closely examining a decorated fan. - “I like you.”

Secret Society Codes

There are a few new signals that have been added to the code by the various secret societies of Théah. Very few people know these movements, and many societies use other variants besides. For instance, some of the signals of the coat code (such as colour) have been adopted by the Rilasciare using fans. However the more common signals have become useful for lovers as well as spies and become part of the code.

Meeting the gaze of an ally, face covered by an open fan - “Tonight, you do not know me.”

Deftly fanning the room rather than oneself. - “This place is dangerous to our society”

Brushing a finger across an open fan, and then shutting it abruptly. - “The scheduled meeting is cancelled.”

Running a finger across an open fan continuously – “You are being followed, chased or even hunted.”

Fanning someone else - “Your message has been delivered safely.”

Fanning another and then snapping the fan shut abruptly - “Your message was intercepted.”

Tapping a ring on the right hand with a closed fan - “The money has been paid/received.”

Tapping a ring on the left hand with a closed fan - “We are in need of funds for our adventure.”

Opening and shutting the fan – “Things are not ready, we need more time.”

Fans across Théah

Avalon

The Glamour Isles are not always a very warm place, and so fans are not as popular here as elsewhere. However, in the days of endless summer brought by the Sidhe, fans for ladies are making a big comeback. However, this is not the case for the Inish and Highlanders. In the highlands, snow is not unknown in summer. So fans are considered pointless and effeminate, by the women as well as the men. The Inish have a similar attitude to the highlanders, and (as usual) have added another twist. Inish jennys, keen to ape the upper classes have taken to using fans with great enthusiasm (and not a little sarcasm). This has become so much the case that, among the Inish, a fan is an unseemly accoutrement for a woman of good breeding.

Castille

Castillians, both male and female cannot get along without a fan. The hot summers of Castille make them essential for both genders. Men see nothing feminine about owning a fan, although the designs for masculine fans are very different. They tend to use less ribbons, and are made with lace and silk of darker colours, in counterpoint to the bright fans of the ladies. Fans have become such an essential, that many Castillian dances require a fan. The powerful movements and rhythmic stamping of dances like flamenco are often punctuated by the snapping of a fan. While the fans of Castille are not always the best or most elegant of fans, they are produced here in greater numbers than anywhere else.

Eisen

The Eisen see no use for a fan in their blasted and wintery country. The women of Eisen like pretty things as much as anyone else, but they have better things (like food and warm clothes) to spend their money on. However, the fan was once recognised as a battlefield signal, so there are many historical fans left in Eisen families. They are all of the old

solid wooded board variety, and have been passed down as family heirlooms for many years. The most prized are those who were used by famous leaders in important battles. The superstitious Eisen often feel something of the leadership and skill of the general remains on the fan and treat it with appropriate respect. This is also the case for fans carried by famous cowards or unlucky generals who lost their battles, and such items are thought cursed.

Montaigne

In Montaigne, the fan is king. Here more than anywhere else fans and their secret language are used in society. Before the revolution, fan making in Montaigne was without peer. The nobility spent vast sums of money on fans, wanting only the best and most unique designs. Consequently the fan makers experimented with all manner of designs and materials in their quest to create the most stunning fans. Since the revolution, fans are still as popular as they once were. The hypocrisy of the leaders of the Revolution is such that they condemn the nobility but still do their best to ape what they see as civilised. It is also against the spirit of the Revolution to stop producing something that the Montaigne citizens are renowned for their skill in producing. Production is not what it was, but in general, the best and most inventive fan designs are still those of Montaigne origin.

Ussura

Like so many things, in fan design Ussura is far behind the rest of Théah. They still use the old solid wooden design, but have become extremely adept at painting them. The Ussuran styles in this design are unique to Ussura and rival those of the Crescent Empire. They have no use for cooling down in such inclement climate, but fans still serve the ladies as fire screens. The Boyars also still use them as gambling and voting markers as well.

Vendel / Vestenmannavnjar

The use of fans on the island mirrors the politics of the two cultures that live there. As fans are mark of nobility and wealth, the Vendel ladies can't buy enough of them from Montaigne (although they have yet to catch on with the gentlemen). To the Vesten, fans are pointless and expensive, proving in their eyes how those same traits lie in abundance with the Vendel.

Vodacce

With their links to the Crescents and the same hot weather as the Castillians, fans are extremely popular in Vodacce. They are considered exclusively to be a feminine device, as no man should let heat bother him. However, some also say that a man holding a fan cannot be holding a dagger in the same hand. In a land of duplicity, the secret language of the fan is extremely prevalent, and not just for courtesans. Just about everyone is familiar with it, regardless of sex or station, as it doesn't pay in Vodacce to be unfamiliar with any secret tongue. Interestingly, fans are the only things considered fitting for both courtesans and Strega, although the designs differ. Fate witch fans are usually black or dark, made with very delicate strands of lace carefully woven together. The fans of courtesans are bright and vivid, but never gaudy, often showing several layers of colour when examined closely. Vodacce is also one of the premiere fan producing nations, and is beginning to take control of the market. They have given some noted fan crafters from Montaigne safe haven since the revolution, which has improved their production no end. The Vodacce seem set on stealing the crowns of quality and quantity from both Montaigne and Castille.

Adventure Hooks

- 1) An Eisen lord comes to the players looking for their help to find his fan. He has lost an old family heirloom, and cannot face his family unless he finds it. He doesn't want to ask his soldier friends to help. If word got round about it, there would be the additional embarrassment of being 'the soldier who got upset because he lost his fan'. As the fan is an old Eisen one, you may decide there is indeed a spirit inside it. This could be the soul of a great general looking to be placed in the hands of a great warrior, or looking to fight in one last battle. However it could be the soul of a terrible coward looking to show the world he was actually brave by sending the owner on a killing spree.
- 2) A lady at a ball signals to a character using the fan code, but unfortunately he fails to understand her. Later that same lady is seen being bundled into a carriage. Can the character remember the signals she was making so he can find out what they mean? Will that help them find the lady? Are her

abductors part of a secret society, or is this merely an enraged husband looking to punish his wife for an attempted dalliance?

Éventail d'Acier sword school

Quite recently a new sword school has developed that is gaining a little popularity among the women of Théah. However, this has more to do with the inventors of the school than the style itself.

When the Montaigne noblewoman Janelle Charmine met the Castillian diplomatic attaché Nero Raimundo at a banquet in 1667 it was love at first sight. They became close and courted for a year, in an affair of such romance it was the talk of the court. However, almost on the day they were to announce their marriage, war broke out between Castille and Montaigne. Finding themselves on the opposite sides of battle their respective families refused to allow the union. In response, the two lovers eloped, and ran away together to seek their fortune. They would have starved, but for the publicity their relationship had attracted. People who had heard their story were only too happy to help, feeling it made them part of one of the greatest romances on Théah. Anyone who met the couple could see how they really did care for each other and no one had the heart to turn them away.

However, the lovers knew that scandal and romance did not make a living. Luckily, both Nero and Janelle were scholars; in fact, their mutual passion for archaeology and exploration was one of the foundations of their relationship. They became full field agents of the Explorer's Society (of which they were both lay members) and set off for adventure together. The society was happy to help, as the couple's fame helped bring new sponsorship to the organisation.

Unfortunately, adventuring was not something Janelle was quite suited to. She still wore the sort of clothes you would expect a Montaigne lady of breeding to wear, no matter where she was. As she refused to compromise her fashion, she got quite used to her dress getting torn and her hair becoming a mess. She would at least start out an adventure looking her best, and not every trip led to mud and brambles. However, what she couldn't abide was the amount of fans she got through. The delicate Montaigne creations she car-

ried were usually the first things to get destroyed in the jungles and ruins that she and Nero adventured through. Getting messy wasn't a problem for her, she loved her adventuring life with her husband, but she still wished she could keep a fan for more than five minutes.

Nero, ever the dedicated husband, was sensitive to his wife's distress. On their first wedding anniversary he gave her a special gift. At great expense he had a new fan made for her, one that would last. The blades were made with thin plates of steel and then had small holes drilled in them. The holes allowed lace and silk weaving to hold the fan together. It was a little heavy, but it was beautiful and durable, much like the lady herself, and Janelle loved it.

It took them a good few months to notice another use for the fan. On an expedition to the Midnight Archipelago they came under attack from angry natives. Nero, an excellent swordsman, was overrun forcing Janelle to have to defend herself. She discovered her fan to be the only weapon to hand, and was surprised to see how well it parried the spears of her attackers. With Janelle able to defend herself, the pressure on Nero was relieved and he was able to beat off the tribesmen.

The couple realised that Janelle's fan could serve a more useful purpose and began to develop a new technique to wield it as a weapon. Soon after, they had the idea to sharpen the ends of the blades, making it a clubbing and parrying weapon when closed and an edged attacking weapon when open. Nero adapted some of his skills with the Swanson school into the mix as well, making the fan a dangerous weapon. There are some people who believe that the idea is not as original as the couple say it is. It is suggested that they learnt the skill on a secret trip to Cathay, where such things are supposedly commonplace. However, there has been no evidence to suggest this is more than jealous rumour.

There are very few masters of the school. It is very new, and Janelle and Nero are rarely in one place long enough to teach anyone. The school does interest a few ladies of the court, but such ladies never pursue anything for more than a few moments. Anyone (male or female) who wants to become a

trained warrior spends their time with a sword, so the school is thought of as a fashionable distraction for the ladies. The school's strength is that it is an unexpected weapon, and behaves very differently to anything an attacker may have fought before. The school teaches a student to use the fan primarily for defence, keeping attackers at bay. Great sweeps and florid slashes are made with an open fan, which is snapped open and closed as the fight progresses. The weakness of the style is the short reach of the fan, and that it can only make slashing and not lunging attacks. Once you know the pattern and range of the attacks you can keep distance and attack when you see an opening.

Country of Origin: Explorer's Society

Basic Curriculum: Fan, Courtier

Swordsman's Knacks: Conceal, Pommel Strike, Whirl, Exploit Weakness (Éventail d'Acier)

Apprentice: Few people expect an attack to come from a lady's fan. So you gain a free raise for your first combat action (such as active defence or attacking) in any fight. The GM may negate this bonus if you are fighting someone who will remember your skills from your last encounter.

