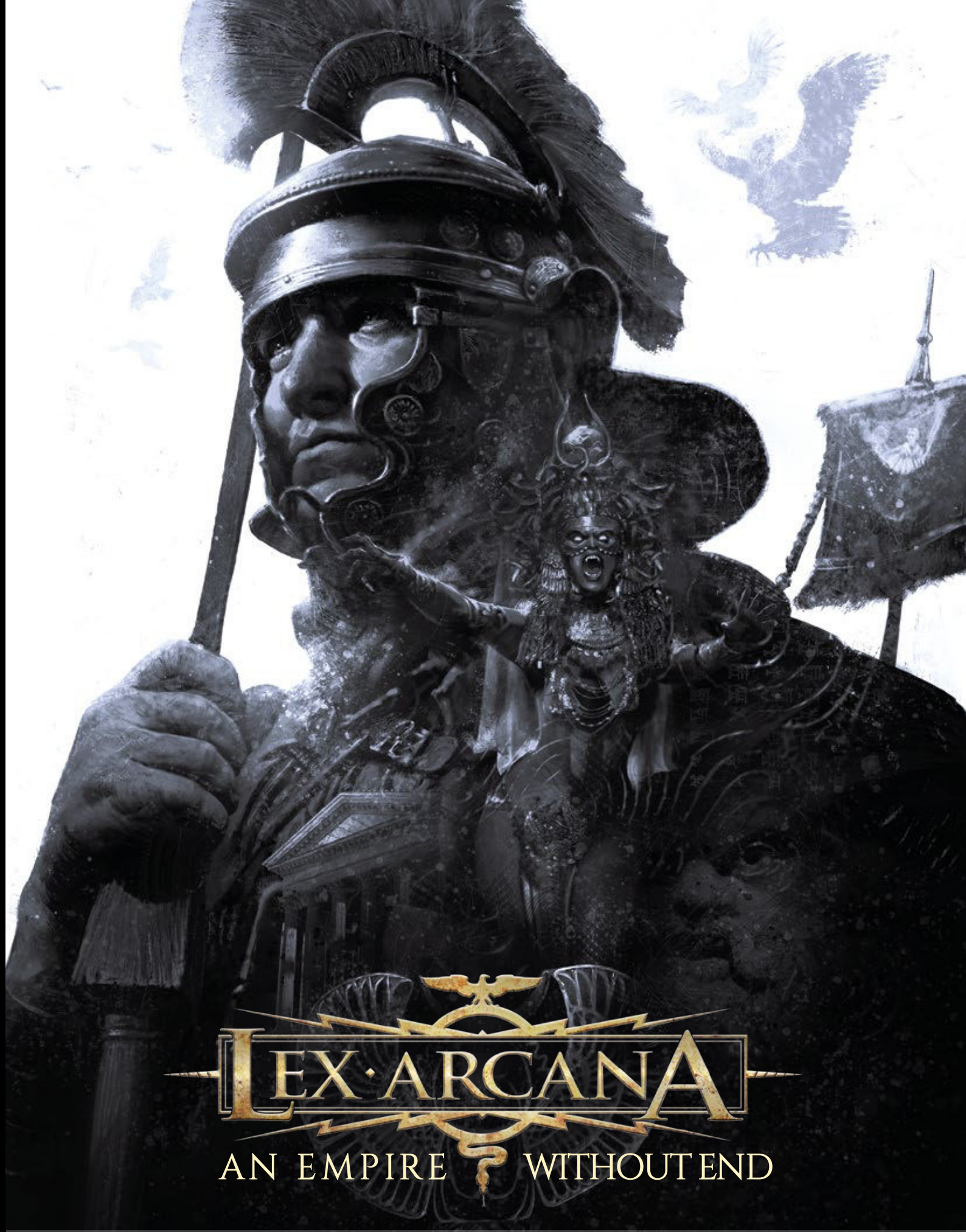


LEX·ARCANA

AN EMPIRE WITHOUT END

Quickstarter

LEX·ARCANA
AN EMPIRE WITHOUT END

LEX ARCANA® is a game by:
LEONARDO COLOVINI, DARIO DE TOFFOLI, MARCO MAGGI and FRANCESCO NEPITELLO

Quickstarter Design and Development: MARCO MAGGI and FRANCESCO NEPITELLO

Adventure by: GIACOMO MARCHI
Historical Consulting: FRANCESCA GARELLO
Editing: LIVIA ALEGI
Creative Direction: ANDREA ANGIOLINO

