

A photograph of a coastal landscape. In the foreground, dark, jagged rock formations are visible. The ocean is in the middle ground, and a tall, dark rock formation stands on the left. A bird is in flight in the sky above the word "Argentina". The word "Argentina" is written in a cursive script across the center of the image.

Argentina

Argentina

]

Shifting Forest Storyworks

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Thanks to all our playtesters!

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General Information

What is a LARP?

A larp is an activity involving several people in which the participants act out a story. Like a play or traditional improvisational theater, each participant generally acts out one character in real time. Unlike a play, the events and ending of the story are not predetermined. Unlike traditional improvisation, the starting situation and nature of the characters is predetermined.

All but one of the participants (the Players) depict characters in the story. They choose their own interpretation of whatever details are unspecified about the personality and background of the character, and use this to decide on the dialog and actions of their character. They are responsible for the strategic and thematically significant decisions of the character and thinking of the ideas that the character is likely to think of. Some value playing a character for the strategic challenge of trying to achieve the character's goals. Others value the vicarious experience of drama and emotion.

The last participant (the Director) is responsible for managing the larp and performing the many necessary tasks other than depicting main characters. These include general organization, playing minor characters, keeping track of the results of actions and the consequences of hidden aspects of the situation, sometimes introducing new elements or information to manage the plot, and adjudicating rules. The Director does not have the authority to dictate actions of other participants' characters.

Rules exist to represent skill differences between characters that do not exist between players and to resolve actions that cannot be directly acted out, either because they are unsafe (like fighting), or simply impractical/impossible (like magic).

Looking for more explanation? Just check out the detailed guide available on our website, www.shiftingforest.com.

DEFINITIONS:

Player: A participant whose sole role is the depiction of one important character.

Director: The participant managing the larp who performs the other tasks described above. Traditionally called the Game Master.

PC: A character depicted by a player.

NPC: A character depicted by the Director.

In Character (IC): Descriptive of actions, dialog, events or decisions actually made by the character and taking place in the fictional world.

Out of Character (OOC): Descriptive of actions, dialog, events or decisions involving the participants in the real world.

Roleplaying: The act of thinking as a character and deciding and depicting their actions, using the character's own decision making process. An action that is "roleplayed" is carried out by acting rather than abstracted within the rules.

Game: A specific time a larp is played.

THE FIRST RULE OF LARPING:

Always keep IC and OOC knowledge/motivations separate.

What is a Parlor Larp?

FORMAT AND MISSION:

Parlor Larps are designed to provide maximally accessible, artistically satisfying larp experiences to a relatively small group of 4- 8 players and 1 Director. All require little or no preparation, a normal sized living room, and take 4-5 hours.

THE ART FORM:

Parlor Larps are intended as something more than "just a game." While they are certainly a leisure activity, they are meant to be thought of as exercises in art as well as entertainment, and in that sense are more like theater games than board games, or even many traditional larps.

Like a play or novel, they are designed to provide an experience, provoke an emotional response or make the participants think. While elements of entertainment, fun and challenge will certainly be present frequently, many of the Parlor Larps are not, and are not intended to be, entirely pleasant experiences. (A successful portrayal of a frightening atmosphere is rewarding even though everyone is feeling frightened.) These larps will be much more successful and enjoyable if all participants keep this goal in mind.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT:

Unlike many other single-session larps, Parlor Larps ask players to fill in many details of their character before beginning to play. This personalization process is guided by a set of questions at the end of each character sheet. It helps turn the characters from a collection of goals and background information into real, fully-fleshed people, and also allows each player to identify better with his/her character.

All characters can be played by either gender, though each game has one preferred male and one preferred female character.

DON'T CONFLATE PLAYER AND CHARACTER SUCCESS!

While each character has his own goals, and many characters have directly opposing goals, it is critical to remember that the players are not competing with each other. The goal of each player is to effectively simulate and portray his character and work with the other participants to build a rewarding story. This is true for most larps, and is vital to the spirit of Parlor Larps.

Remember: If you produce a dramatic and compelling story, everybody wins.

How to use this Book

GENERAL INFORMATION:

All participants should read this section the first time they play a Parlor Larp, (except the Guide To Directing, which need only be read by the Director.)

DIRECTORS' SECTION:

Directors, and only Directors, should read this entire section ahead of time. This section contains secret story information and advice necessary to direct the larp, as well as Director copies of information given out to players.

Directors should read the Public Background Overview, and then Larp-Specific Rules & Announcements to players at the start of game.

Public Background Overview: Relevant background info that all the PCs know.

Secret Background Overview: Relevant background info that not all PCs know.

Player Character Overview: A quick summary of PCs and their roles in the larp.

Game Overview: A guide to the plot and progress of the game itself.

Larp-Specific Rules: Rule changes or additions for this particular larp.

Announcements: Useful OOC reminders and other info for the players.

Character Summary Chart: A quick summary of major relevant info for all PCs.

Character Sheets: The Director's copy of each character sheet.

PLAYER MATERIALS:

This section contains perforated pages that the Director can tear out of the booklet and hand to players as appropriate. Keep in mind that by default, players should not see other players' Character Sheets or Game Materials.

Rules Summary: A shortened version of the Parlor Larp Rules for reference.

Public Background Overview: A copy of the publicly known background info.

Rules and Announcements: A copy of the larp-specific rules and announcements.

Character Sheets: 8 character sheets to be given out, one per player.

Game Materials: Some larps have additional materials. See Setup Advice.

IC/OOC:

Agree on a symbol (e.g. crossed fingers) to indicate when speaking OOC.

INTERPRETING CHARACTER SHEETS:

Names: [Male option / Female option] Lastname. Or, Firstname Lastname.

Character Style (see next page): Found in upper left corner.

Age: Found in upper right corner. (Certain larps don't include ages.)

Apparent Identity: General idea of what type of person the character appears to be.

Real Identity: General idea of what type of person the character really is.

Goals: A character's goals at the beginning of the larp. Not set in stone; can change through new events and roleplaying. Given in roughly decreasing priority.

Abilities / Resists: See Rules

Inventory: A list of nonobvious items the PC has at the time

Questions: These questions refer to aspects of the character that were not previously specified, that the player should develop at start of game. Make sure to answer questions in accordance with the spirit of the specified parts of the character sheet. Potentially controversial answers should be checked with the Director first.

A NOTE ON GENDER:

All PCs can be played as either male or female, though each larp has one character that is preferentially male and one preferentially female. However, for the sake of saving space and standardization, all PCs (and some background characters of unfixed gender, such as "John/Jane Smith's spouse") will be referred to by default as "he".

PRIORITY OF CHARACTERS:

While 8 characters are always provided, each larp can run with as few as 4.

In the Character Overview and in the ordering of character sheets, PCs will always be listed in order of priority. This means that the first 4 should always be included, and each subsequent character should be added with each subsequent player. Using this order is critical to the balance of the game -- don't change it.

CHARACTER STYLES:

Each character has a 3-letter code representing its Character Style. This code is meant to describe what it's like to play the character to help players pick characters.

G/E: Goal or Emotion oriented. Gs are more rewarding to play when focusing on pursuing goals, and Es are more rewarding when focusing on depicting emotions.

L/D: Light or Dark personality. How depressing/disturbing the PC is.

S/C: Simple/Complex personality. Complexity of the PC's personality/motivations.

Each larp has one character of each style. All letters are given relative to the other characters in the larp (so in a Dark 5 larp, the Ls will be darker than in a Dark 1).

In general, all Ls can be darkened and all Ss can be made more complex if the player desires, but the converse is not true.

QUICK-DESCRIPTION CLASSIFICATION FOR PARLOR LARPS

(SEE UPPER RIGHT OF BACK COVER):

The classification system is designed to describe the emphases of each larp in order to give an idea of what it would be like to run and play.

PRIORITIES: The opening letters of the classification represent which of five major elements are present as priorities in the larp, in decreasing order of importance.

A: Atmosphere. A particular mood or feel to the larp

D: Discovery. The existence of IC unknowns and the need to find out about them

M: Morality. Moral dilemmas and complicated moral decisions

R: Relationships. Complicated or changing relationship dynamics

S: Strategy. A need to make strategic decisions in pursuit of goals

SCALES: A number from 0-5. 0 = barely present. 3 = average. 5 = maximal.

Dark: The prevalence of depressing or disturbing elements

DIR: The amount of Director plot intervention required, difficulty of Director role

NPC: The amount of time and effort the Director must expend playing an NPC(s)

CONTENT ADVISORIES:

NC: Normal content. Teenagers and older should be comfortable playing.

AC: Adult content. Contains themes/elements that may not be suitable for teens.

DC: Disturbing content. Contains themes/elements that some adults may not be comfortable with. Consider comfort level of everyone in group before playing.

A Guide to Directing

THE BASICS

WHAT DOES THE DIRECTOR DO?

The Director is the person who manages and simulates the universe of the story so that the players can focus on roleplaying their characters. He knows everything about what is really going on, and observes all aspects of the plot as it unfolds. He manages the game, gives descriptions, answers questions about the environment/situation, propagates effects of PCs' actions on the environment and on NPCs' actions, mediates Ability use, and sometimes mediates Conflicts.

The Director also filters information so that each player only knows what he needs to know in order to successfully play his character. Most players find that having a lot of significant knowledge OOC but not IC can get distracting or confusing.

NPCs:

In some larps the Director also physically roleplays an NPC at the same time as his other duties. When doing so, it's fine to move in and out of character as long as it's clear which is which. However, he should take both roleplaying and directing responsibilities into consideration when determining the NPC's actions and timing.

THE DIRECTOR'S OBJECTIVES:

The primary objective of the Director is to produce a satisfying experience for all participants. There are two parts of this: making sure each player is satisfied with his PC's involvement, and making sure that the flow of the collective story is satisfactory.

The first involves making sure that each PC cares about what's going on, always has something to do and is capable of seriously affecting events that matter to him.

The second involves keeping the flow of events roughly within the intended progress, guiding the story to rising action, climax, and an ending that feels conclusive, as well as timing events to be as interesting and dramatic as reasonably possible.

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DIRECTING A PARLOR LARP

Make sure you are familiar with all the General Information.

Read all the Game-Specific Info, ideally at least an hour before playing. Make sure you know all of it, including character sheets. Important details may only be stated once.

Set up the room according to Advice on Setup.

Gather your players and explain the gist of the game.

Go through PCs. Describe them by name, style, age, and Apparent Identity.

Distribute character sheets, but don't let the players read them in detail yet.

If the players don't know the rules, go over them.

Read aloud Public Background Overview.

Let the players read and answer the questions on their sheets in private. When they are done, quickly go over the character with them--you don't need to know the answer to every question, but get an idea of each character. Give out props at this time.

Have players of PCs with significant relationships (e.g. married couples) go over their PCs' personalities and relationship together before start of game..

Gather everyone together and read the Game-Specific Rules and Announcements.

Run the game!

Afterwards, players tend to enjoy a wrapup to discuss what was going on.

ADVICE ON DIRECTING

PHYSICAL BEHAVIOR:

Maintaining atmosphere and keeping everyone in character as much as possible are critical to a successful larp. Thus the Director's involvement must be very unobtrusive when not playing an NPC: Stay in an unused corner. Don't interact with any props (even chairs). Ask and answer questions as discreetly and quietly as possible. Avoid interrupting important moments. Don't referee conflicts that the players can manage themselves. The Director is invisible IC, and therefore shouldn't be a social presence.

However, you should still move around and query players every once in a while so as to keep track of what is going on with everyone. You will also occasionally have to give expositions of events or people to all parties present-- at these times, interrupt clearly and briefly. Make sure everybody hears you the first time.

UNDERSTANDING PLAYERS AND CHARACTERS:

The more you understand each PC's priorities and way of thinking, the more easily you can guide events in directions that will seriously matter to the characters. The story is about them-- it should evoke ideas, themes, and interactions they care about.

PACING AND ACTION:

Timing makes the difference between a story and a three-hour sequence of events. Time background events and NPC actions so that they contribute to rather than detract from the flow of the plot. Each conflict/situation should be thoroughly addressed: Don't interrupt situations that have not been thoroughly explored with new problems. Don't introduce an event until a few PCs are in a position to properly address it. Don't add lesser plot points to a major plot point in such a way that they will draw attention away from what really matters. Keep in mind that even things like responses from background characters (like servants on errands) will contribute new material.

Be aware that at many times nothing will appear to be happening from the Director's point of view, but the same may not be true of the players'. Do not be afraid of twenty minute lulls. On the other hand, do check with players in a lull to see if they feel involved. If they're not, don't be afraid to give advice or, in more extreme cases, tweak events to make sure things get rolling again. A half hour lull is a problem.

Parlor Larps are written to take approximately three to three and a half hours-- the game will be most rewarding if you pace it to last about that long.

MAKING UP ANSWERS:

You will frequently have to answer questions about a given situation. When doing so, answer based on what is consistent with booklet information and previous answers, generally logical, appropriate to atmosphere and genre, compatible with pacing, interesting for the plot, unlikely to upset or derail the plot, feels fair to the players, and will leave you ample room later to guide the game in a variety of directions.

EXERCISING INITIATIVE AND MAKING EXCEPTIONS:

Parlor Larps are written to save the Director from having to spontaneously take major guesses or make up important plot. However, every Director will run into situations where it seems most beneficial to the game to depart from or override aspects of the scenario. The following is advice to keep in mind when doing so:

Understand the scenario so that you will be able to understand the consequences of your changes. Be selfish: always leave yourself as much room to maneuver as you can, and commit to as little future improvisation as you can. Remember that the bigger the change, the more likely it is to get out of hand. Pay careful attention to how your change draws the PCs' focus, and watch out for pacing.

Most importantly, identify and play to your own strengths. Make it so that any additional work you have to do is work that you understand and comes naturally to you.