Journeyman: You have now learnt to use the fan in either hand, negating the off hand penalty. You can also use the cracking sound of the fan opening to surprise and distract your opponent. You add 5 to your passive or active defence and to the difficulty of any attempt your opponent makes to use a swordsman's knack against you. However, you may not use this ability in any phase you attempt a Pommel Strike (as the fan must be closed) or any phase that you do not have the fan readied for combat.

Master: You have now learnt to use two fans in combat. You gain one additional action dice each round. The speed of your attacks also allows you to re-roll one of your action dice as if you had the advantage 'Combat Reflexes'. If you already have the advantage, you can use it in addition to bonuses from your mastery abilities (allowing two re-rolls). If you have mastered this school you may consider it to be a 'dagger only' sword school for the purposes on combining it

in grand mastery.

Fan (New Martial Skill)

This skill teaches how to use a fan as an offensive weapon. Not just any fan will do, it must be made of metal to cause damage, and be solid enough to parry an attack. However, a wooden fan can function as a form of protection. You cannot attack with it, but you can make one active defence, or use it for passive defence once in combat. Unfortunately, doing so utterly destroys the fan, reducing it to splinters and lace. A steel fan is considered a 1K2 weapon, and they must be made individually by a skilled craftsman. They are not very difficult to make, but no artisan makes them without a commission as there is no demand. Such fans cost around 30 guilders and take around a week to produce.

Basic Knacks

Parry (Fan): The easiest manoeuvres to make with a steel fan are defensive. The fan is kept closed and used much like a dagger to parry attacks.

Advanced Knacks

Attack (Fan): This skill allows the fan to be opened in combat and used in a slicing motion to take advantage of the sharpened steel blades. Much of the action is in the wrist making it difficult to do much damage. Targets are usually vital spots such as the neck and arms of the opponent.

Footwork: Distancing and footwork are very important to any fighter, more so with the fan, as its short reach requires the user to remain nimble.

New Porté Tricks

Nothing symbolises the Montaigne nobility more than their use of Porté sorcery. With the fall of the Montanus line and the persecution of nobles, the open use of Porté has diminished. However, the power itself allowed a great many skilled practitioners to flee the mobs and now the magic is found scattered throughout Theah like at no time before. Many groups who oppose sorcery, such as the Rilasciare and the Kreuzritter, were involved in the revolution to directly counter its use and have taken their shadow war against its practitioners wherever they go. With centuries to develop their arts and now with the added incentive of preserving

their own way of life, many Porté sorcerors have honed their art to allow new tricks and uses as suggested here.

The Holding Boxes.

This excellently crafted pair of 10" wide, 10" deep, 15" long ash wood boxes appear to have no seam or line or lock marking how it opens. It simply looks to be one solid, but hollow, piece of wood. The box lacks all ornamentation save a deep red finish and a small silver concave plate at the top of the boxes.

The box is opened when a Porté mage applies a small drop of his or her blood (a non-Porté mage can open the box, as long as they have a store of Porté rich blood on hand) onto the silver disk. When this is done there's a very slight whisper quite rip-like noise and the lid-line appears and the top of the box can be removed and it's interior revealed. The interior is the same as the exterior save there's a slight 'wet, sweet smell'.

The boxes can be opened at the same time, but lore on the boxes suggest to do so is slightly less dangerous then opening one's eyes while on the Pathway. The extreme rarity of the boxes along with these possible consequences discourages any testing of the situation.

When an item is placed in a box, it is simultaneously available in the other box, once the primary box is closed, by simply placing the lid back on (where the lid line disappears once again). The distance between the boxes physical location is irrelevant. If Duc August Danceny du Rosemonde (IC, page 72) is at his mansion in Montaigne puts a textbook, note, apple or pistol into the box and seals it shut, then René Laurent who is abroad in Pavtlow can open the box in his possession and remove the item; which is complete, whole and unmolested.

The box is airtight so items would be affected as they normally would be if put in such a container. A lit candle, for instance, put into the box would burn out due to a lack of oxygen. While very, very sturdy the box is not immune to physical trauma; the destruction of one box destroys any mystical properties of its twin.

While Porté mages can trade items, the relationship of the individuals can make this very difficult indeed, especially to students and adepts of the art. Such boxes split between a ship and its port make communication and the passing of minor items ridiculously easy, so long as there's a supply of Porté blood. However, only the most important and elite ships might have a box like this.

Often times, those who use the boxes will make an arrangement so as not to open the boxes at the same time.

Writing Mirrors.

These fancy, delicate mirrors are trimmed in silver and studded with eight deep crimson rubies, one at each corner and in the middle of the sides. The mirrors have a matching ruby and silver necklace or ring along with a glass and silver ink-vial and pen.

To use the device the Porté mage makes a Resolve + Bring roll on the mirror (normal difficulty as per the Montaigne Nations Book, page 78) to awaken the mirror's abilities. If they have drop of the person's blood to which they are communicating with, the roll's difficulty is -10. On the other end the necklace or ring chime slightly to alert them that they are being called upon. Once the wanted communicator grasps the other mirror, the two (or more) mirror holding folk may begin to correspond.

To communicate the mages must then write using Blooded ink (TN 15 to craft) on the mirror with the silver tipped matching pen. As they write, the words appear on the receiving mirror's surface. At first they appear backwards, but after a moment they blur and then right themselves. As noted more then two mirrors can communicate at the same time, but each person summoned after the first adds +5 to the normal Resolve + Bring roll.

Doorway Chime.

These single, delicate crystal bells can be hung in a room up to a 50-foot square. Multiple bells can cover larger rooms but a bell does not work over multiple, smaller rooms; even the most slight of walls blocks the nature of the bells.

When hung, the bells chime if a Porté doorway is opened



within their presence. While not loud the sound is unusual, some might say “unearthly”. The alarm does not always give a lot of warning; roll a D10, taking half the die value rolled as Actions worth of warning with a minimum of 1 Action.

Porté Candles.

These white candles have spidery veins of red twisting throughout them. When both ends of the candles are lit and a Porté mage sits in close proximity for the hour that the candles burn, they find that all things involving Porté are easier, clearer; but at the cost of things in and of Théah being slightly less clear. The candles will not ignite, burn or melt at all while in the Walkway, if brought lit they extinguish immediately. The effect lasts for three hours.

The Summoning Ring.

The bearer of this ring may use this device to summon any object he has blooded straight to his hands as a free action so long as the Bring check is successful. The user must make a Resolve + Bring at +20 to the TN. If the roll is failed the ring bearer must make a Mastery Level + Wits check or else be affected by portal sickness, lose the bleeding effect upon the item as well as the Action itself. Note that there’s a 1 in 10 chance the item is lost on the Walkway, never to be seen again.

Sending

Porté sorcerers can reach out to a blooded object and drop something there rather than pull it towards themselves. This allows them to place an object in a blooded box or perhaps even place poison in a blooded cup.

Costs for Porté Sorcery

With the fall of the noble classes, many former pampered sorcerers have had to find a way to make up for their loss in status and wealth. While few would consider themselves for most jobs, many have seen the advantage of their art and that people are willing to pay for services they can provide. For centuries, the use of Porté has allowed the Montaigne to have the best maps in Theah, but now will dozens of mages selling their skills, this advantage is open to anyone who can afford it. Porté has also become a way for anyone with means to transport items or people across the lands, taking the art to places that it had never reached before. Many Porté

sorcerers have in fact found themselves hired onto ships in the great new Age of Exploration, mainly by Avalon, Castille or the Explorer Society.

####TABLE OF COSTS OF PORTE SERVICES####

Prolong Portal (New d20 Feat)

Requirement : Half blooded or Full blooded porte sorcerer

This sorcerer may open portals which stay open for longer than normal. While a portal will normally close 2 rounds after it is opened, anyone with this feat may choose upon creating the portal to allow it to remain open for ten rounds. This allows more people to use the same portal.

Synchronize Portal (New d20 Feat)

Requirement : Prolong Portal

Once per round, this sorcerer has learned to bring two portals within fifty feet into synch with each other as a free action with a successful Porte check (DC 15, DC 25 if either portal was created by another porte sorcerer). The connection only lasts for the rest of the round.

If successful, anything entering the first portal immediately emerges from the second portal. One use of this power is to prevent another porte sorcerer from escaping by synchronizing his portal to your own, so he emerges directly in front of you rather than at his chosen destination. Another use of the power is to allow attacks through the portal. The attacker stabs into one portal and the blade emerges from the other portal. Ranged attacks and unarmed attacks are also possible, but see Passing Through Portals. Any attacks made are at -5 to hit and have a 10% concealment penalty, if the attacker is a non-porte sorcerer, the attacks are at -10 and have a 25% concealment penalty. If an item is still extended through two synchronized portals at the end of the round, the far end is automatically pulled back through the portal.

Anyone who passes between the portals with their eyes open catches a glimpse of what lies between them. Also anyone who makes a melee attack through the portal and misses by 15 or more passes partially into the portal with their eyes open. In either case, he is instantly driven mad. The charac-

ter immediately becomes catatonic and does not respond to any stimuli. This state lasts for between one and ten days. At the end of it, a porte portal appears beneath the person and he simply falls into it. Never to be seen again.

Prolong Portal (New d10 Knack)

This sorcerer may open portals which stay open for longer than normal. While a portal will normally close ten phases after it is opened, anyone with this knack may choose upon creating the portal to allow it to remain open for two extra phases per rank of this knack. This is primarily used to allow more than one person to use a portal.

Synchronize Portal (New d10 Knack)

Once per round, this sorcerer has learned to bring two portals within fifty feet into synch with each other as a free action with a successful Porte check (roll Resolve+Porte Mastery level and keep Resolve. TN 15, TN 25 if either portal was created by another porte sorcerer). The connection only lasts for the rest of the round.