ART:
Character Archetypes: GIANLUCA ROLLI, FEDERICA COSTANTINI, MAURO ALOCCI.
Illustrations: ANTONIO DE LUCA, ROMAN KUTEYNIKOV, ALBERTO BESI, MICHELE ESPOSITO, MICHELE PARISI, MAURO ALOCCI.
Art Direction and Covert Art: ANTONIO DE LUCA
Graphic Design and Layout: GIULIA BERNARDINI

PLAYTESTING:

• I BRONZI DI RIALTO:
Giacomo Marchi (GM), Arancia Cecilia Grimaldi, Alberto Caccin, Giovanna Caleffi, Ludovico Manzato, Valentina Montrone;

• IL SALOTTO DI GIANO:
Laura Cardinale (GM), Diego Carosi, Simone Carlucci, Evelyn Ruth Girardi, Mario Mancaleoni, Stefano Paolo Cardinale, Eugenio Nuzzo, Johanna Macca, Alessandro Grassi, Mauro Cristofani;

• LA CIVETTA SUL COMÒ:
Marco Paolini (GM), Luca De Michelis, Stefano Tiribocchi, Andrea Cioffarelli, Daniele Romano, Emiliano Marchetti, Franco Severino;

• APS LA TAVOLA ROTONDA:
Luca Cardarelli (GM), Alice Mecchia, Marco Caponera, Diego Caponera, Enrico Battelli, Riccardo Carducci.

Special thanks to: GREGORY ALEGI, PAOLO FEDELI and MAURO LONGO
Supervision: ANDREA ANGIOLINO, GIOVANNI CARON and VALERIO FERZI
© 2018 Quality Games S.r.l. – Italy
LEX ARCANA® is a registered trade mark of Quality Games S.r.l. in the U.S.A. and in other Countries
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Lex Arcana is © by 1994 Leonardo Colovini, Dario De Toffoli, Marco Maggi and Francesco Nepitello
Brushes used in the map on page 18 by SirInkman, StarRaven, Rillani / CC

PUBLISHED BY:
Quality Games S.r.l., Via Volturno 2/c, 00185 Roma (RM), ITALY
www.qualitygames.eu

INDEX

LEX ARCANA QUICKSTART RULES

4 ADVENTURES IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

6 THE CUSTODES

9 HOW TO PLAY

11 COMBAT

13 ROMAN MAGIC

15 THE SORTES

ADVENTURE BY THE WILL OF THE GODS

16 PART 1: ARRIVAL

23 PART 2 INVESTIGATION

34 PART 3: ENDING THE THREAT

38 APPENDIX 1: FREQUENTLY PERFORMED RITUALS

39 APPENDIX 2: ANTAGONISTS

41 SAMPLE CUSTODES

47 SORTES

ADVENTURES

YEAR 476 CE: OUR WORLD

In the fifth century CE, the final collapse of the western Roman Empire closes a chapter of history that lasted more than one thousand years. Gods and heroes are forgotten, and with them the dream of a nation unifying the known world...

1229 AB URBE CONDITA: AN ALTERNATE WORLD

In the thirteenth century since the foundation of Rome, an Emperor still watches over twenty provinces and the different peoples inhabiting them. Ruling with the help of divinatory powers, the Emperor grants stability to a world threatened by supernatural phenomena and dark omens.

Lex Arcana is a historical fantasy role-playing game, set in an alternative 5th century CE where magic exists. In this divergent timeline, the Roman Empire managed to steer away from the course of events which led to its historical collapse, thanks to the mastery of the arts of Divination. By being able to see beyond the barriers of time, the Roman Emperors have kept their enemies at bay for centuries, outside the borders of the Empire and within them.

In the year 1229 AUC, the streets of Rome, Alexandria and Carthage see Greek philosophers mingle with astronomers from Babylon, while Germanic warriors enter service in the legions alongside Gauls and Sarmatian nomads. Every citizen of the Empire speaks Latin and is equal under a common law.

But the world of Lex Arcana is also fraught with danger, as within sight of the tall walls of the Roman cities lie demon-riddled deserts and dark, impenetrable forests, inhabited by fantastical beasts and murderous folks who defy the rule of the Emperor.

IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

In **Lex Arcana**, players take the role of **Custodes** (sing. **Custos**) of the **Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana**, a special chapter of the Praetorian Guard appointed by Imperial decree to search and study any supernatural phenomena. Its mission is even more specific: to identify and possibly stop any occult and magical activity. For behind the façade of luxurious ostentation and military might of the Roman Empire, many threats of an arcane nature are constantly gnawing away at its foundations: forbidden cults make converts among the poor and dispossessed denizens of the great cities, while enemy sorcerers unleash frightening monsters against the legions stationed at the frontiers.

To accomplish their task, the Custodes of the Cohors Arcana travel to the four corners of the known world, and investigate unusual occurrences among hostile populations, or unveil mysteries hidden behind foreign incantations.

Far from any Imperial centre, the Custodes must intervene of their own accord, risking to throw cities or entire provinces in turmoil and unrest should they fail. Often, they must fight to complete their missions, escaping assassination attempts or facing creatures risen from the depths of the underworld.

The adventures of **Lex Arcana** are as different as the Roman Empire is vast: the Custodes can be sent to explore the catacombs of Rome looking for a lost relic, they can investigate the infiltration of a depraved cult spreading among the ranks of a border garrison in Britannia, they can end up fighting undead monsters in Syria, or they can be tasked with sailing to the snowy shores of Hyperborea, where the giants live and the sun never sets.

The Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana

The Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana is formed by a few hundred highly specialised and gifted individuals, soldiers and civilians alike. They are selected among the citizens of the many provinces of the Empire by a number of recruiters, specially appointed by the Praetorian Prefects. Upon selection, each recruit is evaluated by a commission and then assigned to one of five training courses.

Tirocinium

Once admitted to the Cohors Arcana, all future Custodes enter a specific training program, the tirocinium, to further hone their skills and bridge their gaps. At the end of the training, each Custos is initiated to the mysteries of the cult of a specific Roman god, or numen, which becomes the tutelary deity of the Custos, granting divine protection.

Contubernium

Custodes from different courses are assembled in a contubernium, a group usually counting from 3 to 6 members, and they undergo a further stage of training as a group. The Custodes in a contubernium are taught to work together, to bring their personal expertise to the table, forming small, highly mobile and self-sufficient groups. They act unsupervised for most of the time, and must always be prepared to face the unexpected.
In the words of their trainers and supervisors, the Custodes are nothing like the legionaries, acting under the orders of their superiors. They must think of themselves as officials, charged with the full authority of the Emperor; even better, they must fancy themselves to be like the adventurous heroes of poems and legend, Achilles, Ulysses, or Aeneas, chosen by fate for a greater destiny.

Hodie Mihi, Cras Tibi

"What's to me today, tomorrow to you"

While the main mechanics of the game as explained in this primer differ slightly from those that were first published in Italy in 1993, the new Lex Arcana will offer much more. The design team is currently at work to improve the original game under every aspect, from the game system, to the background information and the graphic presentation.
A number of boxes using the 'Hodie Mihi...' title above introduce some of the new elements that Lex Arcana 2.0 will feature.

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

A roleplaying game (RPG) is a tabletop game in which players assume the role of fictional characters in order to live a life of adventure. All players but one interpret a single character, and get to describe their actions to the last player which acts as a game moderator. Gameplay consists in a dialogue between the participants, who decide what to do, where to go, how to defeat enemies, etc., and the moderator, who adjudicates the outcome of the players' actions using a set of rules.

The result of this interaction is the creation of a fiction, where the players are the main actors, but with the power of steering the story in any direction they desire.

THE CUSTODES

All Custodes are defined in the game by their personal data and by a set of numerical attributes.

PERSONAL DATA

These entries summarise some biographical details about the character.

Name

The name of a Roman citizen can be composed by up to three elements, depending on their social class and on the customs of their birthplaces.

Province of origin

There are twenty provinces in the Empire, gathered in four prefectures.

OFFICE

There are five offices in the Cohors Arcana, based on the training course the Custos was selected for upon recruitment: augur, diplomat, fighter, scholar, and explorer.

EXPLORER

This is the title given to those Custodes assigned to the cursus exploratorius and who were taught how to survive in a hostile environment, to track a prey, and open the way for others to follow. The tutelary deity of all explorers is the goddess Diana.

Augur

This is the title given to the Custodes assigned to the cursus auguralis, who were initiated to the study and practice of the art of Divination. The tutelary deity of all augurs is the god Apollo.