Parlor Larp General Rules

RULES IN LARPING:

In a larp, most normal activity is simply acted out, with roleplaying and common sense determining the effectiveness of social interactions. The rules exist as a means to simulate characters' actions and capabilities that cannot be safely or effectively acted out.

FUNCTION LEVELS:

Each character, by default, starts at Function Level 5. A character's FL represents the condition the character is in and their ability to act, both physically and psychologically, and can increase or decrease over the course of the larp as a result of harm or recovery.

In general, a character at FL 5 is essentially unharmed and in good shape, at FL 4 is in an unpleasant but not particularly disabling state, at FL 3 is somewhat disabled, at FL 2 cannot perform most activities, and at FL 1 can do little other than speak. If a character is ever reduced to FL 0, s/he is out of the game and completely unable to affect the plot thereafter. It is impossible to go higher than FL 5 or lower than FL 0.

DAMAGE AND RECOVERY:

Decrease of FL is called Damage, but represents any long term harm to effectiveness, not just physical injury. Increase of FL is called Recovery and represents either fixing or making up for previous harm to the character. Change in general is abbreviated DR.

DR is mostly done to a character through Abilities. Each Ability causes DR in a slightly different way, so it is important that each player keep track of what specific injuries/recoveries his character's DR represents, as well as what FL the character is at.

In most cases, DR is explicitly called for by the rules, but if a player decides that his character would be seriously affected either way by what has happened, he can change his character's FL accordingly, subject to Director approval.

REMOVAL FROM THE GAME:

A character that is taken to FL 0 is removed from the game. Specifically, he is removed by the type of damage dealt in that last blow. All previous damage is simply interpreted as making it easier to deal the last blow. Thus, if a character is removed by being punched, he is probably unconscious, but if he is removed by being intimidated, he is probably hiding in a corner unable to do anything.

ABILITIES:

Abilities are actions that a character can take with success determined by rules rather than roleplaying. Abilities are divided into Conflict Abilities and Non-Conflict Abilities. Non-Conflict Abilities always work; Conflict Abilities start Conflicts in which other characters can use other abilities to oppose them.

Abilities are given in the following format:

NAME x [# of uses] (RANGE OF FLs) [bonus]: DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT (amt DR) (resist type)

Examples:

Intimidate x3 (4-5) 1: Make someone back down (-FL3) (S)

Flatter x1 (3-5): Make someone feel unduly proud of themselves (+1) (E)

Spark (1-3): Briefly create a tiny flame by magic

of uses = the number of times that ability may be used during the Larp. If none is listed, the ability may be used as many times as the opportunity arises.

Range of FLs = the range of the user's FLs at which the ability may be used. If a character's FL is outside the range, he may not use that ability.

Bonus = a number from -3 to 3 that represents the character's effectiveness at using that ability against opposition. +/-1 = significant, +/- 2 = extraordinary, +/-3 = world class. (Conflict abilities only.)

Amt DR= DR caused by the ability, if applicable. -/+ FL# indicates that it takes the target down/up to that FL, respectively. -/+ # indicates that the target loses/gains that number of FLs.

Type = type of Resist required to block the ability. P = Physical, S = Social, E = Emotional, NR = Not Resistable, P/S = Physical or Social, whichever is higher. Other letters for other Resists. (Conflict abilities only.)

Special exceptions to abilities are given in the Special section of the character sheet

CONFLICTS:

A conflict occurs when two or more people use opposing abilities. Conflicts need not be physical; two people attempting to intimidate each other also counts.

Whenever anybody uses an ability listed under Conflict Abilities, everybody able to participate in the conflict is invited to do so simultaneously. To participate is not necessary to be directly involved in the action that starts the conflict—one simply has to be taking an action in reaction to other actions taking place.

If a player thinks that his/her character would be too surprised to immediately respond, he should wait until after the conflict to respond, though he still Resists.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DECLARING ACTIONS:

Conflict resolution works as follows: First, participants state their intended actions. Others are invited to participate, stop participating, or change their own intended actions in light of the intended actions of others. (In the rare case that this causes an endless circle, everybody should choose actions simultaneously in secret.)

A participant can declare his/her intended action as contingent on the success or failure of another action (e.g. only running away if his partner dies.). He can also declare that he is not acting, and simply focusing on Resisting as a primary action.

RESISTING:

Every participant in a conflict is always by default Resisting, even if he is performing another action at the same time. This means that the character is trying not to be affected by hostile actions of others. There are three default types of Resists: Physical, Social, and Emotional. Certain larps may change types of Resists. A character always uses all Resists he has at the same time.

Each type of Resist behaves like an ability with a bonus of the Resist number (see bottom left of character sheet) whose effect is to prevent all undesired actions corresponding to that type of Resist from affecting the user.

Note that most actions don't need to be resisted. By default, especially in small conflicts, a player can choose to just permit an action targeting his PC for simplicity, or because he wants it to succeed.

An ability that takes a <type> Resist is called a <type> ability.

BIDDING:

After all intended actions are established, all participants then simultaneously Bid Damage. Bidding means secretly choosing an amount of damage (in FLs) the player is willing for his/her character to risk getting in order to increase the character's action's chance of success.

This is not to say that the character explicitly decides to get damaged in order to succeed-- whether and how much to bid is an OOC decision that is based on the player's judgment of how likely the character is to seriously push for his intended result despite chance of physical or psychological trauma.

No matter how dedicated the character is, however, bid sizes are also limited by the amount of damage the character can plausibly get in the conflict, and each participant is responsible for determining a plausible IC reason to take the amount of damage he bid.. For example, in most cases it is implausible to take more than 1 damage in a petty argument, but any amount of damage is possible in a gun fight. Keep in mind that losing an FL is important, and by default players should not bid.

Bids only apply to a character's primary action. This means that if a character is doing a normal action, the bid does not increase his chances of Resisting. If, however, he is only Resisting, then the bid will increase the chance of all Resists succeeding. Damage that was bid only actually occurs if the action is in any way successful.

When all bids are decided, all participants hold out 0-5 fingers behind their backs corresponding to the size of their bids, then show them at the same time.

RANKING:

Participants then calculate totals by adding their ability bonus and bid. (We recommend then holding out fingers for totals, for efficiency.) If a character is primarily Resisting, any bid he made is added to all his Resist totals.

At this point, participants sort out which attempted actions execute by ranking all participants by their totals, from highest to lowest, with ties broken randomly (such as with rock-paper-scissors).

Actions take place in order, starting from the highest. If a previous action causes a character to have too low an FL to perform his intended action, or simply prevents that action from occurring (e.g. a Resist), that action is cancelled. In essence, a Resist cancels all lower-ranked effects of the relevant Resist type on that character.

If any part of an action succeeded, then the bid goes into effect immediately after the action executes.

It's important to note that when an intended action gets cancelled because of effects of earlier actions, any limited-use abilities spent to attempt the action are still used up, but any damage bid does not occur.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are items that make it easier for a character to cause DR, often as a conflict action. The most common type of artifacts are weapons, which obviously cause damage. However, artifacts like drugs may cause recovery.

Certain characters may have abilities that make them good at using an artifact, but by default, characters simply use artifacts with their General Physical ability. If an artifact use action succeeds, then the target is DRed an amount according to the DR amount of the artifact (exactly the same as using an ability that normally causes DR on its own).

In certain cases, artifact use abilities override DR amounts on an artifact, either by the description, or by being themselves fixed DR (i.e. -/+ FL#). Artifact use abilities that are themselves unfixed DR (i.e. -/+ #) stack with the artifact's own DR amount.

By default, knives are (-1) and guns are (-2).

AFTER RESOLUTION:

After the above process is complete, characters may elect to use more abilities in response to the results. This opens a new round of the conflict in which anybody involved can use abilities and the rules for resolution are the same. This process repeats until a round happens in which nobody uses an ability. Then roleplaying can resume.

After a block of conflict is resolved, we recommend playing out as much of the determined actions as possible (without really hurting anybody, of course). This is especially helpful when a conflict ability used corresponded to IC dialog—it is useful for future dialog to know exactly what the characters said.

The Tale of Bob the Surgeon: A Few Examples of Conflict Resolution

Bob the Surgeon is strolling through a park, enjoying the flowers. His wife, Meg the Engineer uses her "Get Bob to Come Home" ability. (She chooses to do this because she has the ability—if she didn't, she could still simply try to talk him into going home through roleplaying.)

Bob does not want to go home, and chooses to Resist (in this case, only his "Social Resist" matters, since the only power being used against him is social). Bob's player thinks that Bob finds this is important enough that he should bid 1 to Resist, which he defines to represent damage from the frustration. Meg's player decides Meg doesn't consider the matter important enough to bid. Bob has a bonus of 0 to "Social Resist" and Meg has a bonus of 1 to "Get Bob to Come Home." Consequently, both of them have totals of 1.

The tie is resolved by rock-paper-scissors. Bob wins—his Social Resist is ranked higher, and therefore executes first, blocking any Social powers used against him for the rest of the round. Since he has bid 1 to use it, he is reduced to FL 4 as soon as he resists. When they play it out, Meg still acts out trying to talk him into going home, but he is prepared to say no, although he gets frustrated at her. Meg's ability is used up, so she cannot try again.

Bob has a non-conflict ability called "Independence" which allows him to recover 1 FL of damage whenever he successfully resists his wife. Since he's just resisted Meg, he can use it, and he is restored to FL 5. Since it's a non-conflict ability, it doesn't create a conflict and Meg can't prevent it.

After this has occurred, Meg does not drop the conflict, but starts a new one by immediately trying a more desperate tactic. She uses her "Guilt Trip" ability, an emotional attack which does actual damage. Bob decides to flee the park; since he doesn't have a specific ability that lets him do this, it counts as a "General Physical." Zagrabas the Restaurateur, who is also walking by, uses his social ability "Tease" on Bob to embarrass him into staying and standing up to his wife.

Bob has a "General Physical" of 0, and again bids 1. Meg has a "Guilt Trip" of 1, and doesn't bid. Zagrabas has a "Tease" of 0, but a special ability that gives him a bonus of 1 to social abilities immediately after taking a refreshing walk. In addition, Zagrabas cares so much about encouraging Bob to stand up for himself that his player decides that he bids 1 FL of damage, representing the social awkwardness of forcefully intruding on a private argument. This gives Zagrabas a total of 2, while Bob and Meg both have totals of 1.

Zagrabas goes first, beating Bob's social resist of -1, and forces Bob to stay; right after his action executes, his bid executes, reducing him to FL 4. Bob's action contradicts this and would have executed after, so it gets cancelled. Since his action didn't happen, his bid gets cancelled as well. Meg can still do her action, and she beats Bob's emotional resist of 0. Her power immediately takes the target to FL 3, and since Bob's current FL is greater than that, he is reduced to FL 3.

They pause to act out the actions of the round. Bob turns to leave, but Zagrabas starts mocking Bob for caving into his wife, whom he describes in unflattering terms. Bob turns back to confront her as she starts making him feel guilty.

Because Zagrabas succeeded during the previous round, Bob stands up for himself, using his "Complain" ability to do damage to Meg. Meg, meanwhile, tries to get revenge at Zagrabas for what he said about her, using her "General Physical" ability and

her unusual, extra-heavy purse (which does the same damage as a knife). Zagrabas gets angry at Meg, and uses "Embarrass" (an emotional attack) to humiliate her for 1 FL of damage, hoping she will then leave. A passerby uses "Instantly Summon Police." When Meg learns this, she decides that she only wants to attack Zagrabas if the police haven't arrived yet. At the same time, an unnamed shady character wishes to slip out before the police arrive, using a "General Physical." Unk the Lawyer, in the escalating argument, tries to use his "Threaten to Sue" ability on Zagrabas because he hates restaurateurs.

Meanwhile, Unk's pet platypus Eggy and Zagrabas' pet echidna Etch each fight to help their masters. Eggy declares that he wants to use his "Speedy Attack" ability to do physical injury to Zagrabas. Hearing this, Etch decides to attack Eggy in his master's defense. Eggy declares that if he is being attacked, he would rather fight his attacker instead of Zagrabas, and Etch decides that he still wants to attack Eggy anyway to demonstrate his loyalty. So Eggy instead uses his ability to attack Etch, while Etch uses his General Physical to poke Eggy with his spines, even though he can't actually cause damage using general physical without an artifact. Thus the fight between the two pets becomes a completely separate conflict happening at the same time.

Bob's bonus is -2, and he is so drained by Meg's guilt trip that he has nothing extra to throw into it, so he doesn't bid. Meg has a bonus of 0, and bids 1 because she's gotten angry and reckless. Zagrabas has a bonus of 2, but all of his Resists are 1. He would like to bid to increase his Resists, but because he is performing an action besides Resisting, his bid could only apply to the action, so he doesn't bid. The passerby has a bonus of 1, the shady character has a bonus of 3, and Unk has a bonus of 2. Finally, the pets both have attacks of -2 and all Resists at -1 (being only pets). None of these people are invested enough to bid.

The shady character goes first at 3, and leaves. Since nobody's action is contradicted by this, everyone else's actions still have the possibility of happening normally.

Unk and Zagrabas are tied at 2. Unk beats Zagrabas' Resist, but the order matters since Zagrabas can only use Embarrass at FL 3 or higher, is currently at FL4, and Unk's lawsuit always does 2 damage. Zagrabas has a single use non-conflict ability that lets him win a tie due to being extremely lucky. He uses it, and humiliates Meg before Unk threatens him. Then he is reduced to FL2.