If succesful, anything entering the first portal immediately emerges from the second portal. One use of this power is to prevent another porte sorcerer from escaping by synchronizing his portal to your own, so he emerges directly in front of you rather than at his chosen destination. Another use of the power is to allow attacks through the portal. The attacker stabs into one portal and the blade emerges from the other portal. Ranged attacks and unarmed attacks are also possible, but see Passing Through Portals. Any attacks have their TN to hit increased by 15, 25 for non-porte sorcerers. If an item is still extended through two synchronized portals when the effect ends, the far end is automatically pulled back through the portal.

Anyone who passes between the portals with their eyes open catches a glimpse of what lies between them. Also anyone who makes a melee attack through the portal and misses by 15 or more passes partially into the portal with their eyes open. In either case, he is instantly driven mad. The character immediately becomes catatonic and does not respond to any stimuli. This state lasts for between one and ten days. At the end of it, a porte portal appears beneath the person and he simply falls into it. Never to be seen again.

Passing Through Portals

Porte is one of the most popular sorceries within Theah, but many game masters have trouble visuallizing all of the details of it. Here is an example of a game session in which Porte is used properly.

After Timothy, a villainous porte sorcerer, seduced Monica's sister, she vowed to kill him. After months of pursuit, she's finally cornered him. Her partner, another porte sorcerer named Felipe, hopes to prevent her from throwing her life away before she can accomplish her mission.

Gamemaster : Everyone has a weapon drawn? Alright, go ahead and roll initiative. (He rolls for Timothy and gets 2, 2, 4)

Monica : 1, 5, 9

Felipe : 5, 7, 8,10.

Gamemaster : Ok, you're up Monica.

Monica : "You're going to pay for your crimes, you son of a vomitous pig." I thrust towards him, attack is 19.

Gamemaster : He sways to the side and your weapon passes by him. (Timothy's footwork defense is 20). He stabs towards Felipe. I get a 25 on my attack which is enough to hit. You take 8 points of damage.

Felipe : I easily make my Wound check. Passes the GM a note asking to attempt to blood the sword.

Gamemaster : Nods and passes the note back with a TN 25 target number. Felipe rolls and succeeds. "While I realize you would love to feast upon my entrails, I am afraid I have another pressing engagement." Timothy plunges his hands into the air before him and grasps wildly for a moment. A sickening smell assaults your nose just as you see his hands disappear from view in a bloody rift in the very air. Pulling his hands apart, he rips the opening wide enough for his shoulders to fit through as he pulls his hands back, you see that his arms are covered in gore up to the elbow. (Phase 2)

Monica : "No! You will not escape justice time." I use an interrupt action to attack him!

Gamemaster : Sorry, interrupt actions cannot be used for attacks. Before you can move, he leaps into the portal and disappears. Phase 5. Felipe, you have two actions and then it's Monica's turn.

Monica : I leapt into the portal after him!

Felipe : "NO! The portal is filled with death and insanity. If you go

in without any better idea of what you're doing, you are doomed."

Monica : "I'm not going to just let him get away."

Felipe : "We won't. I blooded his sword before he left. I can lead us straight to him, but you have to do it my way. Take my hand and close your eyes. Don't open them and don't let go. No matter what you hear, understand?"

Gamemaster : Which hand do you hold, Felipe?

Felipe : Her right hand.

Monica : I nod and obey his instructions.

Felipe : I pull her into the portal and use my walk to bring us to my blood upon the sword. I get a 27 on my walk.

Gamemaster : As you pass through the portal, you feel something warm and wet splash over you, as if you'd stepped through the rain while passing from a house to a coach. However, this isn't water. It smells of blood left to rot in the sun for hours and you gag slightly. The ground beneath your feet seems somewhat soft, as if it were boggy. Felipe, you feel the pull of your mark ahead of you and press onward, pulling the reluctant Monica along behind you. For several long moments, there is no sound beyond your own breathing. Then you hear a strong breeze blowing past you, even though you don't feel it upon your damp skin. After another moment, the wind resolves into words whispering into your ears. The voice is strangely distorted and faint. "You shouldn't have followed me, Monica. You are in my realm now. Taste my blade!"

Monica : I draw my sword and look around for Timothy!

Gamemaster : When you draw your sword, you instinctively use your right hand, letting go of Felipe.

Felipe : When I feel her let go, I grab for her again and shout out, "No, don't let go!"

Gamemaster : Alright. Felipe, make a Resolve check, target number 5, to keep your eyes closed.

Felipe : 29.

Gamemaster : Alright. You easily keep your eyes shut when you grab for her. You hear a hideous scream of agony and terror that cuts off abruptly. The voice of the wind cackles hideously. "Poor Monica. She just wouldn't listen to you. You've lost her now. Unless you'd care to follow her? I could show you just where to go, if you just opened your eyes...."

Felipe : No. I continue pursuing Timothy.

Monica : What do I see?

Gamemaster : I'm sorry. The sights are too much for your fragile human mind. Monica is never seen again.

Smelling Like a Lily

This adventure requires the use of the Montaigne Revolution book, the Knights and Musketeers book and Rapier's Edge. Set in Montaigne in the waning days of the Revolution, it is intended to help a group move through the days between the Tower of Faith in Rapier's Edge (page 37) and the conversation between Dominique du Montaigne and General Montague as described in Rapier's Edge (page 136).

Outline

A short time ago, Eisenfurst Fauner Posen held General Montague du Montaigne hostage and demanded a high ransom for his return, a ransom that Montaigne was not willing to pay because it was in the midst of a Revolution against the nobles who had controlled it so long. However, Cardinal Durkheim ransomed Montague from Fauner Posen so he could free the Montaigne Bishops from a secret prison (as detailed in the Tower of Faith). But now, before he acts further in restoring the Montaigne throne, he wants to know what has become of his wife and their child. A group calling themselves the Rye Grin has secretly informed him they have the knowledge he seeks, so Montague is sending a group of messengers to Charouse to meet with them. The easiest method of introducing the heroes to this adventure is to have them serve as these messengers.

After bluffing their way into the city, the messengers meet with the Rye Grin at a restaurant known as the Cercle du Chant. The Rye Grin devoted themselves to the belief that no man should pay for the crimes of another and so dedicated themselves to rescuing as many nobles from the Revolutionary forces as possible. At the Cercle du Chant, Antoinette Fletcher, the restaurant's owner and one of the leaders of the Rye Grin, informs the messengers that their spies within the Revolutionary Government tell them that the Revolutionaries have spotted Dominique du Montaigne. They know she will be attending the Lily Festival during the first week of Tertius at the city of Lierre-Vallee. Nestled in a val-

ley in the Province of Aur, the city's festival attracts thousands, even in these hard times, though the official Festival has been pruned to a single day. Thousands of blooming lilies are spread throughout the town and each attendant receives a lily to wear upon their lapel. During the dances and festivities, people may only dance with partners wearing the same color lily, though couples normally are given matching flowers. Since Aur has been largely untouched by the Terror, rumors state that several other prominent nobles will attend the popular Festival as well. Therefore, the Revolutionary Guards plan to be on hand to deal with any nobles who attend. Further, the Festival begins in only 3 days time, barely enough time to reach Lierre-Vallee. The only additional assistance the Rye Grin can provide is that they have an agent in the area. Her name is Cecilia and will respond to the phrase "The darkest day is one that begins well." Members of the Rye Grin can also serve as heroes for this adventure. The details of this meeting are left for individual game masters.

Unfortunately, the Committee of General Welfare suspects they have spies within their midst and have placed Charouse under quarantine. In fact, they intentionally leaked the information about Dominique du Montaigne in order to lure noble sympathizers out of the city. No one is allowed to leave the city for forty-eight hours and anyone who forces their way out are considered traitors to the Revolution. While the quarantine cannot last longer because the city will starve, if the heroes wait for it to end, they cannot possibly reach the Festival in time.

The heroes must then venture across the troubled lands of Montaigne to the city of Lierre-Vallee. They may encounter lynch mobs and other random scenes of the lands ravaged by the intermittent fighting between the warring factions. Focus should remain on the need to move swiftly in order to reach the Festival on time. If the heroes use a carriage or wagon, each day they must make a Resolve + drive carriage check TN 15, or TN 10 if driving day and night, to reach the Festival on time. If they use horses, use Resolve + riding checks instead. On foot, the heroes cannot reach the Festival on time. Do not tell them what the target number for these checks is. If they successfully make raises, they arrive an hour earlier at Festival than indicated in that encounter. If

they fail, they arrive an hour later than indicated at the Festival. Regardless of anything else, the heroes must encounter the Tabards Noire while journeying across Montaigne.

The Lily Festival should require a number of different skills as the heroes attempt to find Dominique while avoiding several hostile forces present. In addition to the Revolutionary Forces, Simon Roublard and his Tabards Noire are also present. The Tabards Noire is a group of former Musketeers and nobles who desire a return to the noble control of Montaigne and their leader Roublard believes only Dominique can rule. Those without social skills should find themselves at a disadvantage in gathering information and preparations while the finale calls for more martial means. Begin by allowing the heroes to arrive at the town and get lilies.

Weapons are not allowed within the festival, even for members of the Swordsman Guild, but the heroes will undoubtedly find means to avoid this restriction. While mingling with the crowds, the heroes will likely find that not all is what it seems and trouble is brewing. Things come to a head at dusk when the entire festival begins dancing and traps are sprung.

However, during the confusion, Roublard escapes with Dominique. To accomplish their mission, the heroes must track Roublard down and defeat him. Once accomplished, they can convince Dominique to meet with her husband, but it is likely that the tale ends tragically as her mind cannot take the strain of the past few months.

Act I - Charouse

The Jeans

Not every opponent is a devious and skilled villain. In fact, Jean Claude and Jean Pierre are simply a pair of farm boys who joined the Montaigne Revolution to avoid starving. They do their best to obey the orders of their superiors and don't have the brains to really consider the implications of their orders. They are intended to be played for humor, rather than a true challenge. They lead a group of brutes who possess strength and skill at arms, but no greater intelligence than their commanders.