SCHOLAR

This is the title given to those Custodes who entered the cursus sapiens and were taught to apply the many fields of scholastic knowledge to the successful achievement of a mission. The tutelary deity of all scholars is the goddess Minerva.

DIPLOMAT

This is the title given to the Custodes assigned to the cursus legatorius and who now distinguish themselves for their interpersonal skills, their eloquence, diplomacy, and rhetoric arts. The tutelary deity of all diplomats is the god Mercury.

FIGHTER

This is the title given to those Custodes who entered the cursus bellicus and were trained especially in the ways of war. The tutelary deity of all fighters is the god Mars.

ATTRIBUTES

The physical, mental and spiritual attributes of a Custos can be grouped in two distinct sets, Virtutes and Peritiae. All attributes are rated with a numerical value, expressing in game terms the capabilities of a character.

VIRTUTES

The Virtutes (sing. Virtus) are attributes quantifying the innate capabilities of an individual. They are employed during character creation to determine the ratings of the Peritiae and to resolve a set of specific actions and reactions, as listed under each Virtus description.
The Virtutes are grouped in three pairs, identifying them as virtues of the Body, of the Mind and of the Soul.

VIRTUES OF THE BODY

Coordinatio (Coordination): the capability of a character in terms of dexterity, swiftness, agility and sense of balance.

• Reflexes Roll. Roll Coordinatio to dodge a falling rock, to reach for something before someone else does, or to balance on a windy ledge.

Vigor (Vigour): the physical prowess of a character in terms of strength, stamina, and physical health.

• Toughness Roll. Roll Vigor to bash open a locked door or lift a marble sarcophagus, resist the effects of poison, endure pain, fatigue, or lack of sleep.

VIRTUES OF THE MIND

Auctoritas (Authority): the force of personality of a character, their magnetism and self-confidence.

• Charisma Roll. Roll Auctoritas to make a positive first impression, to charm a foreign dignitary or to influence others through sheer force of presence.

Ingenium (Intellect): it reflects aspects of intelligence, like wit, deduction and memory.

• Idea Roll. Roll Ingenium to remember correctly the instructions read on a scroll, to recognize a face seen once in a crowd, or to spot a pattern in the symbols on an ancient mural.

VIRTUES OF THE SOUL

Ratio (Reason): the inclination of a character for rational thinking, their composure and force of will.

• Willpower Roll. Roll Ratio to stand fast before a charging lion, to resist most enemy incantations and to oppose other supernatural threats.

Sensibilitas (Sensibility): it measures the awareness of a character, their capability for empathy and their sensitivity towards magic and the unseen

• Perception Roll. Roll Sensibilitas to become aware of someone approaching stealthily, to spot something out of the ordinary in the behaviour of someone, or to perceive an eerie presence.

Hodie Mihi, Cras Tibi

Character Generation
The full rules for Lex Arcana allow players to create characters hailing from the four corners of the Empire. A number of simple steps determine the province of origin of a Custos, their birthplace and the type of upbringing they received, and the training they were subjected to when incepted in the Cohors Arcana. Players will be able to customise their characters' attributes and abilities in depth, making use of a special worksheet.

SPECIALITIES

The new version of Lex Arcana will add depth to the characteristics of each Custos adding a number of 'specialities'. These are abilities further defining the capabilities of a character, that at the same time aim at reducing the 'whiff factor' that is an integral part of a game system based on die rolls: Specialities work as flat bonuses, adding their numerical rating to the die roll result obtained by a player.

There are four specialities for each Peritia. The current roster of specialities is as follows:

- De Bello: Battle, Intimidation, Close Combat, Ranged Combat
- De Corpore: Athletics, Brawl, Stealth, Larceny
- De Magia: Divination, Folklore, Imperial Cult, Foreign Cults
- De Natura: Travel, Ride, Hunting, Scouting
- De Scientia: Erudition, Crafts, Medicine, Inspect
- De Societate: Decorum, Intrigue, Performance, Persuasion

PERITIAE

The Peritiae (sing. Peritia) are values quantifying how much a character is proficient in a certain field, a level of knowledge achieved through study, experience, or training. Peritiae are the ratings of a Custos that must be considered first whenever a character is attempting to achieve something through action, such as performing a ritual of clairvoyance, moving an audience with a theatrical performance, or throwing a pilum into the flaming jaws of a chimera. A high value in a given Peritia is normally the result of the specific training related to the office of a Custos.