Now Meg and the passerby both have totals of 1, and Zagrabas has a physical resist of 1. Meg won't attack Zagrabas if the police are there, and has to beat Zagrabas' Resist, so all three throw rock-paper-scissors together (even though it doesn't matter whether Zagrabas or the passerby goes first, as long as one of them beats Meg). Meg wins, and hits Zagrabas with her purse, since she won't react to something that hasn't happened yet. Her purse always does 1 FL of damage, so Zagrabas is reduced to FL 1. Then the passerby summons the police, who see everything that happens, but are too surprised to react until this set of actions have resolved.

Now, at -2, Bob complains to Meg and both animals attack each other. None of these activities contradict each other, so the order doesn't matter, but all the actions lose to the corresponding Resist.

Now that the police are here, Meg's player gets Director approval to take 1 FL of voluntary damage to represent her fear of getting in trouble for caught disturbing the peace by hitting people in a public park, bringing her down to FL3.

Since the police are present, people have to be careful about what they do. Unk uses a social ability, "Slander," to make Zagrabas out to be a violent criminal. Bob decides to try to make Meg feel better using his "Shelter" ability, which recovers someone 1 FL by offering to protect them from danger. Meg is so surprised at this that she fails to take any action, but she decides that the way Bob is helping her is too demeaning, and Resists it. Since the police don't care about the pets, Eggy and Etch attack each other again, and this time each bid 2 because, with Zagrabas so injured, they're both willing to risk serious physical injury to try to hurt the other. No one else bids.

Unk has a bonus of 2, which overcomes Zagrabas' Resist of 1. It does 1 FL of

damage, reducing Zgrabas to FL 0. Zgrabas is so reviled as a criminal that he can no longer affect the game, and is removed from play. His previous damage contributes to this—for instance the bruise from the purse makes him look less respectable—but it is the final ability which determines why he is removed. Bob has a bonus of 0, while Meg's Resist is 1, so Bob is unable to heal her. Finally, Eggy and Etch have totals of 0, so Eggy does 1 FL of damage to Etch while Etch (who used a "General Physical") succeeds in poking Eggy with his spines, but does no damage to him. Finally, they act out the results, with Unk openly accusing Zgrabas of being a criminal and Bob trying to comfort Meg and she rebuffs him, while the pets fight dedicatedly in the background.

Game-Specific Information for Director

Public Background Overview

INTRODUCTION (REGARDING SERVITUDE):

This story is set immediately after the victory of the “good guys” in a traditional fantasy epic. The PCs are all servants of the evil sorcerer just defeated in trying to conquer the world. The game is not about victory or questing: It’s about servitude, loyalty, responsibility, and identity, the way these people react to the death of a man who had been the most present and pervasive element of each of their lives.

It is important to move away from the modern conception of fundamental equality to a society which takes for granted the existence larger and smaller people, where servants do not go to work every day then return to their own lives at night, but rather share the lives, successes, glories, and ambitions of their masters.

THE SETTING:

The setting is a classic fantasy setting: late medieval technology, highly sophisticated organization and culture, magic universally known about and believed in, but difficult and obscure to practice. All people are normal humans of the same race. All relevant territory is located on the same huge continent. Society is all patriarchal.

THE EMPIRE:

The only country significant to the story is the Empire. The Empire is huge, spans most of the continent, and is ruled by a single Emperor. All manner of terrain and climate variation exist across it. It is divided into 7 different countries, each with its own local king. It is extremely civilized, advanced in art, culture, religion, bureaucracy, and centralization. The Capital is the wonder of the world. On the outskirts of the Empire are four other smaller countries, less advanced and with very different cultures.

Inside its mask of administrative centralization, the Empire is divided and corrupt. Power struggles between officials and local governments pervade, preventing it from achieving sufficient internal cooperation to expand its borders.

MAGIC AND RELIGION:

The Empire follows one prevalent monotheistic religion, which believes in a God associated with light, goodness, and law. Magic is universally believed in, but ill-understood. The religion considers it evil, and forbids it. Sorcerers are feared and reviled-- most people have little idea what magic can actually do, and associate with it all manner of unnatural and nightmarish effects.

There do, however, exist small groups claiming to practice “good magic”, which mostly serve governments or go about their own researches. These groups are highly educated about magic. More common is the occasional local sorcerer, well-hidden, who carries on his enchantments anonymously in cities or hidden in the mountains.

Magical talent is rare and innate. Magic additionally takes long study to learn. The ultimate limit on power, however, is simply innate talent, though true masters study for decades to achieve the fullness of their ability.

ARGENTIN AND THE WORLD:

Argentin (“are’-jinn-teen”) was a great sorcerer, far unrivaled in power by any other the world has ever seen. He lived in a tower in what was once the outer edge of the Empire, before he conquered the surrounding region.

He waged war by magic and held and ruled his territory by fear. The local villages were terrified of him and stripped to poverty with repeated forced tribute. He had connections, holdings, and petty agents throughout the Empire. He frequently

employed extremely cruel and ruthless methods to achieve his goals.

Physically, Argentin was tall, dark, and confident. He wore long dark robes, and had an undefeatable air of power and majesty. He moved and spoke with grace and refinement. His eyes were deeply penetrating, bright with vision, ambition, and secrets. He looked to be in his early thirties, but is at least twice that age.

He had for the past few years been researching an ancient magic that would grant him enough power to conquer the world.

ARGENTIN'S PERSONALITY:

Publicly, Argentin was simply accepted as evil. His household knew him as more complicated. He was intelligent, tasteful, articulate and cultured. He loved art and luxury, insisted on propriety, and was usually courteous when not being directly threatening. To his servants, he was generous but demanding, polite but aloof, fair but strict. He never got angry, though the force of his mild disapproval was usually emotionally devastating. He never permitted informality, and was impossible to lie to.

He often spoke freely of his vision of a unified world, glorious under one ruler powerful enough to hold it. He spoke of art, meritocracy, learning, luxury, and many other things. He was idealistic enough to hold a vast vision, egotistical enough to want to achieve it himself, and powerful enough to have a chance of doing so.

THE HOUSEHOLD

Only Argentin, his apprentice, and a staff of six servants lived in the tower. The PCs include the apprentice, the servants, and a field agent, Argentin's left hand.

The apprentice, Niven, was the highest ranked person in the household other than Argentin. The servants usually obeyed him, though they were not required to. Though he was their superior, he was socially he was closer to them than to Argentin.

The steward, Tallent, ran the household with competence and efficiency. Arken, the guard, followed Tallent in household matters but was the authority in matters of defense. Sov, the housekeeper/cook, simply obeyed Tallent. Ryanon, the groundskeeper, was technically under Tallent's jurisdiction, but was given special dispensation by Argentin to function independently and to requisition money or supplies whenever he wanted. Minnow, the bed servant, did not have special status. Kit, Niven's personal servant, was also everybody's general errand boy. Drae, Argentin's left hand, spent most of his time in the field, but was equal in authority to Tallent when staying in the tower.

THE EPIC BATTLE:

Argentin had been working for several years to achieve ultimate power. On the eve of his planned success, an army led by the young hero, Liam the Golden, marched on the tower. The area was defended by an unenthusiastic local draft force, mercenaries, and Argentin's magic. There ensued an epic battle. At the end of it, Liam the Golden fought and killed Argentin at the top of the tower with his legendary sword.

All the PCs were captured at some point during this invasion. All characters not in play were killed in the fighting. Afterwards, they were taken to separate tents, stripped of weapons but not valuables, kept for days, and eventually marched back to Fort Rothgaen, the closest Empire stronghold. The games starts with the PCs being reunited for the first time since the battle, when they are thrown into the same cell.

NIVEN, THE APPRENTICE:

Shortly before the battle, Argentin gathered everyone and explained what was happening. At that time, he also told them that in the event that he failed, Niven was his heir and would some day come into his own power and carry out his vision.

The captors obviously have no idea who Niven is, or that he can do magic, or they would have killed him immediately. They are all terrified of magic and consider it deeply evil. If they find out who he is now, they will probably do all manner of horrible things to him before killing him.

Secret Background Overview

There is only one secret that does not pertain to the background of individual characters: Argentin was lying when he told everyone that Niven would carry on his vision. Niven, while very talented, is not and can never be anywhere close to Argentin in power, and would not have a chance. Niven himself knows this. The reasons Argentin did so are enigmatic, and will never be known.

Character Overview

(Listed in order of decreasing necessity for smaller-group games.)

NIVEN: ELC. Niven has been Argentin's apprentice for ten years. He is very talented, though nowhere near Argentin, and knows this. He is responsible and good with people. Most of his values and beliefs are left unspecified.

ARKEN: ELS. Arken was Argentin's man. He came to work for Argentin as a guard when the noble he had been previously worked for betrayed him in a fight with Argentin, and Arken was captured. Argentin healed him and offered him a position, and he has been extremely loyal ever since.

MINNOW (PREFERRED FEMALE): GDS. Minnow was Argentin's bed servant. He grew up on a farm in Argentin's lands, and was seized and taken to the tower by Drae three years ago. He is the only servant who did not voluntarily choose to work for Argentin.

SOV: GLC. Sov was the housekeeper and cook in the tower. He is also very religious, and does believe that magic is evil, but for some reason continued loyally serving Argentin for years. He is secretly having an affair with Tallent-- he does not love Tallent, but considers it practical to accept his attentions.

RYANON: EDC. Ryanon was the groundskeeper and gardening for the tower. Argentin killed his family nine years ago, and he came to work for him so that he could get close enough to kill him. However, Argentin allowed him creative expression and truly appreciated his work, and he had not tried anything during all this time.

TALLEN (PREFERRED MALE): GLS. Tallent was Argentin's steward. He is rigid and professional, and did not consider it relevant to judge Argentin's actions. He is in love with Sov, and having a secret affair with him despite considering it improper.

DRAE: GDC. Drae was Argentin's left hand and agent for dirty deeds. When he originally came to work for Argentin, he was as idealistic and loyal as Arken. Since then, Argentin used his loyalty to draw him into worse and worse acts. He considers everyone who worked for Argentin to be equally morally culpable.

KIT: EDS. Kit was Niven's personal servant and general help for the other servants. He was also secretly dispatched by Argentin to spy on the other servants and report back to him, so he knows all their secrets.

Game Overview

THE GUARD:

The Director will be intermittently playing a guard as an NPC. The guard is petty, somewhat obnoxious, mildly corrupt, and not especially smart. He despises the prisoners as evil and does not have a problem with tormenting or taking advantage of them, but is not actively cruel. He is cautious, credulous, proud of the good guys' side, and terrified of magic. He especially jeers at Minnow for being the evil sorcerer's whore, and will want sex with him for the power and the boasting rights.

The guard is the Director's best avenue of control over the game. Decide his actions with a lot of attention toward plot and pacing control. However, allow extraordinary circumstances to naturally change his mind and/or standard behavior.

PHYSICAL LAYOUT AND GUARDS:

The room is situated near the long end of an L-shaped hallway containing 10 cells of various sizes. The close end dead-ends. The other opens to a spiral staircase. At the top of the staircase is a small anteroom, then a large guards' room. A few of the other cells are occupied, but their occupants won't communicate or make noise.

The door to the cell is solid wood, with a foot and a half square of bars situated in it to look or poke a sword through, and a slot at the bottom to pass food through.

There is one guard patrolling the hallway. He makes a round every ten or fifteen minutes. The rest of the time he is out of view (and earshot) around the corner. There are at least twenty guards present at any given time in the main guard room.

All guards have: General Physical (3-5) 1. All Resists: 0.

ENTERING THE CELL:

The characters are thrown into the cell over the course of ten or fifteen minutes in the following order: Arken, Minnow, Drae, Kit, Ryanon, Tallent, Sov, Niven. (Keep the order and just leave out characters not in play.) As Minnow is thrown in, the guard jeers at him and pinches his rear.

TIMED EVENTS:

At the beginning, the prisoners are told that they will be staying in the cell until someone has time to decide what to do with them, which will be in a few days or weeks.

20 - 45 minutes in, once social dynamics have been mostly established and initial activity has died down, the guard will come and tell the prisoners that reports back from the tower indicated that there was another sorcerer staying in the tower other than Argentin. He says they should tell him anything they know about this other sorcerer, especially where he might be hiding now, and they might be rewarded for this.

20-45 minutes after that, (but not much earlier than an hour into the game) the guard will return announcing that they have been sentenced to be publicly burned at the stake in about two hours as punishment and purging of their evils.

10-15 minutes later, he will once more prompt people to tell him about the other sorcerer, and offer an easier execution to anyone who cooperates.

INTERROGATION:

After the guard says he wants to know about the other sorcerer, he will look in every 10-30 minutes to prompt people for information. He may take people aside to question them when it seems like they are unlikely to speak in front of the others. He will press himself on Minnow and possibly other women at some point during this.

Interrogation is done by a mix of intimidation, persuasion, hinting at reward, and

noncommittal negotiation. If the topic of torture is brought up, the guard will indignantly protest, "Do you think everybody is as bad as you people? We don't do that sort of thing here!". He is, however, not opposed to roughing the prisoners up a little (hitting them for 0, 1 or 2 FL of damage) if they are being obnoxious or uncooperative. He also considers torturing sorcerers to be perfectly justified.

MISCELLANEOUS RESPONSES:

The guard will respond if called for loudly enough, but is disinclined to chat.

If OOC food is available, the guard will give it to them if they ask.

He is convinced that the prisoners are terrible people for serving Argentin and is indifferent to pleas or suggestions that they were working against their will.

He cannot commit to bargains or clemency without first checking with a superior.

He will be annoyed by fights in the cell but will avoid intervening to break them up.

ESCAPING:

As far as the captors are officially concerned, there is simply no way for any of the prisoners to get out with their lives. Public and religious demand that the servants of the evil sorcerer be burned to purify the lands once and for all is too strong. They are willing to execute one or two people by other means, but are not willing to let anyone go, even for information on the other sorcerer's whereabouts. The guard will tell the prisoners this when it comes up.