You ride over the top of a small rise and see Charouse spread out ahead of you. You notice that there is a cleared area out from the buildings. Between a pair of warehouses are nestled two small shacks connected with a single white beam. The shacks are poorly built shelter from the rain large enough to house a dozen men. You also see two men dressed in rough homespun topped with the tabard of the Revolutionary forces. Both are large men with the muscular build and small stature of farmers. One is walking along the white beam while the other berates him. Despite the roadblock, nothing prevents you from simply riding around the warehouses and into the city until the man on the beam calls out to you, "Hoy! You want to go into the city, you gots to show me your papers."

The other man suddenly shouts, "Hey, Jean Claude. They gots to show ME their papers. I'm in command."

"I know that, Jean Pierre. But you were so busy yelling at me, I thought I'd handle them."

"You? You couldn't handle a group of six year olds!"

"Hey! That's not fair. They out-numbered me. They had me surrounded."

"They were six! Now shut up while I deal with these people."

Jean Claude and Jean Pierre are in command of this outpost. Their orders are to prevent anyone entrance into the city without proper papers. Each person must have a document identifying their name, birth place, and description which is then notarized by a clerk of the Revolution and officially sealed. If the heroes have the proper documents or decent forgeries, the guards will examine them carefully before allowing them to pass.

If the heroes don't have the documents or are new arrivals to Charouse, they are asked to wait for the next patrol, though they won't be told the patrol isn't due for over two hours. When the patrol arrives, they will escort the heroes to the municipal offices to meet with the clerks. There are a number of cells in the back of the building where the heroes must

wait their turn. If the heroes arrived during the evening, the clerks won't be available until the next day. Typically, officials can produce the documents within 48 hours, though a substantial bribe can reduce this time to only a few minutes.

If the heroes do not have the documentation, they will need to either talk their way past the two guards or simply ride around them. The guards will not willingly allow either one, but they aren't a true threat. Even if the guards defeat the heroes, they will only take them to the municipal offices to obtain their papers. Play them up for light comical relief, doing your best to avoid lethal encounters. If either of the guards is eliminated, they have a limitless supply of cousins whose name all begins with Jean. If the encounter turns into a chase or a fight, brutes will pour out of the shacks to aid their commanders.

Jean - Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 1, Resolve 2, Panache 3. Bodyguard, Athlete, Fencing and Dirty Fighting knacks at 2. Revolution Guards - Rank 2 brutes. They gain an additional unkept die to all chase rolls but get one fewer unkept die for all Wits check.

De-'Jean'-vu

As you move towards the outskirts of the city, you encounter few others on the streets. Trade seems far lower than just a day ago and the people all seem preoccupied. Up ahead, you see the guard shacks at the city edge. A familiar pair of guards stands watch, though they are busy arguing over some inanity. Beyond them, you notice a group of guards patrolling through the cleared area surrounding the city.

Jean Pierre and Jean Claude are still on duty at the outskirts of the city, ensuring that no dangerous noble fanatics attempt to escape the city. Their orders are exceedingly clear. No one, under any circumstances, is to leave the city. There are no exceptions. Those who insist on leaving are to be arrested and held for trial. The heroes must find their own way out of the city. The Jeans and the guards all have three free raises to all Wits check involving someone attempting to leave the city., so while it is still possible to trick the guards, it will be much tougher. Jean Claude and Jean Pierre (or Jean Jean and Jean Russo if the heroes dealt with the first two guards violently) are supported by 2 brute squads within each of the two rickety guard shacks. There are also two

squads of brutes patrolling within sight of the road block. If the heroes cannot come up with a way to leave the city, the Rye Grin will suggest floating out of the city hidden within a wine barrel and stealing mounts out there.

Jeans - Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 1, Resolve 2, Panache 3.

Bodyguard, Athlete, Fencing and Dirty Fighting knacks at 2.

Revolution Guards - Rank 2 brutes. They gain an additional unkept die to all chase rolls.

Act II - The Road to Lierre-Vallee

Mob Justice

As you journey along, you come across a small village. The fields are planted, but you don't see any people as you approach. To the north, you can see the burnt remnants of a once-proud manor home. Whatever noble once lived there has since departed for better lands, whether in Theus' hands or a foreign powers. However, as you get nearer, the ugly sounds of shouting reveal the townfolks' location to you. Within the town square, someone has erected a small platform and atop it sits the infamous coiffeur. A crowd of peasants and farmers led by a tall man with a stump for his left arm stands around it yelling and shaking makeshift weapons while a squad of six men wearing the tabards of the Committee of General Welfare, showing a white scale on a red and blue background, stands upon the platform. A pretty young woman in a befouled white dress whose hands are tied before her stands beside them. After a moment, you realize that the mob is not protesting the execution as you'd originally thought, but urging the Guards to action.

The name of the young woman is Marie and she stands accused of aiding and abetting the noble Irene Leveque d'Aur. D'Aur was once a famous singer in Charouse, one of the most gifted opera performers in Montaigne. However, she returned to her manor house here in the village of Flaubert shortly before the troubles started. She remained here for several months peacefully. Since she had never placed undue strain upon the peasant folk, they left her in peace. When the Revolution pushed beyond Charouse, they sent troops here to arrest her for crimes against the people, but Irene fled to Eisen just ahead of them. The troops left Levar

behind as their agent. He lost his arm when a nobleman's carriage ran him down in Charouse for not moving aside quickly enough several years ago and still holds a rabid hatred of all nobles. He has spent months inciting the hatred of the sleepy people of this town and convincing them to build the platform and coiffeur. While he never had enough support to push it further, another troop from the Committee came through two days ago and left a squad here.

The squad's actual purpose is to stop all traffic through the village and arrest anyone of obvious noble birth or traitorous leanings. Instead, Levar brought charges against Marie and incited the townfolk into calling for an immediate execution. Marie had no part of Irene's escape, but she did work as a laundress and maid for the noblewoman. Further, she is a beautiful woman who had an affair with Irene's cousin, Herbert Leveque d'Aur, a year ago. She still yearns for him and believes he will return from Eisen for her, so she has rebuffed the clumsy propositions from several of the villagers in a cruel and haughty manner since she believes her looks make her better than the other villagers. This combination was enough to make her unpopular before and an obvious target for Levar, who was also rejected. The villagers dislike her, but just as importantly, they fear Levar and the troops, so they are pushing for the execution.

The heroes may deal with the situation in any manner they see fit. A daring rescue, an attempt at logic and legal defense, or simply ignoring the matter and moving on under cover of this distraction. Mention to them that time is slipping away. If they stop to intervene, they must make a raise per hour delayed on their drive carriage/ride checks later.

Thrown to the Wolves

A pair of the Black Wolves which inhabit Montaigne ambush the heroes during their journey through the countryside.

The meandering road you've followed now passes from amongst gently rolling pastures and fields give way to a small forest. Signs of neglect are far greater here as the evergreens and oaks press in upon the path. Up ahead, you see several fallen trees from last season block part of the road while errant branches and thorns reach for you from

both sides.

Allow the heroes to respond with paranoia and suspicion, but wait until they've passed the fallen tree to spring the real trap. Moving slowly, it takes a ride check TN 10 to get past the fallen trees, though it requires 2 raises to do so while moving quickly. A wagon or cart must bypass through the shrubs with a drive carriage check TN 15 at slow speeds (with 2 raises to do so quickly). Don't let the heroes bypass the fallen trees if they don't have a carriage (because that would be undramatic). Failure indicates the horse and rider or carriage/horses injure themselves. This is 1k1 damage if moving slowly and 3k3 damage if moving quickly. Further, failure means the steeds require 3 rounds to free themselves carefully or take an additional 3k3 damage per round.

A hundred yards past the fallen tree, the trees are much larger and have blocked out the sun completely. Their shadows have blocked off the undergrowth, giving the ground a splotched look and leaving the area pleasantly cool and free of clutching plants. The road widens here, allowing even a wagon to turn around, but the low hanging branches of the trees do not provide enough room for even a rider to pass through easily. A sudden howl from up ahead splits the air, followed by another.

Allow the heroes to make a perception check or hunting check TN 20 to notice that the splotched look is actually due to a strange dark liquid soaking into the ground before the howling. The howls are a mated pair of Black Wolves. These vicious animals rush forward and engage the heroes. They will both pick a single rider, preferably one of the ones who has not fled and attack in concert. The creatures have haunted this area for several months. By drooling upon the ground, they create a connection with it similar to a porte sorcerer's blooding, allowing them to teleport at will around this area.

First the heroes must make animal handling or ride checks TN 20 to keep their animals from bolting back along the path. Failure indicates the animals bolt back towards the fallen trees. With a wagon or carriage, the horses become entangled and the vehicle will topple over. Riders must make the ride check again to move through the fallen trees

again quickly. If they make it past the fallen trees, they may make another animal handling/ride to get control of their horses again. If the heroes are walking, the wolves will simply attack them.

When the wolves attack, one will rush forward and snap at the leading hero on his first action. His mate waits until her second action and then teleports behind the leading hero and attacks (which uses both her actions). On his last action, the first wolf teleports away. They reverse roles every round. Half of all their attacks are made on the hero's horse until it goes down. They continue attacking until one is crippled and then both teleport away. Once crippled, the wolves can only teleport once to a place of safety (100 yards to the left of the ambush site) and lick their wounds. Any horse which takes more than 2 dramatic wounds is unable to continue and the Black Wolves will eat them later.

Black Wolves (2) - Brawn 4, Finesse 3, Resolve 3, Wits 2, Panache 3. Attack 5k3, Damage 4k2. Ambush 4 (with two free raises), Footwork 3, Tracking 4. May spend a single action die (even one from a later phase) to successfully defend without rolling.

Good for What Ails You

As you ride along, you spot a crowd gathered up ahead. Although the nearest village is over a mile away, a score of people mill about in front of a garishly decorated horse-drawn wagon. One man dressed in a flamboyant crimson jerkin cavorts on top of the wagon and shouts down to the crowd. "Are you tired of the only the nobles benefiting from the marvelous advances in chemistry and pharmacology that have been made? No longer! Now you too can gain the advantage of greater strength, stamina and beauty previously hoarded by those in power!"