De Bello (Combat)

It is a measure of the combat readiness and strategic cunning of a character. A high value in this Peritia is usually the mark of a Fighter.

- Roll De Bello when facing down gladiators in the arena or when peppering barbarians with arrows and spears, to field your contubernium with tactical savvy, or even to draw up a centuria in battle order.

De Magia (Magic)

It measures the magical and religious lore of a character and the art of Divination in particular. A high value in this Peritia usually indicates the office of Augur.

- Roll De Magia to perform the right offices in an imperial or foreign temple, to complete a ritual of clairvoyance, precognition or retrocognition, to find a hidden meaning in dreams, to read omens in the flight of birds or in the entrails of sacrificed animals.

De Corpore (Physical)

It expresses the capability of a Custos to perform activities relying on their physical preparedness. Most Custodes rely on a high value in this Peritia for their survival.

- Roll De Corpore to swim ashore in a stormy sea, to open the locked door of a villa, to pass a guard post without being heard, or to become a champion of harpastum (a brutal form of ball game).

De Natura (Nature)

It is the measure of the skills developed by a Custos by travelling across the Empire and staying out in the wild. A high value in De Natura is the mark of an Explorer.

- Roll De Natura to find water and food in a desert, ride a camel or a horse, to pick the best location for an encampment, to follow the tracks of a wounded beast or a fugitive.

De Scientia (Knowledge)

It is a measure of the knowledge of an individual, and their capability to put it to practical use. It includes natural philosophy, medicine, astronomy, history, and the logic of Aristotle. A high value in De Scientia is usually the mark of a Scholar.

- Roll De Scientia to treat the injuries of a wounded Custos, build a siege machine. or to deduct the cause of death of an individual from clues and marks left on the body.

De Societate (Social)

It gauges the capability of a Custos within the social sphere, allowing them to feel equally at ease pacing the halls of a foreign prince and walking down the streets of the Suburra. A high value in this Peritia usually indicates a Diplomat.

- Roll De Societate to make a public speech, to bargain prices with a merchant, to exchange greetings with a foreign dignitary or a crime lord, and to cheat at a game of dice or even tell believable lies.

Hodie Mihi, Cras Tibi

Fatigue

The new Lex Arcana will incorporate a simple system to keep track of the exhaustion level of a character. To simulate stress and weariness, characters in Lex Arcana will gain Fatigue, reducing their current Hit Points by barring them out with a slash (instead of crossing them out, as when a Custos is wounded).

Hit points

Hit points are a numerical value representing the capability of a character to resist to damage and wounds received as a consequence of combat or other sources of injury. The highest the rating, the more punishment the character can endure before succumbing. Hit points are lost as a character suffers damage and gained as wounds are healed, but never exceeding its maximum score. A character reduced to zero hit points in combat or due to other sources of injury dies.

Equipment

In addition to their clothing, the pre-generated Custodes attached to this booklet are provided with a basic travelling gear (a leather satchel, waterskin, cooking equipment, etc.) and with their choice of armour and weapons.

HOW TO PLAY

In Lex Arcana, players see their choices translated into actions undertaken by their characters. In several occasions, a die roll is required to determine the outcome of an action.

How easy or hard an action can be and its consequences are adjudicated by the game moderator (called Demiurge in Lex Arcana), using the following guidelines.

Dice

Lex Arcana employs the classic dice used in many role-playing games. Specifically, players need at least a set including dice with 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 20 faces (abbreviated as d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20, respectively). The rules also reference d3s and d5s: when such dice are required, simply use respectively a D6 and a D10, halving the result.

Die Rolls

The Virtutes and Peritae defining the Custodes, as well as their weapons and armour, are recorded on a character sheet as a numerical value and as a die type, or combination of dice. These combinations are to be used whenever the gameplay calls for a die roll, for example to adjudicate the outcome of an action.
When players of Lex Arcana make a roll, they roll the dice combination corresponding to the characteristic most appropriate to the task to be resolved. If more than one die is rolled, the result of the roll is equal to the sum of all rolled dice. The higher the result, the better.

The fate roll

Whenever a player rolls one or more dice and the result equals the highest possible score (for ex.: rolling an 8 on a d8, or a 15 rolling d10+d5), the player then rolls the same die (or dice) again, adding the second roll result to the first. Should the second roll again score the highest possible result, then the player would roll again, always adding the result to the previous ones, and so on.