In practice, there are two ways for one person to escape. The first is if Niven uses Convergence. The second is that the guard is willing to risk himself to smuggle one person away provided that person gives him a lot of information toward finding the other sorcerer (so that the guard will get a lot of credit), and gives him a bribe.

Brilliant plans, extenuating circumstances, and roleplaying of the guard can cause there to be another way to get one or two people out. It is simply impossible to escape by fighting-- there is an arbitrarily large number of guards available to pour in and recapture everybody.

If a character is at FLO and not dead, he still matters and will still be executed.

MONEY:

The guard requires a bribe worth 50 or 75 silver. The amount is 50 if Drae is not in play, 75 otherwise. Money has been distributed such that a bribe requires Minnow's cooperation, and additionally Drae's cooperation if he is in play. (These are the two most likely to create conflict over pooling money for a bribe, especially to save Niven.)

If the characters are too annoying about the bribe question, the guard is happy to give up on courtesy and forcibly take some of their valuables and return nothing.

LEARNING THAT NIVEN IS THE OTHER SORCERER:

If someone confesses that Niven is the other sorcerer too early, the guard will laugh and simply not believe it on the grounds that he would have escaped already. If multiple people substantiate this, or if it is brought up later in the game, he will believe it.

Obviously, if Niven is seen using magic, the guard will also know and react.

Once it is known who Niven is, a dozen guards will pour in and take him away.

LIAM THE GOLDEN AND LADY OLIECRA:

The background characters of Liam the Golden and Lady Oliecra (his girlfriend) exist as convenient elements. By default, they don't come up or matter. However, the Director can evoke them for thematic purposes, or cause peripheral consequences of their actions to ripple down and affect the situation and events in the prison corridor.

THE ENDING:

When time is up, the guard will smuggle away anyone he promised to smuggle. Then guards will escort all remaining prisoners to execution.

Advice on Setup

- The ideal playing space is a large single room representing the cell, a hall, and a separate area/room where guards can privately talk to prisoners without being overheard.
- Clear out the room as much as you can. Move the furniture to the side, and throw sheets over them to represent miscellaneous juts of stone. It is a barren prison cell.
- Keep an area representing a pile of straw. Also have a small bench, to promote status interactions. Try not to make the bench too comfortable (chairs are okay, a couch is less ideal).
- Use a trash can as a chamber pot prop, and leave it in one corner.
- Find a clean bucket or very large bowl, fill it with water, and leave it in a different corner with one clean cup. This represents the bucket of drinking water. Absolutely do this if you can-- it will contribute a lot to atmosphere, social dynamics, and punctuation of pacing.
- Light the room dimly. There are technically no torches in the cell, so if you can move lights into the hall, so much the better.
- Close all windows and minimize visual access to the outside.

Advice on Casting & Running

ADVICE ON CASTING:

- The E-- characters are very E--. Give them to people who are satisfied with focusing on values and psychology rather than actions or events.
- Be aware that Minnow is a character who was forced into sexual servitude, and make sure he is played by someone comfortable with that.

ADVICE ON RUNNING:

- Make sure everyone goes to the bathroom before start of game.
- Have everybody briefly describe what they are like before start of game. Make sure everyone knows what their relationships with each other are, especially Sov & Tallent, Niven & Kit, Arken & Drae, everyone & Minnow.
- The movement and position of the guard are important pieces of atmospheric and tactical information. Prearrange a way to indicate when you are IC as the guard and when you aren't. (Standing = Guard, Sitting = Director will work fine.) Also, clearly indicate when the guard is walking by by gently hitting your hand against the wall to represent hard footsteps on stone.
- You probably won't need to move around the room much, so use the exit of the cell as your default watching place. This will both keep you out of the way, and have the additional bonus of making the players feel instinctively as though scrutiny comes from the physical direction of the door.
- Work out with your players ahead of time how much physical contact/handling they are comfortable with, and use as much as you can. Being able to roughly grab and throw a character into the room or slap Minnow's butt as he goes by contributes a lot.
- Remember that actual sex takes a reasonable amount of time, so if you're skipping time in narration for the guard to have sex with Minnow or another character, don't forget to wait a while before bringing them back.
- It may often be true that it appears as though nothing substantive is happening and nobody has anything to do, when in fact the players are actually engaged in internal roleplaying and do not perceive a lull at all. Do check on them occasionally to make sure they aren't bored, but be aware that in most cases you should just let them go on without interruption and restrain urges to insert more plot.
- Note that Drae has an ability to do any amount of damage unarmed. Keep this in mind when deciding movements of guards, to keep him from using it to escape.
- Arrange for the characters to understand that worse things than execution by burning will happen to Niven if their captors learn who he is.
- The domain of this game is extremely focused and sparse. Be advised that small interventions will have much wider repercussions than a Director usually expects.

Larp-Specific Rules and Beginning Announcements

(Read this to your players at start of game)

LARP-SPECIFIC RULES:

- Physical location matters to fighting in this game. There is a -1 penalty for having to go halfway across the room for an attack, -2 for going all the way across.

BEGINNING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- This is an extremely roleplaying-focused game. Most G-- characters are also very E--. The story is about ideals and psychology, not about events. This means that very little action will take place and few characters will achieve their goals. Play your character immersively.
- Most notably, keep in mind that the game is not designed for most people to be able to escape, so do not OOC expect to be able to conceive of any great triumphant plans.
- If you are familiar with the popular epic fantasy genre, you can answer a lot of clarification questions by thinking of things in those terms. Liam the Golden was the hero, Lady Olicra his love interest, Argentin the villain. You are the villain's servants who, if they are not casually killed by the good guys in one sentence during the storming of the tower, are granted a full paragraph's narration when they are executed in falling action.
- For example, this means that most of Fort Rothgaen loves Liam the Golden, but you guys have barely heard of him, and probably didn't see him in the fight.
- Keep in mind that this is a culture that is very close-minded about sexuality and sexual responsibility. Minnow was an evil sorcerer's whore. This makes him a dirty and less worthwhile person to most people, regardless of whether he consented.
- Pay attention to the status difference between everyone. To what degree do you retain your former statuses with Argentin gone?
- Make sure you know your relationships with each other before beginning.
- If you don't understand Argentin's personality, talk to the Director.
- 1 silver = spending money. 5 silver = 1 day's salary for a servant or guard.
- Most importantly, never forget that until a few days ago, Argentin was the largest and most important thing that filled all of your lives. He wasn't just an employer: he was a world. Everybody, you included, saw you simply as pieces of him.

Character

CHARACTER	STYLE	AGE	ROLE	EMPLOY LENGTH	STATUS
Niven	ELC	21	Apprentice	10 years	10
Arken	ELS	35	Tower Guard & Bodyguard	8 years	7
Minnow	GDS	17	Bed Servant	3 years	5
Sov	GLC	27	House Servant & Cook	11 years	4
Ryanon	EDC	28	Groundskeeper	9 years	7
Tallent	GLS	49	Steward	23 years	8
Drae	GDC	42	Left Hand	22 years	8
Kit	EDS	13	Niven's servant & general help	4 years	1

Status: A scale 1-10 of the character's status in the household, relative to the others. Status is a generalization of position, authority, respect, and favor with Argentin.

Summary Chart

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN	GOALS / PLOT ROLE	MONEY
Respectful, others as determined	<Fulcrum of conflict> Decide about using Convergence Learn about people	0
Loyal, belonged to Argentin	Continue serving Argentin Understand Niven	14
Hated Argentin Powerless, Argentin was the world	<General antagonism> Ruin what's left of Argentin Survive	34
Honest servant Thought Argentin & magic were evil	Do the right thing Get people to talk	10
Wanted revenge Artistically close to Argentin	No pre-established goals	12
Professional, loyal, nonjudgmental	Make sure everyone gets what they deserve	8 / 30
Wants to please Argentin Was corrupted by Argentin	Make sure everyone gets the same fate	35
Loyal spy on other servants Was scared of Argentin	Help/hurt people you like/dislike Don't come in last	0

	<p><i>Argentin</i></p> <p>Niven</p>	<p>Age 21</p>						
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's apprentice and intended heir</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: A talented student that could never approach Argentin's power</p> <p>BACKGROUND: You were born the youngest child of a middle-class merchant in a major city. When you were eleven, Argentin found you, recognized your intelligence and talent, and took you back to his tower to be his apprentice. You studied diligently and learned quickly. But as time passed, you understood that while you might have become a great sorcerer in many years, you could never come remotely close to Argentin's power. This did not bother you because you have always been comfortable with yourself and who you are, but it does mean that you will not, in fact, be able to take on his mission.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: You always respected Argentin, and he generally seemed satisfied with you, but he never exhibited any sign of closeness or personal attachment, and brooked none from you. You refer to him as "My Master" or sometimes, rarely, "Argentin".</p> <p>GOALS: Be true / Do the right thing Decide if you want to use Convergence, and if so on whom Learn about everyone and their relationships to Argentin</p>								
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES: General Physical (2-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P) Condemn (1-5) 1: Gently criticize someone (-FL4) (S) Dignity (3-5) 1: Shame someone throwing a tantrum by the force of your own composure (cannot be during a physical conflict) (-2) (S) Approve x3 (3-5) 0: Make someone loyal to you feel good by expressing your approval of an action of theirs (+1) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES: Read Person x3 (1-5): Tell how someone is feeling or if they are lying (E) *Heal x3 (1-5): Heal one FL of physical injury *Convergence x1 (1-5): Transport a person not yourself to a random location</p>								
<p>RESISTS</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Physical</td><td style="text-align: right;">0</td></tr> <tr><td>Social</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Emotional</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> </table>	Physical	0	Social	1	Emotional	1	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>Your * abilities are magic (see note on next page)</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>None</p>
Physical	0							
Social	1							
Emotional	1							

KNOWLEDGE:

Ryanon had ulterior motives. You could tell from the way he sometimes looked at Argentin when he thought nobody was looking, but you have no idea what those motives were. In any case, he never did anything remarkable.

You are not powerful enough and will not be able to return to rescue anyone else if you escape.

GETTING CAPTURED: You had been helping Argentin in the battle until he saw that he was losing and ordered you inside to hide. You changed into servants' clothing, and were knocked unconscious by falling debris. You woke up in the cell-- they assumed you were a servant and took you with the others.

NOTES ON USING MAGIC: You can normally do a lot more magic with proper materials and preparation. If the guard ever sees you use magic, he will recognize it as magic. Heal can be done quickly and does not attract much attention (so you can do it when the guard isn't looking).

Convergence is a powerful effect-- it's not so much a proper spell as just the effect of an abrupt gathering of energy that you can pull together in desperation. This is why it sends the target to a random location. The location will not kill them instantly (like 'in the middle of a wall' or '1000 feet in the air') but could be anywhere in the world. You need to gesture and chant at normal volume for three minutes before touching the target, and there will be glowing light, so it will be really hard to pull off without the guard noticing. It will lose you 1 FL of spiritual drain (cannot be healed or recovered).

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What was your family like? What does family mean to you?

What would you have done with your power once you became a great sorcerer?

How did you feel about Argentin?

How do you think Argentin felt about you? Did he care about you?

How did your family feel about your leaving to learn magic? Did Argentin get their permission?

How do you feel about not having been present when Argentin lost?

What does magic mean to you?

What do you respect about yourself?

What is your best guess as to why Argentin told the servants that you were to carry on his quest? How strongly do you believe your guess is true?

Did you expect Argentin to win? How do you feel about what happened?

What do you love?

What do you hate?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>Arken</p>	<p>Age</p> <p>35</p>
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's guard (both bodyguard and tower guard)</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Argentin's man, very loyal to him</p> <p>BACKGROUND: Eight years ago, you were serving a minor noble who was resisting Argentin's dominance. In a violent confrontation, your employer tricked you into an extremely dangerous position to cover his retreat and then left you for dead. Instead of killing you, Argentin saved you, took you back to his tower, and healed you. From that day on, you were his man. You mostly guarded the tower, but for many of his trips into the Empire, you are the only one he took with him. Recently, he had even been trusting you on small independent missions. You were quite content with your life. Argentin's death is a blow to you, in many ways.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: You have always been loyal to Argentin. His life was your life, his goals your goals, his honor your honor. He too has always done right by you. He often told you little and expected you to trust him, though you understood that he would have been quite willing to sacrifice you for his ends if the need arose. You admired his strength and vision. It didn't matter whether you agreed with his goals or his methods-- he was your master and you did not judge him. You refer to him as "the Master" or "my Lord".</p>		
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>General Physical (2-5) 1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P) Hit (2-5) 1: Punch someone really hard (-1) (P) Detect Lie x3 (2-5) 0: Tell if the last statement was a lie (E) Calm x2 (3-5) 0: Turn combat to dialogue (S) Example x1 (3-5) 2: Inspire someone to be as composed as you are (+ your present FL) (S)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>Defend (2-5): Take for yourself physical damage meant for someone else</p>		
<p>RESISTS</p> <p>Physical 1 Social 0 Emotional 0</p>	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Ring worth 14 silver</p>

GOALS:

Serve Argentin as best you can
Figure out what sort of person Niven is, learn more about him
Figure out who you are now that Argentin is dead
Other goals as you determine them

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You respect Tallent
Drae and his methods kind of put you on edge
Niven is really quite young-- people seem to forget that
There is something sketchy about Kit

GETTING CAPTURED: You were separated from Argentin in the final battle because you were fighting on the ground while he was atop the tower working magic. But then there were too many attackers, and they got past you and the other defenders. You were defeated and taken prisoner long after Argentin fell.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Why did you switch to work for Argentin?

What was your life like working for your first employer?

What type of family were you originally from? Where are they now?

Why does service and loyalty mean so much to you?

What do you disdain in a person?

What do you respect in a person?