The crimson garbed man is named Doctor Marcellus Bresailles, though he isn't really a doctor, and he is selling some of his famous Elixir, which is neither famous nor medicinal in nature. Emboldened by the lack of nobles and their servants who usually drove him off, Bresailles is selling his Elixir to everyone who can rub two coins together. The Elixir is actually 2/3rds alcohol mixed with herbs and berries and is truly good for nothing more than getting drunk quickly. Despite this, Bresailles will loudly claim a variety

of medicinal purposes from removing warts, to improving stamina and health. These claims are particularly effective against the poorly educated Montaigne peasants, though some heroes might wishfully purchase the Elixir if confronted with Bresailles after sustaining dramatic wounds.

If examined by a hero with the Doctor or Herbalism skills, he can make a Wits check TN 15 (Wits check TN 20 unskilled) to determine the mixture has no medicinal benefits, though it does count as two drinks if the inebriation rules are used. If confronted violently, Bresailles will try to rally the villagers listening to his spiel against the heroes using his Oratory. As he does so, several men in the crowd loudly agree with what he says (providing two free raises). These men are Bresailles's accomplices who normally step forward to try the Elixir and declare its beneficial side effects as part of the scam. If the engagement goes against, Bresailles, he drops onto the wagon's seat and cracks the reins to get his horse moving while his accomplices grab onto the back and ride to safety. Bresailles is willing to banter or debate anyone and is skilled enough to convince most of the crowd of the beneficial effects of his Elixir. Bresailles is a greedy scoundrel, but not a villain.

Marcellus Bresailles : Brawn 2, Finesse 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Panache 3. Doctor : all knacks at 1, Criminal : all knacks at 1 except Quack 4, Dirty Fighting : all knacks at 3, Performer : all knacks at 1 except Oratory 4. Arcana : Greedy Accomplices – 3 Rank 2 brutes, unarmed. Villagers – 20 Rank 1 brutes, unarmed.

Squares Anyone?

As you ride along, you spot a vast cleared area up ahead on the left. As you come closer, you notice a platform five feet above the ground beside the road and decorated with scraps of former finery. Tatters of a silk canopy, torn pieces of embroidered cushions and shards of glass cover the platform. Beyond the platform, you can now see the cleared area consists of an enormous checkerboard pattern laid into the land itself. Each square is ten feet to a side and the alternating patterns consist of black marble tiles and areas of once shortly cropped grass. The entire pattern is surrounded by a ten foot wide oaken walkway. Many of the marble tiles are cracked, the grass sections are growing wildly and the

dozens of oaken planks have disappeared. Beyond the pattern lies more fallow fields and the rubble of a small village.

This area is another fine example of the Montaigne nobles' excesses. In the final days before, a pair of noblemen agreed to decide a point of honor with a game of Squares. However, rather than play in normal surroundings, the challenger built this elaborate game board on which to play, though it ruined an entire field. When the villagers complained, he ordered his men to destroy the entire village as punishment. The plan had been to play using actual people as the pieces while the nobles called out their moves, but before they played, the Revolution swept them both away.

The area still houses a remnant of the villagers, though they have since turned to banditry. A group of them armed with a mixture of farm implements and bows are hidden beneath the platform. Their leader is Jacques du Paix, a self-educated man who fancies himself as a Squares player. If the heroes slow down at the spectacle of the game board, he and his men rush out from beneath the platform and shout for the heroes to stop. The villagers are in no mood to debate, but know their martial skill and weaponry is slight, so they attempt to use bluff and threats rather than violence. Du Paix orders the heroes to drop their valuables including all weapons and then leave. Should the heroes attempt to parley or object rather than simply springing into the combat, du Paix offers another possibility, a game of Squares to decide the matter. The heroes take the place of one sides powerful pieces while the villager leaders (rank 2 brutes) do the same for his side (du Paix takes the position of king). The remaining villagers will act as the pawns. If the heroes win, they may leave unhindered, but if they lose, they will leave all their possessions behind. The other twist is that du Paix mentions in passing is that all moves are final.

The easiest method of running this encounter is to set up a chess board, assigning each of the heroes and brutes to one of the pieces on the board. Then run the game with you playing the part of Du Paix and his side while the heroes act as the other side. If the heroes are appearing to win, the pawns on their side begin to cheat to throw the game. They make mistakes (such as moving to the wrong spot, the wrong piece moves, or one of the pieces leaves for a "talk with na-

ture” and doesn’t come back) to put the heroes at a disadvantage. Du Paix will insist that these mistakes stand according to the rules to which the heroes agreed. At other times, his own men will ignore his instructions and make a different move when they see an advantage. Do this once when the villager in question spotted a better move in order to immediately capture a piece. Later, if the heroes need a hand and place a piece in jeopardy, the villagers will again disregard Du Paix’s instructions and capture it, even though it opens them up to be captured in return. In general, he is a gloating player who belittles his opponent’s moves, though his own skill in Squares is actually only moderate. Feel free to make simple errors in order to give the players and advantage. If the heroes complain too strongly about the game or the cheating, the villagers all finger their weapons threateningly and they will attack if the heroes draw weapons. If the heroes win the game, the villagers still attack. The simplest method out of this situation is to bargain with the villagers. If they offer some money and food, either during or after the game, the villagers allow them to leave.

Jacques du Paix : All traits are 2, Skills : Athlete 2, Fencing 2, Firearms 2. Armed with a pistol and fencing sword.
 Villagers : 16 rank 1 brutes armed with farm implements.
 Villagers : Rank 2 brutes armed with bows. There are 15 brutes minus the number of heroes (to allow them to field enough pieces for both sides of the game).

Tabards Noire Ambush

The Chambeau River crosses the road you have been following at the famous Three Eagles Bridge. The name comes from an ancient battle fought here in which three divisions of Numan troops held off a barbarian horde. The troops were stationed here for two years after the fight to recuperate and hold the border and they built this massive granite bridge to ease travel across the instable ford. As you approach through the rolling hills of the region, you spot the bridge beneath you and the men standing guard there. There must be twenty men present, along with several pitched tents and a hastily established camp. The bridge itself is thirty feet wide and fifty feet long. The waters beneath it are rolling and frothing as late runoff from the mountains to the East fill it to the tops of the banks.

The heroes should spot the bridge only half an hour before they must pass it to prevent them from detouring too easily. The bridge is the only means of crossing the Chambeau river safely within eight hours ride and the only means by which a carriage can pass it at all for a day’s ride. If the heroes ask, the men on the bridge are wearing earth tones, common garb such that any farmer or bandit would wear. Careful observation (Wits check, TN 25) reveals that the old Montaigne flag is on display at the front of several of the tents.

The men here are mostly mercenaries working for the Tabards Noire. The lone exception is Francis Flory Leveque d’Aur, a young man and full member of the Tabards. While he was once a courtier, fop and infamous clothes horse, Flory has witnessed horrors and tragedy over the past year. His parents were dragged from his home by a blood-thirsty mob and slaughtered while he hid within a wardrobe. He barely escaped with his life as the peasants looted and burned his home to the ground. He returned to his home in the country, but the men and women he thought he could trust and ruthlessly exploit, rose up and drove him from his second home. In the fight, one of the women he’d forced to share his bed countless times in the past slashed his face open with a butcher’s knife. Scarred and terrified, he stumbled across a troop of the Tabards Noire, a group of Montaigne nobles who violently oppose the Revolutionary Government and all who side with her, and joined their ranks. Now the Tabards know that several nobles and Revolutionary groups are planning on attending the Festival and Flory was posted here to intercept them. Any nobles are to wait within the tents until Flory can escort them to safety at an isolated manor house, a former hunting cottage of Victor Leveque d’Aur. Anyone with Revolutionary leanings is be killed on sight for supporting this criminal government.

If the heroes arrive openly, Flory emerges from one of the tents and examines them. He uses cold read to determine if they side with the Revolution forces. If he believes this is the case, he nods to his men and states that the heroes may go. When they reach the far side of the bridge and the center of the camp, his men attack. If he suspects noble members among the heroes, he warns them of the Revolutionary forces attending the Festival and may even mention that he engaged them only a day ago, the reason that he was so late

arriving to set up this check point. If the heroes mention they are members of the Rye Grin, Flory insults them and their organization, stating that the Rye Grin are deluded fools who believe that all men have the same rights (No one should pay for the crimes of another), even though it is apparent that some men are superior to others as evinced by their sorcerous heritage. Flory will not allow members of the Rye Grin to pass without facing him in a duel. It is best to keep Flory from dying. He should annoy the heroes, perhaps even injure them, but should then escape so he can reappear at the Festival to irritate them again.

Francis Flory Leveque d'Aur - Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3. Courtier at 3, Fencing at 3, Performer at 2 (Cold Read at 4), Porte at 4 (journeyman), Rider at 2, Scholar at 1, Valroix at 4 (journeyman).

Tabards Noire - 18 Rank 4 Brutes. These brutes roll an additional unkept die for initiative and always roll at least 2 dice for skill checks. Two squads of six are armed with only fencing weapons while the third squad is armed with pistols and fencing swords. (Use the massed fire rules. Roll 10d10 and hit with a 8,9 or 10. Each hit does 12 flesh wounds divided amongst the people fired upon).

Act III - Lierre-Vallee

Boucher Lilies

Up ahead, you notice a wide table set up with dozens of lilies of seven different colors. Brilliant blues, oranges, yellow and purples all lie scattered in profusions. A lovely couple steps up to the table. The man is tall and robust with a wide smile and an easy grace. Though her cast off garb was obviously cut for another, the woman's willowy figure and elegant features make it seem lovely. She has wrapped her arm around her companions left arm, leaving his sword's arm free, though no weapon is visible. Standing behind the table, a short man with round features and a nose which has obviously been broken more than a few times hands the man a scarlet red lily and the woman a delicate green one. The man raises an eyebrow questioningly, but the woman giggles slightly and pins her lily in place before pulling him towards the garlanded streets and stalls.

The table is set up at the western end of the town at the mouth of the box canyon so any visitors must pass it to enter the town unless they sneak through the lightly forested area north of the town. There are a dozen Revolutionary guards hiding within these woods, though careful heroes can sneak past them. If the guards spot the heroes, they will immediately move to arrest them. The guards are armed with fencing weapons and muskets, but they will not use the firearms to avoid spooking the nobles within the town.