The fate roll applies to all die rolls made by the Custodes, including damage and protection rolls (see Combat).

Invoking a Tutelary Deity

The divine protection granted by the Roman gods to the Cohors Arcana doesn't manifest solely with the fate roll, but also with the possibility

of the Custodes to invoke the tutelary deity of their particular cursus.

In game terms, each numen is associated with a Peritia, the main one of the protected cursus:

- **Mars** is the tutelary deity of the cursus bellicus and thus of the De Bello Peritia
- **Diana** is the tutelary deity of the cursus exploratiorius and thus of the De Natura Peritia
- **Mercury** is the tutelary deity of the cursus legatorius and thus of the De Societate Peritia
- **Apollo** is the tutelary deity of the cursus auguralis and thus of the De Magia Peritia
- **Minerva** is the tutelary deity of the cursus sapiens and thus of the De Scientia Peritia

Action Resolution

Die rolls are not always required to determine the outcome of an action, as many of the possible tasks featured in a typical game do not pose a challenge to the valiant Custodes: starting a fire to cook a meal, climbing a ladder or asking the local vigiles for help are all automatic actions, and they are considered successful without the need of any test.

A die roll is instead required whenever the outcome of an action is made uncertain by adverse circumstances or by direct opposition.

When this happens, the Demiurge must choose which attribute of the acting character is best suited to the task at hand, taking into consideration the description of both Virtutes and Peritiae. Most often, the attribute most relevant to the action at hand will be a Peritia, but it may happen that a task is best associated with a Virtus.

SET DIFFICULTIES

A number of actions described in this quickstarter are given a set Difficulty Threshold instead of determining it randomly (see Healing for example).

Moreover, the text for the introductory adventure includes the required attribute and a set Difficulty Threshold for all the actions that the players will be most likely to undertake.
For example, smashing a closed door could be presented as requiring a roll of De Corpore against DT 6.

If the Demiurge is undecided between a Virtus and a Peritia, roll the attribute with the highest score. When the attribute has been selected, the Demiurge must determine how difficult is the task, selecting a Difficulty Threshold (DT).

Finally, the acting player takes the dice combination corresponding to the challenged attribute and makes the roll.

Hodie Mihi, Cras Tibi

Strain
Characters in the new Lex Arcana gain Fatigue when rolling 1s on the dice, to simulate strain and stress (and to limit players from rolling when not necessary).

I Choosing the Appropriate Attribute

The vast majority of actions in Lex Arcana can be resolved employing one the six Peritiae defining the capabilities of the Custodes. At times, a Virtus can be more appropriate instead (see the descriptions of the various specific rolls listed under each Virtue).
The Demiurge should read carefully the descriptions of the various proficiency fields, to know precisely which attribute should be considered to be most appropriate to a certain task.

II Determining the Difficulty Threshold (DT)

The difficulty of an action is quantified in game terms by a numerical value called the Diffficulty Threshold (DT). Using this quickstarter rules, if an action is made uncertain by adverse circumstances, the Demiurge determines its Difficulty Threshold by rolling 2d6 and adding up the two results.
If the action is made uncertain by the direct opposition of another character (another Custos or a NPC, for example), the Difficulty Threshold is determined by the Demiurge rolling the value of the attribute of the opposing character that is considered to be most relevant (this is also called an opposed roll).

III Make the Roll

Once the relevant characteristic and the difficulty of the action have been set, the acting player rolls the appropriate dice combination listed on the character sheet: if the roll result is greater than the Difficulty Threshold, the action succeeds, otherwise, it fails.

Degree of Success

Sometimes it is not enough to know that an action resulted in a success. Should the circumstances of a task require a finer quantification of its outcome, the Demiurge can subtract the Difficulty Threshold of the action from the die roll result and refer to Degree of Success table below.

DIFFERENCE	DOS	DESCRIPTION
1 2 3	I	Marginal
4 5 6	II	Simple
7 8 9	III	Complete
10 11 12	IV	Major
13 14 15	V	Exceptional
16 17 18	VI	Amazing
19 or more	VII	Limit of human capabilities

COMBAT

All the members of the Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana are trained in the arts of combat, as the Custodes must be ready to counter all hazards threatening their lives and their missions.

Combat Types

Combat is a special case of opposed check, requiring a number of specific rules. Combat can be at close quarters, using swords, knives, maces and other hand-to-hand weapons, or ranged, using missile and thrown weapons, like javelins, slings and bows. Moreover, combat at close quarters can be considered a duel when a character is faced by a single foe, or against multiple opponents, if it's one versus many.