How do you feel about not being there to protect Argentin in the last battle?

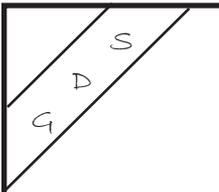
How, through the course of your life, have you envisioned your death?

How do you feel about the death you currently face?

Who, in general, deserves to be helped?

Is anyone at fault for Argentin's death? If so, who and why?

Suppose you could choose between Argentin's survival and the success of his quest. Which would you pick?



Argentin

Minnow

Age
17

APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's bed servant

REAL IDENTITY: Young person furious at being used and having no control of his life, who hates Argentin and those who make him possible

BACKGROUND: Three years ago, you lived on a farm on Argentin's lands. He passed by one day and saw you. A few days later, Drae came to take you away-- neither you nor your family could protest. In the tower, Argentin made you his bed servant, never entertaining the idea that you could protest.

The other servants helped you settle, and you quickly learned to please him. Once every few nights Argentin would send for you. He used you normally, but with a sense of having vastly greater status and concerns, almost to the point of not paying attention. He never had consideration for you, and rarely even had serious conversations with you.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Argentin shocked you with the ease with which he ripped away everything you had and made himself the extent of your life. But he really was your life-- you really wanted to please him most of the time, your repeated struggles to regain yourself really kept getting defeated every few nights, you really are left with nothing now that he's dead. You refer to him as "the Master" and occasionally "Argentin".

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Bite (1-5) -1: Bite someone really hard (-1) (P)
- Indifference x1 (1-5) 1: Hurt someone's feelings by sheer force of disregard for their problems or well-being (-FL2) (E)
- Massage (2-5) 0: Make someone more comfortable (+1) (P/S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Resolve x2 (1-5): Use an ability despite being at inappropriate FL for it
- Insinuate x2 (3-5): Get someone to seriously consider an idea or possibility without knowing you introduced it

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social -1 Emotional -1	None	Necklace worth 34 silver that has sentimental value

GOALS:

Regain a measure of personal power
Ruin what is left of Argentin, get general revenge
Survive somehow

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

Sov was quite kind to you when you first came to the tower.
You hate people like Drae, Tallent, Arken, and even Sov for supporting Argentin and helping him prey on innocent people like you and your family. You have thus far kept your hatred secret for practical reasons.
Niven is surprisingly all right, at least compared to the others.
Arken doesn't know that Drae used to be an honest guard just like him-- In a few more years, Argentin would have had him out kidnapping children too.

GETTING CAPTURED: You were seized early on when the tower was stormed. When the Empire soldiers found out who you were, they ridiculed you for being the evil sorcerer's whore, and you were repeatedly raped. It seems that people everywhere all suck just as much.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What did you hate about your life before you came to the tower?

What, more generally, was your life with your family like?

What did you think of Argentin before he came for you?

What does survival mean to you?

What does sex mean to you?

How have you changed since coming to the tower?

Why does the necklace matter so much to you?

What defines a good person?

What type of person do you consider yourself?

What gives you comfort?

Who, if anyone, are the good guys? Why do you believe this?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>SOV</p>							
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: The tower's general house servant and cook</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Devout person who served Argentin despite disapproving of him</p> <p>BACKGROUND: When you first came to work for Argentin eleven years ago, you did not actually believe rumors that he was an evil . Over the course of the next few years, you witnessed phenomena that disabused you of your credulity. Being a religious person who believes that magic is evil (and if magic isn't, some of the things Argentin did certain were), you had to deal with working someone like Argentin. But deal with it you did. You served him all this time, did everything he said, and never betrayed or even indirectly hurt his projects.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Despite everything, you have never actually been afraid of Argentin. He was strict and aloof with you, but you could tell he did not mean you harm and trusted his integrity, if not his virtue. You refer to him as "the Master".</p> <p>GOALS: Figure out what the right thing is and do it Get people to talk about themselves and their own relationships with Argentin Come to peace with God</p>								
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES: General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P) Inconvenient x4 (1-5) 0: Frustrate / embarrass someone by being present when they don't want you around (-1) (S) Empathy (3-5) 1: Tell how someone is feeling (E) Comfort (3-5) 0: Make someone feel smaller & taken care of by you (+1) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES: Cope x1 (2-5): Ignore effects of a non-passive social/emotional ability (if limited, attacker does not burn a use of the ability)</p>								
<p>RESISTS</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Physical</td><td style="text-align: right;">-2</td></tr> <tr><td>Social</td><td style="text-align: right;">0</td></tr> <tr><td>Emotional</td><td style="text-align: right;">2</td></tr> </table>	Physical	-2	Social	0	Emotional	2	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Coin worth 10 silver hidden in shoe</p>
Physical	-2							
Social	0							
Emotional	2							

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You respect Tallent because he is good at what he does, but he is also a little ruthless. But then, so are most of the people who work for Argentin. You have been having a very secret affair with him out of practicality.

Minnow was very frightened when he first came to the tower-- it was obvious that he didn't want to be there. You tried to be nice and help him settle in.

Ryanon seems like one of the nicer people around, but somewhat distant.

You're kind of scared of Drae.

GETTING CAPTURED: When the tower was stormed, you hid. The Empire soldiers found you when they were going through the tower after the battle.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What did you like about Argentin?

How guilty are you for Argentin's crimes simply because you served him?

How guilty are you for Argentin's crimes because you cooperated with him?

What is evil?

What is good?

Okay, the big question... Why continue serving him for so long if you were not afraid of him and hated the things he did?

What was your background before you came to the tower? family?

What does God mean to you?

Why are you willing to have an affair of convenience with Tallent?

What do you like about yourself?

What do you fear?

What do you deserve?

What do the others deserve?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>Ryanon</p>	<p>Age</p> <p>28</p>
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: The tower's gardener and groundskeeper</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Person who originally wanted to assassinate Argentin</p> <p>BACKGROUND: Nine years ago, you were recently married, the only child and heir of a councilman in a village on the outskirts Argentin's territory. During that time, Argentin was trying to expand- your village refused to pay tribute, and he razed it as an example, killing many, including your family and spouse. You swore revenge, and got a job at Argentin's tower, waiting to get close enough to kill him. In the first few months, this was difficult. But in these nine years, you have had ample opportunity, and done nothing. You sometimes feel bad about this, but mostly just live your life.</p> <p>While you were a mediocre potential councilman, you are an excellent gardener, creative and artistic in your own right.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP TO ARGENTIN: Your attitude toward Argentin is of course very complicated, and largely up to you. He is as aloof with you as with the other servants, but slightly less strict. He truly appreciates your work. Of all his retainers, yours is the only work that exists primarily to bring him pleasure rather than simply practical success. Even Minnow is not the same.</p> <p>Unlike the other servants you refer to him as "Argentin". He did not mind.</p> <p>GOALS:</p> <p>As you determine them</p>		
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>General Physical (2-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)</p> <p>Betray x1 (2-5) 2: Seriously betray someone who trusted you (-FL1) (E)</p> <p>Stare x2 (2-5) 1: Make someone feel like you know them too well (-FL3) (S)</p> <p>Evoke Argentin x3 (1-5) 3: Make a comment about a characteristic/habit of Argentin's, either reassuring or disconcerting, that deeply strikes everyone listening. (+/- 1) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>Like Water x1 (1-5): Ignore the effects of any ability on you (does burn use)</p> <p>First Aid x1 (3-5): Heal someone 1 FL physical injury</p>		
<p>RESISTS</p> <p>Physical 1</p> <p>Social 2</p> <p>Emotional -1</p>	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>Like Water does not work on magic</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Silk handkerchief worth 12 silver</p>

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You are generally nice and polite to the other servants, but withdrawn.
You know Sov disapproved of Argentin.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

So... Why haven't you killed Argentin all this time? Did you still believe that you might someday kill him?

What do you like about Argentin?

What did Argentin give you that no one else could?

What type of person was your father?

What was your spouse like? What did you marry him?

What in particular about what he did did you want revenge so much for?

Did you think there was a chance Argentin would win? If so, how did you feel about the possibility?

How did you get captured during the epic battle?

What does gardening mean to you?

What do you daydream about?

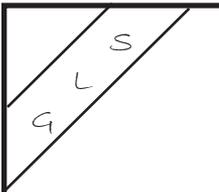
Why haven't you gotten closer to the other servants?

If you were to grow old, what would your sharpest memory of Argentin be?

What makes a good person?

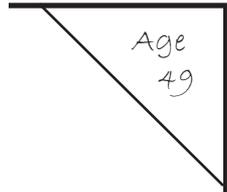
What, if anything, is unforgivable?

What do you deserve?



Argentin

Tallent



APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's steward

REAL IDENTITY: Competent administrator fixated on control and propriety

BACKGROUND: 23 years ago, you were a bureaucrat in the capital when Argentin approached you offering you a job as his steward. You went with him because of the temptation of the exclusivity. You have managed his accounts and household extremely effectively, kept the order and quiet he prefers, and been extremely satisfied with your job. You in some ways considered yourself the extension of Argentin's will upon the tower and household, his right hand. His pride was your pride, his peace your peace, his success your success. You did not judge him and did not care what he did.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Argentin had a way of nodding to indicate his appreciation for your competence that made you feel proud and satisfied like nothing else could. You refer to him as, "the Master" or "my lord".

GOALS:

- Figure out what everyone deserves and make sure they get it
- Maintain your own dignity and reputation
- Be a figure of authority

GETTING CAPTURED: You fought ineffectively in defense of the tower, and were defeated and taken shortly after the invaders broke in.

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Reprimand (3-5) 1: Criticize someone in front of others (-FL3) (S)
- Standard of Behavior x5 (4-5) 1: Make someone feel strong pressure to be more composed / effective in your presence (+1) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Silence x2 (4-5): Get everybody to be very quiet for a while
- Introduce Topic x3 (3-5): Get everybody to discuss a topic of your choice
- Effective x1 (1-5): Add 1 to your total in a non-physical conflict

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social 0 Emotional 2	None	Ring worth 8 silver

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You have been having an affair with Sov. This is extremely indecorous, so you've been keeping it very secret, but you are a little bit in love with him despite yourself.

You respect Niven and Arken, though you are occasionally jealous of the former for being closer to Argentin, and the latter for being the one Argentin took on many of his trips into the Empire.

You despise Minnow because you know he pretends at obedience while secretly hating Argentin. His anger upsets the peace of the tower, and it is despicable for him to feel so strongly negatively toward the Master.

You like and appreciate Ryanon for being competent and polite.

You respect Drae for being a crucial part of Argentin's work. The two of you get along and do not tread on each others' territory. Drae used to be an idealistic guard like Arken, before Argentin got him into doing dirty work.

Kit is annoying, and too often underfoot, but that's because he is young.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Did you expect Argentin to win or lose? How do you feel about the result?

What are you now that Argentin is dead?

What are the others now that Argentin is dead?

How did you feel about Argentin?

Why were you jealous of people who were closer to him?

Is Sov the first person you have been in love with? If not, what were your previous loves like? If so, how do you feel about it?

Why are you willing to have an affair with Sov? What does it mean that you have broken propriety this way?

(If Sov is opposite sex) Why not simply considering marrying Sov?

Why were you so indifferent to the bad things Argentin did?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>Drae</p>	<p>Age</p> <p>42</p>
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's left hand, agent who did much of his dirty work</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Originally devoted guard whom Argentin corrupted and coached into regularly doing evil.</p> <p>BACKGROUND: 22 years ago, you came to work for Argentin as a guard, doing much of what Arken does now. You were young, idealistic, devoted to notions of Loyalty and honor. Five years later, Argentin started ordering you to do darker and darker, more and more suspect tasks for him. By the time you were 29, you were working full time as his left hand. You killed, kidnapped, bullied, and tortured whoever and whenever you were told, often with no idea why. Doing all this for him as become so much a part of your life and who you are that you consider yourself an evil person.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Your relationship to Argentin is understandably complex. There is no doubt that he made you what you are, but he was able to do so because you have always wanted very much to please him. He never coerced you, and you never believed you needed to fear from him. Probably he would even have let you leave if you had insisted on it. He never demonstrated affection for you, only professional appreciation, and never entertained the idea that you might have a problem with the things he wanted you to do.</p>		
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>General Physical (3-5) 2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)</p> <p>Fighting x3 (4-5) 1: Do any amount of damage, unarmed or with a weapon. Cannot bring a PC to FLO. (P)</p> <p>Intimidate x2 (3-5) 1: Make someone frightened of you (-FL2) (E)</p> <p>Introspect (1-5) 2: Force someone to think about their problems with themselves (-FL3) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>Kill x2 (3-5): Kill someone at FLO without a weapon</p>		
<p>RESISTS</p> <p>Physical 1</p> <p>Social 1</p> <p>Emotional 2</p>	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Gold tooth worth 35 silver</p>

GOALS:

Make sure everybody gets the same fate
Bring the others down to your level (whatever that means to you)
Other goals as you determine them

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

All those who work for/with Argentin and help him in small ways should also be considered evil for contributing to his deeds. They are truly no better than you-- the only difference is that you admit your complicity and work openly while they pretend at distance. But the fact that they serve and do not protest makes them no better.

Sov, especially, is annoying because he thinks of himself as a good person, even tries at petty kindnesses and dares to follow God. Niven is even worse. He, too, believes that he is a good person, and actually seems to think that he can do good with his magic, that he is different from Argentin. You were the one who brought Minnow to the tower. Argentin saw him at his farm and wanted him, so you went and forcibly brought him back despite his and his family's protests.

You respect Tallent. He is good at what he does, realizes the consequences, and doesn't care. He is actually slightly disturbing because he is in some ways more ruthless than you. As Argentin's primary servants, the two of you have an understanding and do not tread on each others' territory.