The man handing out lilies is none other than Edward Boucher, a high ranking member of the Committee of General Welfare. He is also gifted with a ring which allows him to smell any sorcerers close to him. His role is to pick out anyone with noble sentiments and give them a scarlet lily. While he is very familiar with most of the nobles of Montaigne, few would recognize him. He also provides sorcerers with lilies of a delicate green hue to mark them to his men. When the Revolutionary forces attack, they will concentrate their attention on those individuals he has marked in this fashion. If Boucher recognizes any of the heroes, he will not admit to it unless they greet him and only then will he claim to simply be helping out at the festival. Even if he knows that they are an enemy of the Revolution, he will not act against them, preferring to allow his men to arrest them quietly to avoid warning the nobles present of his presence. If attacked, he does have a pair of pistols ready in a box beneath the table and will use them.

Edward Boucher - Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 2. Keen Senses, Merchant 3, Streetwise 3, Firearms 3, Courtier 2, Cold Read 3.

Revolutionary Guards - 12 Rank 3 brutes armed with fencing weapons.

Within the Town

Lierre-Vallee is a typical small town in Montaigne. There are three main street running east to west through the center of town while half a dozen smaller streets and alleys cross north to south. A large plaza in the center of town is dominated by a massive fountain surrounded by flower beds overflowing with lilies. To the north, a small forest spreads out to steep cliff walls. To the east and south, fields of grain and grazing lands spread out to more cliff walls. A pass cuts through the hills to the east with numerous switchbacks

and turns. The town's grain silos, mills, warehouses and homes are all hidden beneath masses of flowered garlands and garden plots. Riots of color and scent whirl about you in a pleasing chaos.

Through these sweetly perfumed streets stroll hundreds of people dressed in everything from finery to rags. Music from street performers floods the streets and more than one person twirls and prances to its beat. Stalls and street vendors sell food and minor luxury items such as scarves, cheap jewelry and souvenirs such as flower pots, cooking pans, and flasks, all emblazoned with a lily. Everyone you see seems happy and proudly wears a lily, though the shades vary from a pale yellow to a bright red.

If any of the heroes is not wearing a lily, one of the townsfolk will stop them and explain that everyone must wear one. They will even point out where to get one (the western edge of town). They will also point out that it is illegal to destroy or damage any of the lilies within the town. The penalty is one guilder for each flower damaged, though this extreme cost is intended to prevent anyone from damaging them intentionally rather than to punish accidents or mistakes. However, a Wits+Stealth check, TN 15 allows the heroes to pluck a flower without being seen. If the heroes wish to switch the lily they're wearing, they may do so easily.

If the heroes are bearing visible weapons, the townsfolk will explain that this is a peaceful event and fighting is not allowed. No weapons allowed. They may place their weapons at the town hall where a table has been set up and reclaim it at the end of the night. If the heroes disregard this, a group of town militia (a rank 2 brute squad) bearing quarterstaves will ask them to relinquish their weapons and will attack if they refuse. If a fight breaks out, an additional brute squad will arrive at the end of every round to a total of 5 brute squads. If any of the brutes are killed, the heroes involved lose 10 reputation and if they are spotted again, the remaining brutes will attack them with fencing weapons.

Should the heroes insist on bearing weapons, a perfectly reasonable proposition, there are several easy methods of doing so. They may conceal one upon their person (Wits+Conceal, TN 20 for daggers, TN 30 for fencing weapons. Allow a

free raise for a particularly ingenious hiding spot. While this may be more difficult than the heroes expect, it is intended to represent hours spent bearing a hidden weapon.). Improvised weapons abound such as the souvenirs, quarterstaves and flats of flowers. Bearing a weapon concealed within a cloak or other disguise is also possible. The point is not to prevent them from bearing arms, but simply to make them stretch their abilities to keep it hidden. Anyone caught with concealed weapon will be asked by the militia to place it in the town hall and to pick it later.

What about Pie?

A street vendor adjacent to the central plaza calls out to you as you pass. "Pies! Pies for sale! All kinds of pies! Cherry pies! Meat pies! All sorts of pies!" Then in a much quieter voice, she adds "Come here, dearie. Cecilia's got a little something for you."

Cecilia is their contact within the Rye Grin and assuming the heroes provide the password, she gives them information. Asking the heroes to approach under cover of selling them a meat pie, she tells them that several nobles are present and will point out the ones she can identify (three women, two men and one child), though she hasn't seen Dominique yet. She notes that all of the women are wearing red lilies, though one of the men and the child are wearing green. She spotted a group of armed men approaching one of the warehouses before dawn. She doesn't know who they are or what they have planned, but she can point it out to them. She will also mention that Boucher, the man handing out lilies, is not a local and may suggest speaking to the mayor since he may know more about what is going on. She is also willing to keep her eyes open and store items, including weapons, for the heroes. If asked, she has a rapier hidden within easy reach inside her stall. If they ask, she refuses to tell them what the meat in the pies is since they just don't want to know. If the heroes are rude or insulting to her, she provides no additional information.

How much is that Puppy in the window?

There are hundreds of people within the town with which the heroes may interact. Here are a few suggestions for some people they may meet. The primary thing to remember is

that the entire premise is the heroes are wandering through a crowd, play this up and try to give the impression of the constant flow of people. Don't let the heroes stay together and don't let them sit quietly to the side. These are all social interactions, so let the heroes who enjoy dealing with people have their moment in the sun.

A young boy is sitting on the steps of an inn which is doing a brisk business in wine right now. In front of the boy is a small window box of puppies which he is selling. The puppies are a common hunting dogs, though they are extremely cute. If asked, he can tell them that the shining woman left this morning, but will come back tonight to get a puppy for her little boy. The woman he is talking about is Dominique du Montaigne who has a sorcery similar to *porte* but which has a residue of bright lights rather than dripping blood. She has visited the town several times and spoken with the boy (though she doesn't plan on buying a puppy). If questioned further, he can show them where he last saw her, behind a local dress maker's shop. Careful searching reveals a tiny smear of colorful light dancing in the shadows there. The light cannot be affected. This is the spot Dominique will reemerge later today.

A pickpocket named Marcel (All traits 2, pick pocket, stealth and dirty fighting knacks at 3) is working the crowds, taking a purse here and a ring there, but never enough to attract too much attention. Should a heroes notice him at work, he will offer to help them in exchange for letting him go. He can act as another pair of eyes and ears and has already noticed that a group of men arrived at the southern edge of town a short while ago. They picked up lilies from Boucher already, mostly red ones, and all fastened them to their right shoulder. These men are a group from the Tabards Noire (see Tabards in Waiting).

A pair of lovers have a minor problem. The woman is wearing a green lily while the man is wearing a blue one. They are desperately trying to find someone to swap with either one of them so they can match since couples without matching lilies are constantly interrupted during the dances by mischievous townsfolk. The woman is the bastard daughter of a minor nobleman and does know that she possesses a small degree of *porte* though she rarely uses it. Careful ex-

amination reveals her slightly stained hands (Perception check TN 20).

A blind begger sits in an alleyway and calls out for alms for the poor. If anyone drops a coin or two into his bowl, he thanks them profusely. During his thanks, he mentions that normally the town's mayor helps him out with a bite of bread and a drop of wine, but since the Revolution guards arrived, he's been too busy to care. Further bribes or a friendly ear refresh his memory enough to tell the heroes that they were hanging out by the plaza.

Any of the townsfolk can tell the heroes that this festival is going well, even if it is shorter than normal. But it just isn't the same without Pierre. Pierre was an older man who served as the festival's organizer for years and always personally handed out the lilies to guests, but he died unexpectedly two nights ago. The man who stepped in to take his place is named Boucher, but he doesn't even live here. No one really knows how he got the job or where he comes from.

A group of young men sit by a vendor selling cheap wine and gossip while they drink. They are all pro-Revolutionary and regret that more people from this region aren't enthusiastic about it. One of them even claims to have seen a well-known anti-Revolutionary figure, Simon Roublard of the Tabards Noire. And the young men intend to go hunt him down and arrest him in the name of the Revolution. Right after they finish this bottle of wine. Of course, they've said that for the last two bottles.

Town hall seems largely vacant, but just inside the front door two men stand guard. Another two men are at the top of the stairs to the second floor, just in front of the mayor's office. Mayor Francoise du Paix, a tall nervous man, frets within his office, concerned about the possible bloodshed which may engulf his town at any moment. He knows that the Revolutionary Guards are here and intend to arrest and kill any nobles who attend the Festival. In fact, Edward Bloucher forced him to appoint him to the reception table to hand out the lilies and then ordered him kept here under guard. Francoise just wants to avoid trouble, so he isn't attempting to escape, but if someone eliminates his guards, he

will attempt to quietly warn the nobles. He hopes that if the nobles are all gone, there won't be any fighting. He also knows of the cannon the Guards have in the warehouse by the plaza and may mention it to convince the heroes not to fight. Guards - 4 Rank 4 Brutes. These brutes roll an additional unkept die for initiative and always roll at least 2 dice for skill checks.

Brutes (4) rank 3, armed with fencing weapons

Snakes in Waiting

You almost miss the warehouse on the east end of the central plaza beneath its disguise of blue and purple lilies. A flower cart sits in front of the double doors, blocking entrance into the interior, though they can enter through a smaller side door. Flowers are draped over the windows as well.

The side door is locked securely (TN 20 to break down the door or pick the lock) and all the windows are blocked, so the interior cannot be seen. This is the staging area for a group of Revolutionary guards. They're waiting for dusk when all of the street musicians come to the central plaza and play together. At this point, three brute squads and two henchmen burst out of the doors, brushing the flower cart aside. Armed with muskets, they arrest everyone wearing a red or green lily. Another twelve brutes led by Edward Boucher charge from the north end of town and aid them. If a large combat ensues, one of the brutes will trigger a loaded cannon they have within the warehouse. The grape shot will clear the central plaza of all non-combatants. In addition, roll 15 dice. Any result of 8, 9 or 10 is a hit which should be evenly distributed between the heroes and henchmen within the plaza. Each hit inflicts 15 flesh wounds. If anyone enters the warehouse early, the guards attack using fencing weapons, hoping to keep their presence secret, though they will attack with full force if discovered and attempt to arrest as many as possible. However, a fast-talking group might be able to convince the group that they are allies, though any major decisions will be made by Edward Boucher who can be summoned by a runner from the Guard if necessary. A coiffeur is also present within the warehouse in order to carry out the sentence on any captured nobles.