You started out just like Arken, and Argentin made you what you are now. You can see that Argentin had started Arken on the same path.

GETTING CAPTURED: You were doing a job in the Empire and returned for the final battle to help fight for Argentin, even though he did not expect you. You were at his side for most of the time even though Arken was downstairs, but near the end you were separated by the fighting. You were taken down shortly before he died.

QUICK NOTE: Realize OOC that you will not be able to use the Fighting ability to escape, so don't waste it by trying to conserve its uses.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

How did you come to work for Argentin in the first place?

Do you like Argentin? How do you feel about him? What do you like and dislike about him?

How do you think Argentin really felt about you?

What did you think of him when you first came to work for him? How did you feel about some of the bad things he did?

Why did you do the first dirty things you did for him?

Why did you keep going?

Why, in all this time, didn't you leave?

What do you think of the person you were when you were young?

Did you think there was a chance Argentin would win?

Why did you return to defend him?

Have you ever been in love? If so, what happened? If not, do you regret it?

	<i>Argentin</i> Kit	Age 13
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: The youngest tower servant, in part Niven's personal servant and in part general help for the other servants</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Fearful spy for Argentin on the other servants</p> <p>BACKGROUND: You were the youngest child of a large family that could not support you. Four years ago, Tallent found you and brought you to help out around the tower. You were everybody's trash, doing the worst jobs, always moving from one errand to the next. You didn't like it, but it was a living. A few months after your arrival, Argentin took you aside. He told you he wanted you to spy on the other servants and Niven for him, generally report on their activities. He did not do anything to make it easier, but it was implicitly clear that terrible things would befall you if you didn't do it. You have thus been living in constant fear of both being caught by the other servants (since Argentin clearly wouldn't protect you) and displeasing the Master.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: You privately reported to Argentin regularly, and he was generally calm and courteous. However, you remained terrified of him. His presence driving you to secretly get information pervaded everything you did, every interaction you had.</p>		
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES: General Physical (3-5) -2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P) Probe x4 (3-5) 1: Get someone to talk about a topic of your choice (can be privately) without their knowing you influenced them (S) Serve x4 (2-5) 1: Make someone more relaxed by doing something for them (+1) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES: Overhear (2-5): Overhear a conversation without being noticed Luck x2 (1-5): Cause a person of your choice to win on a tie</p>		
<p>RESISTS</p> <p>Physical -1 Social -2 Emotional 0</p>	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Papers stolen from Tallent's office (they are otherwise unremarkable)</p>

GOALS:

Avoid coming in last

Try to help people you like and hurt people you dislike.

NOTES ON OTHER PCs: (All important info below was reported to Argentin)

Sov and Tallent have secretly been having an affair. Nobody else knows. Tallent is actually in love with Sov, but not vice versa.

Ryanon has many secrets. You did some active research into his past. He comes from a village that Argentin destroyed a long time ago. You are almost certain he meant to kill Argentin.

Sov has been kind to you

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What does status mean to you?

Which of the PCs did you most dislike when living in the tower?

What, in life, do you consider to be important?

Are you religious? How do you feel about magic?

What did your family do? What were they like?

Did you want Argentin to succeed?

How good of a spy were you? How hard did you try?

What did you think would happen if you got caught?

Player Materials

Rules Summary

FUNCTION LEVELS, DAMAGE, AND RECOVERY:

By default, each character starts at Function Level 5. A character's Function Level (FL) represents the condition that the character is in, physically and psychologically, and can decrease or increase over the course of the larp as a result of harm or recovery.

In general, a character at FL 5 is essentially unharmed and in good shape, at FL 4 is in an unpleasant but not particularly disabling state, at FL 3 is somewhat disabled, at FL 2 cannot perform most activities, and at FL 1 can do little other than speak. If a character is ever reduced to FL 0, he is out of the game and completely unable to affect the plot thereafter. Exactly how the character is taken out depends on the nature of the damage that reduced him to FL 0.

A player can request that the Director approve an FL change even when the rules don't call for it, if he thinks that prior events would cause the change to happen.

ABILITIES:

Abilities are given in the following format:

NAME x [# of uses] (RANGE OF FLs) [bonus]: DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT (amt DR) (resist type)

Examples:

Intimidate x3 (4-5) 1: Make someone back down (-FL3) (S)

Flatter x1 (3-5): Make someone feel unduly proud of themselves (+1) (E)

Spark (1-3): Briefly create a tiny flame by magic

of uses = the number of times that ability may be used during the Larp. If none is listed, the ability may be used as many times as the opportunity arises.

Range of FLs = the range of the user's FLs at which the ability may be used. If a character's FL is outside the range, he may not use that ability.

Bonus = a number from -3 to 3 that represents the character's effectiveness at using that ability against opposition. +/-1 = significant, +/- 2 = extraordinary, +/-3 = world class. (Conflict abilities only.) This will modify the character's chance of success when using the ability.

Amt DR= DR caused by the ability, if applicable. -/+ FL# indicates that it takes the target down/up to that FL, respectively. -/+ # indicates that the target loses/gains that number of FLs.

Type = type of Resist required to block the ability. P = Physical, S = Social, E = Emotional, NR = Not Resistible, P/S = Physical or Social, whichever is higher. Other letters for other Resists. (Conflict abilities only.)

Special exceptions to abilities are given in the Special section of the character sheet

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DECLARING ACTIONS:

Conflict resolution works as follows: First, participants state their intended actions. All other characters are allowed to participate, stop participating, or change their own intended actions in light of the intended actions of others. (In the rare case that this causes an endless circle, everybody should choose actions simultaneously in secret.)

A participant can declare his/her intended action as contingent on the success or failure of another action (e.g. running away only if his partner dies.). He can also declare that he is not acting, and simply focusing on Resisting as a primary action.

BIDDING:

After all intended actions are established, all participants simultaneously Bid Damage. Bidding means secretly choosing an amount of damage (in FLs) that the player is willing to risk his/her character receiving in order to increase the character's action's chance of success.

Regardless of the character's dedication, bid sizes are limited by the amount of damage the character could plausibly get in the conflict, and each participant is responsible for determining a plausible IC reason to take the amount of damage he bid. For example, in most cases it is implausible to take more than 1 damage in a petty argument, but any amount of damage is possible in a gun fight. Keep in mind that losing an FL is significant; a player's default bid should be 0.

Bids only apply to a character's primary action. This means that if a character is doing a normal primary action, a bid does not increase his chances of Resisting. However, if he is only Resisting, then a bid will increase the chance of all of his Resists succeeding. Damage that was bid only actually occurs if the action is in any way successful.

When bids are decided, participants hold out 0-5 fingers behind their backs corresponding to the size of their bids. All participants then show their bids at the same time.

RANKING:

Participants calculate totals by adding their ability bonus and bid. (We recommend then holding out fingers for totals, for efficiency.) If a character is primarily Resisting, any bid he made is added to all his Resist totals.

At this point, all actions are ranked by their totals, from highest to lowest, with ties broken randomly (such as with rock-paper-scissors).

Actions take place in order, starting from the highest. If a previous action causes a character to have too low an FL to perform his intended action, or simply prevents that action from occurring (e.g. a Resist), that action is cancelled. A Resist cancels all lower-ranked effects of the relevant Resist type on that character.

If any part of an action succeeded, then the bid goes into effect immediately after the action executes.

It's important to note that when an intended action gets cancelled because of effects of earlier actions, any limited-use abilities spent to attempt the action are still used up, but any damage bid does not occur.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are items that make it easier for a character to cause DR, often as a conflict action. The most common type of artifacts are weapons, which obviously cause damage. However, artifacts like drugs may cause recovery.

Certain PCs may have abilities that make them good at using an artifact, but by default, PCs simply use artifacts with their General Physical ability. If an artifact use action succeeds, then the target is DRed an amount according to the DR amount of the artifact (exactly the same as using an ability that normally causes DR on its own).

Specific artifact use abilities may override DR amounts on an artifact, either by the description, or by being themselves fixed DR (i.e. -/+ FL#). Artifact use abilities that are themselves unfixed DR (i.e. -/+ #) stack with the artifact's own DR amount.

By default, knives are (-1) and guns are (-2).

AFTER RESOLUTION:

After the above process is complete, characters may elect to use more abilities in response to the results. This opens a new round of the conflict in which anybody involved can use abilities and the rules for resolution are the same.

Public Background Overview

INTRODUCTION (REGARDING SERVITUDE):

This story is set immediately after the victory of the “good guys” in a traditional fantasy epic. The PCs are all servants of the evil sorcerer just defeated in trying to conquer the world. The game is not about victory or questing: It’s about servitude, loyalty, responsibility, and identity, the way these people react to the death of a man who had been the most present and pervasive element of each of their lives.

It is important to move away from the modern conception of fundamental equality to a society which takes for granted the existence larger and smaller people, where servants do not go to work every day then return to their own lives at night, but rather share the lives, successes, glories, and ambitions of their masters.

THE SETTING:

The setting is a classic fantasy setting: late medieval technology, highly sophisticated organization and culture, magic universally known about and believed in, but difficult and obscure to practice. All people are normal humans of the same race. All relevant territory is located on the same huge continent. Society is all patriarchal.

THE EMPIRE:

The only country significant to the story is the Empire. The Empire is huge, spans most of the continent, and is ruled by a single Emperor. All manner of terrain and climate variation exist across it. It is divided into 7 different countries, each with its own local king. It is extremely civilized, advanced in art, culture, religion, bureaucracy, and centralization. The Capital is the wonder of the world. On the outskirts of the Empire are four other smaller countries, less advanced and with very different cultures.

Inside its mask of administrative centralization, the Empire is divided and corrupt. Power struggles between officials and local governments pervade, preventing it from achieving sufficient internal cooperation to expand its borders.

MAGIC AND RELIGION:

The Empire follows one prevalent monotheistic religion, which believes in a God associated with light, goodness, and law. Magic is universally believed in, but ill-understood. The religion considers it evil, and forbids it. Sorcerers are feared and reviled-- most people have little idea what magic can actually do, and associate with it all manner of unnatural and nightmarish effects.

There do, however, exist small groups claiming to practice “good magic”, which mostly serve governments or go about their own researches. These groups are highly educated about magic. More common is the occasional local sorcerer, well-hidden, who carries on his enchantments anonymously in cities or hidden in the mountains.

Magical talent is rare and innate. Magic additionally takes long study to learn. The ultimate limit on power, however, is simply innate talent, though true masters study for decades to achieve the fullness of their ability.

ARGENTIN AND THE WORLD:

Argentin (“are’-jinn-teen”) was a great sorcerer, far unrivaled in power by any other the world has ever seen. He lived in a tower in what was once the outer edge of the Empire, before he conquered the surrounding region.

He waged war by magic and held and ruled his territory by fear. The local viliages were terrified of him and stripped to poverty with repeated forced tribute. He had connections, holdings, and petty agents throughout the Empire. He frequently

employed extremely cruel and ruthless methods to achieve his goals.

Physically, Argentin was tall, dark, and confident. He wore long dark robes, and had an undefeatable air of power and majesty. He moved and spoke with grace and refinement. His eyes were deeply penetrating, bright with vision, ambition, and secrets. He looked to be in his early thirties, but is at least twice that age.

He had for the past few years been researching an ancient magic that would grant him enough power to conquer the world.

ARGENTIN'S PERSONALITY:

Publicly, Argentin was simply accepted as evil. His household knew him as more complicated. He was intelligent, tasteful, articulate and cultured. He loved art and luxury, insisted on propriety, and was usually courteous when not being directly threatening. To his servants, he was generous but demanding, polite but aloof, fair but strict. He never got angry, though the force of his mild disapproval was usually emotionally devastating. He never permitted informality, and was impossible to lie to.

He often spoke freely of his vision of a unified world, glorious under one rule powerful enough to hold it. He spoke of art, meritocracy, learning, luxury, and many other things. He was idealistic enough to hold a vast vision, egotistical enough to want to achieve it himself, and powerful enough to have a chance of doing so.

THE HOUSEHOLD

Only Argentin, his apprentice, and a staff of six servants lived in the tower. The PCs include the apprentice, the servants, and a field agent, Argentin's left hand.

The apprentice, Niven, was the highest ranked person in the household other than Argentin. The servants usually obeyed him, though they were not required to. Though he was their superior, he was socially he was closer to them than to Argentin.

The steward, Tallent, ran the household with competence and efficiency. Arken, the guard, followed Tallent in household matters but was the authority in matters of defense. Sov, the housekeeper/cook, simply obeyed Tallent. Ryanon, the groundskeeper, was technically under Tallent's jurisdiction, but was given special dispensation by Argentin to function independently and to requisition money or supplies whenever he wanted. Minnow, the bed servant, did not have special status. Kit, Niven's personal servant, was also everybody's general errand boy. Drae, Argentin's left hand, spent most of his time in the field, but was equal in authority to Tallent when staying in the tower.

THE EPIC BATTLE:

Argentin had been working for several years to achieve ultimate power. On the eve of his planned success, an army led by the young hero, Liam the Golden, marched on the tower. The area was defended by an unenthusiastic local draft force, mercenaries, and Argentin's magic. There ensued an epic battle. At the end of it, Liam the Golden fought and killed Argentin at the top of the tower with his legendary sword.

All the PCs were captured at some point during this invasion. All characters not in play were killed in the fighting. Afterwards, they were taken to separate tents, stripped of weapons but not valuables, kept for days, and eventually marched back to Fort Rothgaen, the closest Empire stronghold. The games starts with the PCs being reunited for the first time since the battle, when they are thrown into the same cell.

NIVEN, THE APPRENTICE:

Shortly before the battle, Argentin gathered everyone and explained what was happening. At that time, he also told them that in the event that he failed, Niven was his heir and would some day come into his own power and carry out his vision.

The captors obviously have no idea who Niven is, or that he can do magic, or they would have killed him immediately. They are all terrified of magic and consider it deeply evil. If they find out who he is now, they will probably do all manner of horrible things to him before killing him.

Larp-Specific Rules and Announcements

LARP-SPECIFIC RULES:

- Physical location matters to fighting in this game. There is a -1 penalty for having to go halfway across the room for an attack, -2 for going all the way across.

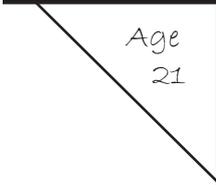
BEGINNING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- This is an extremely roleplaying-focused game. Most G-- characters are also very E--. The story is about ideals and psychology, not about events. This means that very little action will take place and few characters will achieve their goals. Play your character immersively.
- Most notably, keep in mind that the game is not designed for most people to be able to escape, so do not OOC expect to be able to conceive of any great triumphant plans.
- If you are familiar with the popular epic fantasy genre, you can answer a lot of clarification questions by thinking of things in those terms. Liam the Golden was the hero, Lady Olicra his love interest, Argentin the villain. You are the villain's servants who, if they are not casually killed by the good guys in one sentence during the storming of the tower, are granted a full paragraph's narration when they are executed in falling action.
- For example, this means that most of Fort Rothgaen loves Liam the Golden, but you guys have barely heard of him, and probably didn't see him in the fight.
- Keep in mind that this is a culture in that is very close-minded about sexuality and sexual responsibility. Minnow was an evil sorcerer's whore. This makes him a dirty and less worthwhile person to most people, regardless of whether he consented.
- Pay attention to the status difference between everyone. To what degree do you retain your former statuses with Argentin gone?
- Make sure you know your relationships with each other before beginning.
- If you don't understand Argentin's personality, talk to the Director.
- 1 silver = spending money. 5 silver = 1 day's salary for a servant or guard.
- Most importantly, never forget that until a few days ago, Argentin was the largest and most important thing that filled all of your lives. He wasn't just an employer: he was a world. Everybody, you included, saw you simply as pieces of him.

PC Info Chart

CHARACTER	AGE	ROLE	EMPLOY LENGTH	STATUS
Niven	21	Apprentice	10 years	10
Arken	35	Tower Guard & Bodyguard	8 years	7
Minnow	17	Bed Servant	3 years	5
Sov	27	House Servant & Cook	11 years	4
Ryanon	28	Groundskeeper	9 years	7
Tallent	49	Steward	23 years	8
Drae	42	Left Hand	22 years	8
Kit	13	Niven's servant & general help / errand boy	4 years	1

Status: A scale 1-10 of the character's status in the household, relative to the others. Status is a generalization of position, authority, respect, and favor with Argentin.

	<p><i>Argentin</i></p> <p>Niven</p>							
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's apprentice and intended heir</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: A talented student that could never approach Argentin's power</p> <p>BACKGROUND: You were born the youngest child of a middle-class merchant in a major city. When you were eleven, Argentin found you, recognized your intelligence and talent, and took you back to his tower to be his apprentice. You studied diligently and learned quickly. But as time passed, you understood that while you might have become a great sorcerer in many years, you could never come remotely close to Argentin's power. This did not bother you because you have always been comfortable with yourself and who you are, but it does mean that you will not, in fact, be able to take on his mission.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: You always respected Argentin, and he generally seemed satisfied with you, but he never exhibited any sign of closeness or personal attachment, and brooked none from you. You refer to him as "My Master" or sometimes, rarely, "Argentin".</p> <p>GOALS: Be true / Do the right thing Decide if you want to use Convergence, and if so on whom Learn about everyone and their relationships to Argentin</p>								
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES: General Physical (2-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P) Condemn (1-5) 1: Gently criticize someone (-FL4) (S) Dignity (3-5) 1: Shame someone throwing a tantrum by the force of your own composure (cannot be during a physical conflict) (-2) (S) Approve x3 (3-5) 0: Make someone loyal to you feel good by expressing your approval of an action of theirs (+1) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES: Read Person x3 (1-5): Tell how someone is feeling or if they are lying (E) *Heal x3 (1-5): Heal one FL of physical injury *Convergence x1 (1-5): Transport a person not yourself to a random location</p>								
<p>RESISTS</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Physical</td><td style="text-align: right;">0</td></tr> <tr><td>Social</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> <tr><td>Emotional</td><td style="text-align: right;">1</td></tr> </table>	Physical	0	Social	1	Emotional	1	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>Your * abilities are magic (see note on next page)</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>None</p>
Physical	0							
Social	1							
Emotional	1							

KNOWLEDGE:

Ryanon had ulterior motives. You could tell from the way he sometimes looked at Argentin when he thought nobody was looking, but you have no idea what those motives were. In any case, he never did anything remarkable.

You are not powerful enough and will not be able to return to rescue anyone else if you escape.

GETTING CAPTURED: You had been helping Argentin in the battle until he saw that he was losing and ordered you inside to hide. You changed into servants' clothing, and were knocked unconscious by falling debris. You woke up in the cell-- they assumed you were a servant and took you with the others.

NOTES ON USING MAGIC: You can normally do a lot more magic with proper materials and preparation. If the guard ever sees you use magic, he will recognize it as magic. Heal can be done quickly and does not attract much attention (so you can do it when the guard isn't looking).

Convergence is a powerful effect-- it's not so much a proper spell as just the effect of an abrupt gathering of energy that you can pull together in desperation. This is why it sends the target to a random location. The location will not kill them instantly (like 'in the middle of a wall' or '1000 feet in the air') but could be anywhere in the world. You need to gesture and chant at normal volume for three minutes before touching the target, and there will be glowing light, so it will be really hard to pull off without the guard noticing. It will lose you 1 FL of spiritual drain (cannot be healed or recovered).

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What was your family like? What does family mean to you?

What would you have done with your power once you became a great sorcerer?

How did you feel about Argentin?

How do you think Argentin felt about you? Did he care about you?

How did your family feel about your leaving to learn magic? Did Argentin get their permission?

How do you feel about not having been present when Argentin lost?

What does magic mean to you?

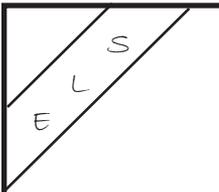
What do you respect about yourself?

What is your best guess as to why Argentin told the servants that you were to carry on his quest? How strongly do you believe your guess is true?

Did you expect Argentin to win? How do you feel about what happened?

What do you love?

What do you hate?



Argentin

Arken

Age
35

APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's guard (both bodyguard and tower guard)

REAL IDENTITY: Argentin's man, very loyal to him

BACKGROUND: Eight years ago, you were serving a minor noble who was resisting Argentin's dominance. In a violent confrontation, your employer tricked you into an extremely dangerous position to cover his retreat and then left you for dead. Instead of killing you, Argentin saved you, took you back to his tower, and healed you. From that day on, you were his man.

You mostly guarded the tower, but for many of his trips into the Empire, you are the only one he took with him. Recently, he had even been trusting you on small independent missions. You were quite content with your life.

Argentin's death is a blow to you, in many ways.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: You have always been loyal to Argentin. His life was your life, his goals your goals, his honor your honor. He too has always done right by you. He often told you little and expected you to trust him, though you understood that he would have been quite willing to sacrifice you for his ends if the need arose. You admired his strength and vision. It didn't matter whether you agreed with his goals or his methods-- he was your master and you did not judge him. You refer to him as "the Master" or "my Lord".

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (2-5) 1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Hit (2-5) 1: Punch someone really hard (-1) (P)
- Detect Lie x3 (2-5) 0: Tell if the last statement was a lie (E)
- Calm x2 (3-5) 0: Turn combat to dialogue (S)
- Example x1 (3-5) 2: Inspire someone to be as composed as you are (+ your present FL) (S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Defend (2-5): Take for yourself physical damage meant for someone else

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical 1 Social 0 Emotional 0	None	Ring worth 14 silver

GOALS:

Serve Argentin as best you can
Figure out what sort of person Niven is, learn more about him
Figure out who you are now that Argentin is dead
Other goals as you determine them

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You respect Tallent
Drae and his methods kind of put you on edge
Niven is really quite young-- people seem to forget that
There is something sketchy about Kit

GETTING CAPTURED: You were separated from Argentin in the final battle because you were fighting on the ground while he was atop the tower working magic. But then there were too many attackers, and they got past you and the other defenders. You were defeated and taken prisoner long after Argentin fell.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Why did you switch to work for Argentin?

What was your life like working for your first employer?

What type of family were you originally from? Where are they now?

Why does service and loyalty mean so much to you?

What do you disdain in a person?

What do you respect in a person?

How do you feel about not being there to protect Argentin in the last battle?

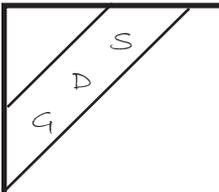
How, through the course of your life, have you envisioned your death?

How do you feel about the death you currently face?

Who, in general, deserves to be helped?

Is anyone at fault for Argentin's death? If so, who and why?

Suppose you could choose between Argentin's survival and the success of his quest. Which would you pick?



Argentin

Minnow

Age
17

APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's bed servant

REAL IDENTITY: Young person furious at being used and having no control of his life, who hates Argentin and those who make him possible

BACKGROUND: Three years ago, you lived on a farm on Argentin's lands. He passed by one day and saw you. A few days later, Drae came to take you away-- neither you nor your family could protest. In the tower, Argentin made you his bed servant, never entertaining the idea that you could protest.

The other servants helped you settle, and you quickly learned to please him. Once every few nights Argentin would send for you. He used you normally, but with a sense of having vastly greater status and concerns, almost to the point of not paying attention. He never had consideration for you, and rarely even had serious conversations with you.

RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Argentin shocked you with the ease with which he ripped away everything you had and made himself the extent of your life. But he really was your life-- you really wanted to please him most of the time, your repeated struggles to regain yourself really kept getting defeated every few nights, you really are left with nothing now that he's dead. You refer to him as "the Master" and occasionally "Argentin".

CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)
- Bite (1-5) -1: Bite someone really hard (-1) (P)
- Indifference x1 (1-5) 1: Hurt someone's feelings by sheer force of disregard for their problems or well-being (-FL2) (E)
- Massage (2-5) 0: Make someone more comfortable (+1) (P/S)

NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:

- Resolve x2 (1-5): Use an ability despite being at inappropriate FL for it
- Insinuate x2 (3-5): Get someone to seriously consider an idea or possibility without knowing you introduced it

RESISTS	SPECIALS	INVENTORY
Physical -1 Social -1 Emotional -1	None	Necklace worth 34 silver that has sentimental value

GOALS:

Regain a measure of personal power
Ruin what is left of Argentin, get general revenge
Survive somehow

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

Sov was quite kind to you when you first came to the tower.
You hate people like Drae, Tallent, Arken, and even Sov for supporting Argentin and helping him prey on innocent people like you and your family. You have thus far kept your hatred secret for practical reasons.
Niven is surprisingly all right, at least compared to the others.
Arken doesn't know that Drae used to be an honest guard just like him-- In a few more years, Argentin would have had him out kidnapping children too.

GETTING CAPTURED: You were seized early on when the tower was stormed. When the Empire soldiers found out who you were, they ridiculed you for being the evil sorcerer's whore, and you were repeatedly raped. It seems that people everywhere all suck just as much.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What did you hate about your life before you came to the tower?

What, more generally, was your life with your family like?

What did you think of Argentin before he came for you?

What does survival mean to you?

What does sex mean to you?

How have you changed since coming to the tower?

Why does the necklace matter so much to you?

What defines a good person?

What type of person do you consider yourself?

What gives you comfort?

Who, if anyone, are the good guys? Why do you believe this?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>SOV</p>							
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: The tower's general house servant and cook</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Devout person who served Argentin despite disapproving of him</p> <p>BACKGROUND: When you first came to work for Argentin eleven years ago, you did not actually believe rumors that he was an evil . Over the course of the next few years, you witnessed phenomena that disabused you of your credulity. Being a religious person who believes that magic is evil (and if magic isn't, some of the things Argentin did certain were), you had to deal with working someone like Argentin.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">But deal with it you did. You served him all this time, did everything he said, and never betrayed or even indirectly hurt his projects.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Despite everything, you have never actually been afraid of Argentin. He was strict and aloof with you, but you could tell he did not mean you harm and trusted his integrity, if not his virtue. You refer to him as "the Master".</p> <p>GOALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure out what the right thing is and do it Get people to talk about themselves and their own relationships with Argentin Come to peace with God 								
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Physical (3-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P) Inconvenient x4 (1-5) 0: Frustrate / embarrass someone by being present when they don't want you around (-1) (S) Empathy (3-5) 1: Tell how someone is feeling (E) Comfort (3-5) 0: Make someone feel smaller & taken care of by you (+1) (E) <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cope x1 (2-5): Ignore effects of a non-passive social/emotional ability (if limited, attacker does not burn a use of the ability) 								
<p>RESISTS</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Physical</td><td style="text-align: right;">-2</td></tr> <tr><td>Social</td><td style="text-align: right;">0</td></tr> <tr><td>Emotional</td><td style="text-align: right;">2</td></tr> </table>	Physical	-2	Social	0	Emotional	2	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Coin worth 10 silver hidden in shoe</p>
Physical	-2							
Social	0							
Emotional	2							

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You respect Tallent because he is good at what he does, but he is also a little ruthless. But then, so are most of the people who work for Argentin. You have been having a very secret affair with him out of practicality.

Minnow was very frightened when he first came to the tower-- it was obvious that he didn't want to be there. You tried to be nice and help him settle in.

Ryanon seems like one of the nicer people around, but somewhat distant.

You're kind of scared of Drae.