Revolutionary guards : 30 Rank 3 brutes armed with mus-

kets or fencing weapons.

Revolutionary officers : All traits are 2, fencing and firearm skills are all 3.

Edward Boucher - Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 2. Keen Senses, Merchant 3, Streetwise 3, Firearms 3, Courtier 2, Cold Read 3.

Tabards in Waiting

In the midst of the fragrant blooms and colorful stands, you notice a shadowy alleyway leading between two warehouses two blocks from the plaza. Boxes have been placed across the entrance which block your view any deeper into the shadows nestled among nature's beauty.

The boxes are placed at either end of the alleyway for the sole purpose of keeping people away from the small group of men gathered within the alley. This group of Tabards Noire and hired thugs infiltrated the town and are waiting for the proper moment to rush out. Simon Roublard, their leader, has left the group and is circulating through the crowds, searching for Dominique du Montaigne. His signal to the group is the firing of a pistol and when they hear it, the Tabards draw weapons and charge through the crates on the south side of the alley. They will engage the Revolutionary Guards or anyone else standing in their way until they reach Roublard's side. Once they've reached him, the group will fight its way back to the north side of the town and into the woods. If the battle goes against them, d'Aur and Roublard will flee via Porte, leaving their mercenary followers to their fate. Should the heroes enter the alley aggressively, the Tabards will attack. However, if the heroes attempt to talk their way into the area, the Tabards will be suspicious but will hear them out. D'Aur will not accept the help of any known member of the Rye Grin but won't attack them unless forced because he doesn't want to expose his position in the city.

Francis Flory Leveque d'Aur - Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3. Courtier at 3, Fencing at 3, Performer at 2 (Cold Read at 4), Porte at 4 (journeyman), Rider at 2, Scholar at 1, Valroix at 4 (journeyman).

Tabards Noire - 18 Rank 4 Brutes. These brutes roll an additional unkept die for initiative and always roll at least 2 dice for skill checks.

Puppy Love

Through the crowds, you spot a distinctive man. Though his flowing garb is non-descript, prominent nose and piercing eyes give off an air of intensity and power. He strides by without a pause, not even using the cane he carries, continually peering around through the thick crowds. You're not certain what he seeks, but you can sense his strong commitment to finding it.

The man is Simon Roublard, the leader of the Tabards Noire. This group of former Montaigne Musketeers gathered around Roublard during the weeks of terror in which the Revolution struck down any who bore noble blood. He offered a return to tradition and a measure of power purchased with mercenaries and bloodshed. Despite their brutal methods, the group seeks one thing alone, the return of a daughter of l'Empereur to the throne of Montaigne. Roublard believes that Dominique du Montaigne is the only possible candidate since survived without every fleeing the country and now possesses a new form of Porte sorcery. The last time Roublard spoke to her, his intensity scared her away and he witnessed her powers firsthand. The brilliant lights which accompanied her departure, rather than the typical Porte blood, produced awe in a man who believed himself completed jaded. Now, he desires to prove himself to her by placing her on a pedestal as the ruler of Montaigne, even if she doesn't know that she wants it yet. In fact, his obsessive reverence borders on insanity.

Roublard knows that this festival was one of her favorite holidays and that she will attempt to return here today. So, he searches the crowds and when he spots her, he intends to fire a small concealed pistol in his cane to signal his men. Then he and his men can escort Dominique and any other nobles present from the city. He already knows there are Revolutionary Guards within the city and he believes that his men can defeat them, or at least slow them enough to allow the nobles to escape.

Encounters with Roublard should be extremely disconcerting because his keen mind examines every facet of the people around him. Upon meeting someone, he makes a Cold Read check (10k7 due to keen senses) with 4 raises to deter-

mine four important facts about that person. In particular, he usually seeks to know whether the person is of noble blood, what their occupation is, how skilled they are in combat and if they have any notable "tells" (subtle body language) when they are lying. This gives him a strong advantage in any interaction. For instance, if someone insists they are a messenger from Francis d'Aur, he will likely know they are lying whether from their "tells" or simply knowing that Francis d'Aur would not send a nobleman to him as a courier or similar deductions.

If approached as an ally, Roublard will send the heroes to handle the Revolutionary Guards in order to eliminate both of these potentially hostile groups. If attacked, Roublard will flee back to the alleyway where his men are stationed. Roublard will reemerge a few moments later and continue his obsessive search for Dominique. Roublard is armed with a sword cane and concealed beneath his left sleeve is a pair of manacles, one end of which is already fastened to his arm.

Simon Roublard - Brawn 3, Finesse 5, Wits 6, Resolve 5, Panache 4. Keen Senses. Courtier at 3, Scholar at 2, Spy at 2, Athlete at 2, Commander at 3, Fencing at 5, Firearm at 2, Rider at 2, Valroix at 4 (journeyman). Cold Read at 5, Footwork at 4.

Dominique's Arrival

Dominique du Montaigne's last year has been extremely difficult. She discovered she was pregnant; her husband was sent off to invade Ussura; she learned that although she had no sorcery, her son would be the most powerful sorcerer in the world and that he was cursed to be destroyed by his powers; she betrayed her father, l'Empereur Leon, to warn her husband; she gave birth to her first child and performed a ritual to absorb his powers herself; felt the sudden influx of powers undreamt of as she watched her son die; watched the lower classes rise up and topple everything she's ever known; and heard that her husband was dead. She feels there's nothing left to which to cling, that everything around her is chaos. Even the fact that her traveling sorcery involves bands of light and beautiful energy rather than bleeding rips in reality is no comfort for the fact that her maternal attempt to save her son from pain cost him his life.

She visited the town of Lierre-Vallee several times within the last week, but found that the lilies just weren't as pretty without the festivities. So she decided to revisit it today in hopes of finding some sign of her past life. She will arrive in a flash of light behind a small dress-maker's shop a few blocks from the plaza and head towards the plaza. Only a handful of people in town even know what she looks like, so she will wander without being noticed for several minutes. She is dressed in a simple black gown tattered around the bottom, but moments after arriving, she stops at a small flower stand and garbs herself in long strands of lilies which she wraps around herself. She will arrive a few minutes before dusk when a major dance is always held. During the first few bars of the dance she will be spotted by both Roublard and Boucher (see below). If a major combat breaks out earlier, she arrives in the midst of it and wanders through the fight sequence (see below).

Time to Dance

As the sun disappears behind the hills to the west, the town seems to hold its breath. One by one, the street musicians halt their playing and gather at the north end of the central plaza. The men and women wandering the streets follow them as the street vendors close down their stalls. For several moments, the only sound is the low murmur of the crowds. Then with a triumphant wave, one of the fiddlers begins a wild jig and the rest of the musicians take up the tune. Couples grab each others hands, beginning to prance and careen through the plaza and spilling out into the adjoining streets.

If the heroes have not precipitated events by dusk, the groups within the city will act. The visitors and locals all gather at the plaza in preparation for the most popular part of the festival, the Dusk Dance of the Lilies. People quickly pair off with others who bear the same hue of lily and dance through the streets of the town. As everyone else is moving towards the plaza, Simon Roublard slips back to the alley where his men are positioned. His men leave the alley and follow the crowds to the western edge of the plaza. Roublard and Francis Flory Leveque d'Aur will point out a half dozen nobles to their men with orders to protect them. Meanwhile, Edward Boucher skirts the plaza moments before the music begins and joins a group of twelve Revolu-

tionary Guards who just arrived at the northern end of the city and leads them to the plaza. The Revolutionary Guard in the warehouse emerge into the plaza at the eastern edge as soon as hostilities break out. Dominique du Montaigne arrives at the southern edge of the plaza and begins making her way through the crowd. She is wearing garlands of lilies in many different colors and rather than stay with one partner, she swings from one handsome man to another, dancing only a few steps with each one. If possible, she should briefly dance with one of the heroes, though she will not take more than a moment with him and will not speak unless forced.

If the heroes do not interfere, Simon Roublard spots Dominique and slips through the crowd towards her. Reaching her side, he pulls out the other end of the manacle attached to his arm and fastens it to her right wrist. Before he can act further, Edward Boucher and his men burst from the warehouse, brushing aside a flower cart and moving into the crowd in order to arrest everyone wearing a red (noble or noble sympathizer) or green (sorcerer) lily. Their forces consist of 18 brutes and two henchmen, all armed with muskets. Their orders are to capture where possible, but if the target puts up more than token resistance, the use of lethal force is approved. Once they have fired their muskets, they will use them as bludgeoning weapons rather than take the time to reload. Edward Boucher leads the twelve brutes from the northern end of the town into the fray as well. If the carefully planned arrests fail or someone puts up too much resistance, the Revolutionary Guard makes a final push towards the north while one of the brutes breaks away and triggers the loaded cannon within the warehouse. (Roll 15 dice. Any result of 8, 9 or 10 is a hit which should be evenly distributed between the remaining heroes and henchmen within the plaza. Each hit inflicts 15 flesh wounds.) The resulting grape shot clears much of the central plaza, though the Guard should have reached safety. Boucher refuses to flee and squares off against a hero in a fight to the death. The Revolutionary forces talk about Boucher's final battle for months to come, until their entire regime collapses around them.

The Tabards Noire forces split into five groups of three and each group gathers around one of the nobles pointed out by

their leaders. Each group “escorts” their noble out of the city. The mercenaries will work with each other wherever possible, but Roublard promised 15 guilders to each trio who rescued their noble, so the mercenaries will not allow the plight of their companions slow their flight. D’Aur and the remaining three brutes try to help Roublard escort Dominique out of the city. However, at the end of the second round of the fight, Dominique rips open a portal marked with brilliant light and vanishes through it, followed by Simon Roublard. If possible, allow one of the heroes to come close enough to spot something flutter from Dominique’s pocket to the ground (see Chaos in Lierre-Vallee). D’Aur and his men then fight their way out of the city and rejoin the other Tabards outside town. At this point, D’Aur and a master level Porte mage rip open a portal and flee with all of the targets the Tabards freed to their safe house (see Tabards Noire Ambush). He abandons the Tabards brutes to their fate as the Revolutionary Guards pursue them.

The combat can be extremely messy here since this is potentially a three way fight with scores of individuals, so a quick breakdown of how things proceed is provided. There are a total of 15 target people wearing the red or green lilies (not counting the heroes, Dominique du Montaigne or the Tabards Noire). Unless the heroes interfere, the Revolutionary Guards capture one prisoner (red or green lily) at the end of each round (to a maximum of 6) and eliminate 2 of the Tabards per round until they lose 15 brutes. Then they retreat, fire the cannon and simply try to keep the targets they have already acquired. The Tabards escape with one noble per round (to a maximum of 9) and eliminate 2 Revolutionary Guards per round until they have all fled or been captured. Keep track of how many targets and Tabards Noire remain at any given time. After the Tabards are all gone, the Revolutionary Guards, led by Edward Boucher if he survives, hold a farce of a trial and execute any nobles they captured. If the heroes are no longer present, a young noblewoman pulls out a tiny concealed pistol and kills Boucher as they lead her towards the coiffeur.

Revolutionary forces :

Edward Boucher - Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 2. Keen Senses, Merchant 3, Streetwise 3, Firearms 3, Courtier 2, Cold Read 3.

Revolutionary guards : 30 Rank 3 brutes armed with muskets or fencing weapons.

Revolutionary officers : All traits are 2, fencing and firearm skills are all 3.

Tabards Noire forces :

Simon Roublard - Brawn 3, Finesse 5, Wits 6, Resolve 5, Panache 4. Keen Senses. Courtier at 3, Scholar at 2, Spy at 2, Athlete at 2, Commander at 3, Fencing at 5, Firearm at 2, Rider at 2, Valroix at 4 (journeyman). Cold Read at 5, Footwork at 4.

Francis Flory Leveque d’Aur - Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Panache 3. Courtier at 3, Fencing at 3, Performer at 2 (Cold Read at 4), Porte at 4 (journeyman), Rider at 2, Scholar at 1, Valroix at 4 (journeyman).

Tabards Noire - 18 Rank 4 Brutes. These brutes roll an additional unkept die for initiative and always roll at least 2 dice for skill checks.

Chaos in Lierre-Vallee

Regardless of how the final battle plays out at Lierre-Vallee, the festival is over and the locals are in hiding. Most likely the Tabards Noire escaped with some of the endangered nobles and the Revolutionary Guard killed several more. If the heroes defeated the Revolutionary Guards, the town is extremely cautious because they know the Council in Charouse will most likely send an army to put down their “rebellion.” Allow the heroes to attempt to pursue the Tabards Noire or the Revolutionary Guard as you see fit, but remind them that Dominique and Roublard are together at large. If someone saw an object fall from Dominique’s pocket during the fight, examination reveals that it is a label for a cask of wine from the Chateau Alsace. Anyone with the Courtier skill may make a Wits check TN 15 (free raise to anyone from Montaigne or with the merchant knack Vintner) to remember that this tiny vineyard only produces a hundred bottles of marginal quality wine a year. The Chateau is only a day’s ride from here, nestled among the hills of D’Aur. Try to avoid allowing the heroes to heal at this point, they should focus on reaching Dominique du Montaigne as quickly as possible. If the heroes didn’t notice the wine label during the fight, the young boy selling puppies will return. The lad mentions that he saw the pretty lady again and that he saw

her drop another of the labels.

Act IV - Chateau Alsace

Time to Rescue

As you ride up the steep slopes, you spot a pile of debris far above you, jutting out at the edge of a cliff. Approaching closer, you see several acres of scorched and burnt lands draped in the charred remains of a vineyard, doubtless another victim of the Revolution's violence. A single tower still remains, though its sides are soot-stained and cracked.

The rubble is the remains of Chateau Alsace and the tower is one of Dominique du Montaigne's hiding places. She fled here from Lierre-Vallee, but discovered that Simon Roublard was able to follow her because of the manacle binding them. Although she used her powers several more times, she could not elude him. All the while, he shouted that he only wanted to talk. Settling here, she listened as Roublard laid out a plan for the future. A future in which the commoners would be beaten back into submission, the nobles would be restored to their rightful place and she would be crowned Imperatress. He continued with fawning words of her bravery, beauty and power. He explained away all her flaws as the mistakes of other men, treacherous men like her husband who left her to fight in a foreign war and her father who never truly respected her. Given the events of the past few months in which Dominique saw her entire world tore apart, his words promised hope and more than forgiveness, a certainty that she had committed no sins. Roublard has not stopped talking, neither to sleep or to eat, since they left Lierre-Vallee. As the heroes arrive, Dominique's mind is ready to snap from exhaustion, stress and Roublard's poisoned words. If d'Aur survived the Festival, he is also present and will fight at Roublard's side.

The tower's first three floors are burnt husks with only a handful of walls and stairs. The fourth floor is the open rooftop of the tower where Dominique staring at the mountains to the east and listen to Roublard. If he spots the heroes coming, he will warn her against them, claiming they are assassins and spies who mean her harm. He will even reveal any secrets he uncovered about the heroes if it will

make them appear untrustworthy. When the heroes reach the tower, he yells down to them to leave or face his wrath. He is committed to staying with Dominique until she realizes her own potential and he cannot tolerate interruptions at this point. Should they persist in approaching, he throws insults and chunks of masonry down towards them. If the heroes scale the tower, it requires a Brawn+Climb check TN 20 and he will attack them 4 times on the way up. (He rolls his Wits+Throw (8k6) vs. their Climbing defense. Hits inflict 4k3 damage and force the climber to make an additional Brawn+Climb check just to hold on.

If the heroes use the mostly intact stairs inside, they only need to make a Finesse+Climb checks TN 15 and he can only drop debris once. However, as they climb, he descends to the third floor, dragging Dominique with him and knocks out several support columns. His intention is to force Dominique to open a portal for them as the tower collapses and leave the heroes far behind them. Instead, she discovers that she is too exhausted to rip open a portal and simply wait for the tower's fall.

Once the heroes reach the top of the tower, Roublard attacks from above, forcing them to fight him one at a time on the narrow staircase or at the edge of the rooftop as the tower collapses around them. Footwork is impossible, making everyone use either parry or balance for their defense knacks. Every five phases (twice per round), everyone on the roof except Dominique, must make a Finesse+Balance check to remain atop the tower. The target number starts at 5 and increases by 5 every time it is rolled. Failure indicates they fall, taking 6k6 damage as they plummet to the ground amid falling masonry. Roublard does not need to make the Balance check until he is crippled and then he will plummet to his death. Unless the heroes interfere, Dominique will fall as well, though roll damage normally for her. This is the climatic battle to finish this adventure, so play it up for all its worth. Once the final person on the tower falls, it collapses entirely.

Simon Roublard - Brawn 3, Finesse 5, Wits 6, Resolve 5, Panache 4. Keen Senses. Courtier at 3, Scholar at 2, Spy at 2, Athlete at 2, Commander at 3, Fencing at 5, Firearm at 2, Rider at 2, Valroix at 4 (journeyman). Cold Read at 5, Footwork at 4.

Conclusion

Freed from the manacle, Dominique can finally rest and her state of mind slowly returns to normal. Initially after discovering that her husband is alive, she is elated, but then begins to worry about what he will say about the death of his son. She decides to meet with him at a neutral place and arranges this with the party. However, the worm of doubt that Roublard planted within her remains. Although the heroes have succeeded in their mission, Dominique's mind is still too fragile to sustain the shock of meeting the man she loves, but no longer trusts. At the meeting, after making a few wild accusations, Dominique flees, believing that she cannot trust Montague or anyone ever again. She uses her powers to escape Theah completely, traveling to the New World where she will remain hidden away for years. Despite this tragic turn of events, the heroes should congratulate themselves on the lives they've saved and the nefarious plots they've disrupted.

Credits

Writing

Dana DeVries, Martin Hall and Andrew Peregrine

Additional Writing and Editing

Mark Stanton Woodward

System Mechanics

Author

Line Development

Mark Stanton Woodward

7th Sea System Creation

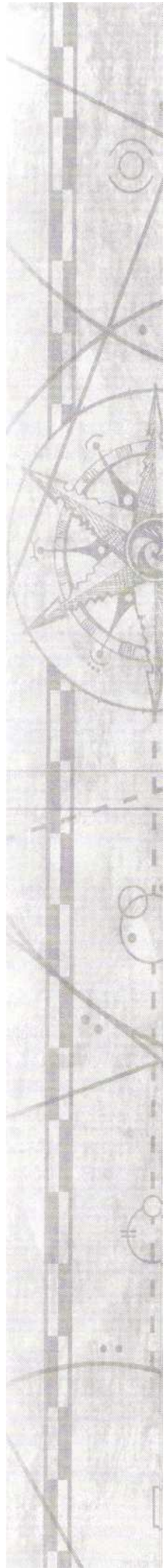
John Wick, Jennifer Wick and Kevin Wilson

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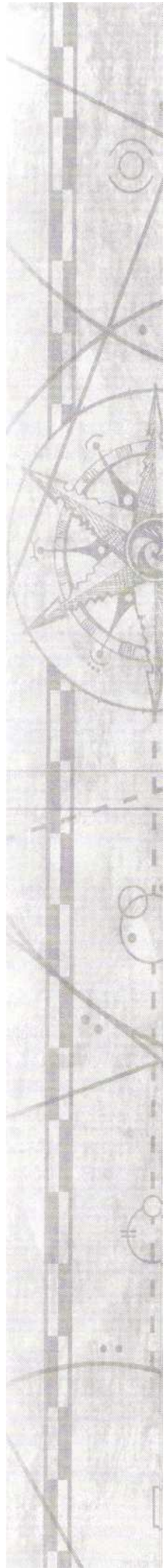
















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