GETTING CAPTURED: When the tower was stormed, you hid. The Empire soldiers found you when they were going through the tower after the battle.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What did you like about Argentin?

How guilty are you for Argentin's crimes simply because you served him?

How guilty are you for Argentin's crimes because you cooperated with him?

What is evil?

What is good?

Okay, the big question... Why continue serving him for so long if you were not afraid of him and hated the things he did?

What was your background before you came to the tower? family?

What does God mean to you?

Why are you willing to have an affair of convenience with Tallent?

What do you like about yourself?

What do you fear?

What do you deserve?

What do the others deserve?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>Ryanon</p>	<p>Age</p> <p>28</p>
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: The tower's gardener and groundskeeper</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Person who originally wanted to assassinate Argentin</p> <p>BACKGROUND: Nine years ago, you were recently married, the only child and heir of a councilman in a village on the outskirts Argentin's territory. During that time, Argentin was trying to expand- your village refused to pay tribute, and he razed it as an example, killing many, including your family and spouse. You swore revenge, and got a job at Argentin's tower, waiting to get close enough to kill him. In the first few months, this was difficult. But in these nine years, you have had ample opportunity, and done nothing. You sometimes feel bad about this, but mostly just live your life.</p> <p>While you were a mediocre potential councilman, you are an excellent gardener, creative and artistic in your own right.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP TO ARGENTIN: Your attitude toward Argentin is of course very complicated, and largely up to you. He is as aloof with you as with the other servants, but slightly less strict. He truly appreciates your work. Of all his retainers, yours is the only work that exists primarily to bring him pleasure rather than simply practical success. Even Minnow is not the same.</p> <p>Unlike the other servants you refer to him as "Argentin". He did not mind.</p> <p>GOALS:</p> <p>As you determine them</p>		
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>General Physical (2-5) 0: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)</p> <p>Betray x1 (2-5) 2: Seriously betray someone who trusted you (-FL1) (E)</p> <p>Stare x2 (2-5) 1: Make someone feel like you know them too well (-FL3) (S)</p> <p>Evoke Argentin x3 (1-5) 3: Make a comment about a characteristic/habit of Argentin's, either reassuring or disconcerting, that deeply strikes everyone listening. (+/- 1) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>Like Water x1 (1-5): Ignore the effects of any ability on you (does burn use)</p> <p>First Aid x1 (3-5): Heal someone 1 FL physical injury</p>		
<p>RESISTS</p> <p>Physical 1</p> <p>Social 2</p> <p>Emotional -1</p>	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>Like Water does not work on magic</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Silk handkerchief worth 12 silver</p>

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You are generally nice and polite to the other servants, but withdrawn.
You know Sov disapproved of Argentin.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

So... Why haven't you killed Argentin all this time? Did you still believe that you might someday kill him?

What do you like about Argentin?

What did Argentin give you that no one else could?

What type of person was your father?

What was your spouse like? What did you marry him?

What in particular about what he did did you want revenge so much for?

Did you think there was a chance Argentin would win? If so, how did you feel about the possibility?

How did you get captured during the epic battle?

What does gardening mean to you?

What do you daydream about?

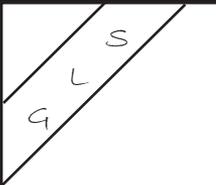
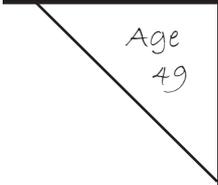
Why haven't you gotten closer to the other servants?

If you were to grow old, what would your sharpest memory of Argentin be?

What makes a good person?

What, if anything, is unforgivable?

What do you deserve?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>Tallent</p>							
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's steward</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Competent administrator fixated on control and propriety</p> <p>BACKGROUND: 23 years ago, you were a bureaucrat in the capital when Argentin approached you offering you a job as his steward. You went with him because of the temptation of the exclusivity. You have managed his accounts and household extremely effectively, kept the order and quiet he prefers, and been extremely satisfied with your job. You in some ways considered yourself the extension of Argentin's will upon the tower and household, his right hand. His pride was your pride, his peace your peace, his success your success. You did not judge him and did not care what he did.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Argentin had a way of nodding to indicate his appreciation for your competence that made you feel proud and satisfied like nothing else could. You refer to him as, "the Master" or "my lord".</p> <p>GOALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Figure out what everyone deserves and make sure they get it Maintain your own dignity and reputation Be a figure of authority <p>GETTING CAPTURED: You fought ineffectively in defense of the tower, and were defeated and taken shortly after the invaders broke in.</p>								
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Physical (3-5) -1: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P) Reprimand (3-5) 1: Criticize someone in front of others (-FL3) (S) Standard of Behavior x5 (4-5) 1: Make someone feel strong pressure to be more composed / effective in your presence (+1) (S) <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silence x2 (4-5): Get everybody to be very quiet for a while Introduce Topic x3 (3-5): Get everybody to discuss a topic of your choice Effective x1 (1-5): Add 1 to your total in a non-physical conflict 								
<p>RESISTS</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td>Physical</td><td style="text-align: right;">-1</td></tr> <tr><td>Social</td><td style="text-align: right;">0</td></tr> <tr><td>Emotional</td><td style="text-align: right;">2</td></tr> </table>	Physical	-1	Social	0	Emotional	2	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ring worth 8 silver</p>
Physical	-1							
Social	0							
Emotional	2							

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

You have been having an affair with Sov. This is extremely indecorous, so you've been keeping it very secret, but you are a little bit in love with him despite yourself.

You respect Niven and Arken, though you are occasionally jealous of the former for being closer to Argentin, and the latter for being the one Argentin took on many of his trips into the Empire.

You despise Minnow because you know he pretends at obedience while secretly hating Argentin. His anger upsets the peace of the tower, and it is despicable for him to feel so strongly negatively toward the Master.

You like and appreciate Ryanon for being competent and polite.

You respect Drae for being a crucial part of Argentin's work. The two of you get along and do not tread on each others' territory. Drae used to be an idealistic guard like Arken, before Argentin got him into doing dirty work.

Kit is annoying, and too often underfoot, but that's because he is young.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Did you expect Argentin to win or lose? How do you feel about the result?

What are you now that Argentin is dead?

What are the others now that Argentin is dead?

How did you feel about Argentin?

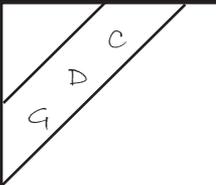
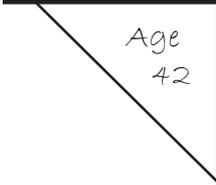
Why were you jealous of people who were closer to him?

Is Sov the first person you have been in love with? If not, what were your previous loves like? If so, how do you feel about it?

Why are you willing to have an affair with Sov? What does it mean that you have broken propriety this way?

(If Sov is opposite sex) Why not simply considering marrying Sov?

Why were you so indifferent to the bad things Argentin did?

	<p>Argentin</p> <p>Drae</p>	
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: Argentin's left hand, agent who did much of his dirty work</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Originally devoted guard whom Argentin corrupted and coached into regularly doing evil.</p> <p>BACKGROUND: 22 years ago, you came to work for Argentin as a guard, doing much of what Arken does now. You were young, idealistic, devoted to notions of Loyalty and honor. Five years later, Argentin started ordering you to do darker and darker, more and more suspect tasks for him. By the time you were 29, you were working full time as his left hand. You killed, kidnapped, bullied, and tortured whoever and whenever you were told, often with no idea why. Doing all this for him as become so much a part of your life and who you are that you consider yourself an evil person.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: Your relationship to Argentin is understandably complex. There is no doubt that he made you what you are, but he was able to do so because you have always wanted very much to please him. He never coerced you, and you never believed you needed to fear from him. Probably he would even have let you leave if you had insisted on it. He never demonstrated affection for you, only professional appreciation, and never entertained the idea that you might have a problem with the things he wanted you to do.</p>		
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>General Physical (3-5) 2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)</p> <p>Fighting x3 (4-5) 1: Do any amount of damage, unarmed or with a weapon. Cannot bring a PC to FLO. (P)</p> <p>Intimidate x2 (3-5) 1: Make someone frightened of you (-FL2) (E)</p> <p>Introspect (1-5) 2: Force someone to think about their problems with themselves (-FL3) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>Kill x2 (3-5): Kill someone at FLO without a weapon</p>		
<p>RESISTS</p> <p>Physical 1</p> <p>Social 1</p> <p>Emotional 2</p>	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Gold tooth worth 35 silver</p>

GOALS:

Make sure everybody gets the same fate
Bring the others down to your level (whatever that means to you)
Other goals as you determine them

NOTES ON OTHER PCs:

All those who work for/with Argentin and help him in small ways should also be considered evil for contributing to his deeds. They are truly no better than you-- the only difference is that you admit your complicity and work openly while they pretend at distance. But the fact that they serve and do not protest makes them no better.

Sov, especially, is annoying because he thinks of himself as a good person, even tries at petty kindnesses and dares to follow God. Niven is even worse. He, too, believes that he is a good person, and actually seems to think that he can do good with his magic, that he is different from Argentin. You were the one who brought Minnow to the tower. Argentin saw him at his farm and wanted him, so you went and forcibly brought him back despite his and his family's protests.

You respect Tallent. He is good at what he does, realizes the consequences, and doesn't care. He is actually slightly disturbing because he is in some ways more ruthless than you. As Argentin's primary servants, the two of you have an understanding and do not tread on each others' territory.

You started out just like Arken, and Argentin made you what you are now. You can see that Argentin had started Arken on the same path.

GETTING CAPTURED: You were doing a job in the Empire and returned for the final battle to help fight for Argentin, even though he did not expect you. You were at his side for most of the time even though Arken was downstairs, but near the end you were separated by the fighting. You were taken down shortly before he died.

QUICK NOTE: Realize OOC that you will not be able to use the Fighting ability to escape, so don't waste it by trying to conserve its uses.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

How did you come to work for Argentin in the first place?

Do you like Argentin? How do you feel about him? What do you like and dislike about him?

How do you think Argentin really felt about you?

What did you think of him when you first came to work for him? How did you feel about some of the bad things he did?

Why did you do the first dirty things you did for him?

Why did you keep going?

Why, in all this time, didn't you leave?

What do you think of the person you were when you were young?

Did you think there was a chance Argentin would win?

Why did you return to defend him?

Have you ever been in love? If so, what happened? If not, do you regret it?

S D E	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Argentin</h2> <p style="margin: 10px 0;">Kit</p>	Age 13
<p>APPARENT IDENTITY: The youngest tower servant, in part Niven's personal servant and in part general help for the other servants</p> <p>REAL IDENTITY: Fearful spy for Argentin on the other servants</p> <p>BACKGROUND: You were the youngest child of a large family that could not support you. Four years ago, Tallent found you and brought you to help out around the tower. You were everybody's trash, doing the worst jobs, always moving from one errand to the next. You didn't like it, but it was a living.</p> <p>A few months after your arrival, Argentin took you aside. He told you he wanted you to spy on the other servants and Niven for him, generally report on their activities. He did not do anything to make it easier, but it was implicitly clear that terrible things would befall you if you didn't do it.</p> <p>You have thus been living in constant fear of both being caught by the other servants (since Argentin clearly wouldn't protect you) and displeasing the Master.</p> <p>RELATIONSHIP WITH ARGENTIN: You privately reported to Argentin regularly, and he was generally calm and courteous. However, you remained terrified of him. His presence driving you to secretly get information pervaded everything you did, every interaction you had.</p>		
<p>CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>General Physical (3-5) -2: Physical actions not otherwise covered (P)</p> <p>Probe x4 (3-5) 1: Get someone to talk about a topic of your choice (can be privately) without their knowing you influenced them (S)</p> <p>Serve x4 (2-5) 1: Make someone more relaxed by doing something for them (+1) (E)</p> <p>NON-CONFLICT ABILITIES:</p> <p>Overhear (2-5): Overhear a conversation without being noticed</p> <p>Luck x2 (1-5): Cause a person of your choice to win on a tie</p>		
<p>RESISTS</p> <p>Physical -1</p> <p>Social -2</p> <p>Emotional 0</p>	<p>SPECIALS</p> <p>None</p>	<p>INVENTORY</p> <p>Papers stolen from Tallent's office (they are otherwise unremarkable)</p>

GOALS:

Avoid coming in last

Try to help people you like and hurt people you dislike.

NOTES ON OTHER PCs: (All important info below was reported to Argentin)

Sov and Tallent have secretly been having an affair. Nobody else knows. Tallent is actually in love with Sov, but not vice versa.

Ryanon has many secrets. You did some active research into his past. He comes from a village that Argentin destroyed a long time ago. You are almost certain he meant to kill Argentin.

Sov has been kind to you

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

What does status mean to you?

Which of the PCs did you most dislike when living in the tower?

What, in life, do you consider to be important?

Are you religious? How do you feel about magic?

What did your family do? What were they like?

Did you want Argentin to succeed?

How good of a spy were you? How hard did you try?

What did you think would happen if you got caught?

Parlor Larps

1 Living Room
1 Evening
1 Director
4-8 Players

RM

NPC 3

DIR 2

Dark 4

- AC -

(See Page 8)

Argentin

A few days ago, a young hero and the armies of good defeated the great evil sorcerer, Argentin, and saved the world. They fought his forces, stormed his tower, and ultimately killed him high on the battlements.

Set in the aftermath of a classic fantasy epic, this story is not about the heroes, or the kings, but about the evil sorcerer's servants. Lost in the confusion of the battle, taken prisoner afterwards, then held automatically culpable for their master's crimes, this small group served the daily needs of a man who had tried to conquer the world and lost everything when he was defeated. Sitting in a dungeon in what may be the last hours of their lives, they must sort through the meanings of loyalty, identity, and responsibility, to learn to understand a world without Argentin.

Requires a
hallway area

\$10.00

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