War gear

During combat, the players and the Demiurge refer to the characteristics of the weapons the Custodes and their foes are using, the armour they are wearing, and the shield they are carrying:

Weapons

Based on their type, Weapons can be used at close quarters or in ranged combat. Some weapons require only one hand, and therefore allow the use of a shield, while others require two hands to be used effectively. In game terms, all weapons are rated with a damage value corresponding to their efficacy in hurting an opponent.

Armor

Armour worn may reduce the amount of damage inflicted by a successful enemy attack. All Armour have a protection value between 3 and 10, which is the amount of damage they can absorb.

Shields

Shields improve the chance of a character of being missed by incoming attacks. Using a shield prevents the use of a two-handed weapon. All shields have a parry rating between 1 and 3, depending on their size and sturdiness, improving the defensive capability of a character.

THE DUEL

The duel is the simplest form of combat: two combatants fight until one of them retreats, surrenders, or succumbs. The rules for fighting against multiple opponents or using ranged weapons are presented as variants of the duel.

THE TEMPUS

When gameplay evolves into a combat scene, time is divided into units called tempora (sing. tempus). A single tempus is the abstract amount of time (a few seconds) required for both opponents to act, exchange blows, parry or dodge incoming attacks.

I ROLL DE BELLO

In each tempus, both combatants roll their De Bello and the results are compared: the combatant who scored the highest result is the attacker, while the other is the defender. In case of a tie, no one managed to land a significant blow during the tempus, so the fight skips to the following tempus.

II CALCULATE AP

After attacker and defender have been established, the Attack Potential (AP) of the attacker is determined subtracting the result rolled by the defender from the result of the attacker. If the defender is carrying a shield, its parry value is also subtracted from the attacker's result. If the Attack Potential is now equal to zero or less, the attack was blocked by the defender's shield.

III FIND DAMAGE MULTIPLAYER

If the Attack Potential equals 1 or more, the attacker managed to land a blow. The injury inflicted to the defender is based on the damage value of the weapon, multiplied by a factor determined by the Attack Potential. The table below indicates the multipliers corresponding to the different AP values:

AP	MULTIPLAYER
1 2 3	x1
4 5 6	x2
7 8 9	x3
10 11 12	x4
13 14 15	x5
16 17 18	x6
19 or more	x7

IV ROLL FOR DAMAGE

To determine the damage inflicted, the attacker rolls the die corresponding to the damage rating of the weapon used, as many times as determined by the multiplier and adding up the results. The defender can reduce the damage received rolling once the die corresponding to the protection value of any armour worn. The difference between the two results is the amount of Hit Points lost by the defender.

Hodie Mihi, Cras Tibi

Brawling Attacks

Using the rules in this quickstart, a character attacking without a proper weapon rolls De Bello normally and is considered to have a damage value of 1.
The new version of Lex Arcana introduces the pankration, the Roman art of wrestling and boxing, used by the Custodes to subdue their foes without killing them.

MULTIPLE OPPONENTS

During combat, a human-sized creature can be confronted by up to 3 foes at the same time, and a larger creature can be attacked simultaneously by 4 or more. When this happens, the fight is resolved using the same rules presented for the duel, with a few variations.
The main difference is that the outnumbered character must face all opponents in turn each tempus, in an order determined by the party enjoying the advantage. During each exchange, the outnumbered character opposes each adversary with a separate roll of De Bello. On their part, the opponents enjoy a substantial bonus:
The first opponent in order rolls De Bello normally, and all consequences are determined as in a duel. The second opponent in turn rolls De Bello, then rolls that of the first opponent and adds the two results. A third opponent would roll De Bello, and then roll that of the two preceding adversaries, adding the results (and so on).

RANGED COMBAT

Ranged combat takes place when someone is targeting an enemy using a ranged weapon, like a bow, a spear or a sling. The target must of course be within range of the weapon used. If two combatants target each other using ranged weapons, they both get to make a ranged attack in the same tempus.
The rules for ranged attacks are similar to those for the duel, but in this case the attacker is automatically established as the character using the ranged weapon. The attacker rolls De Bello, opposed by the defender's roll of De Corpore. AP, shield defense and damage are all determined normally.

SURPRISE ATTACKS

Surprise attacks in Lex Arcana happen when a character is not aware of either the presence or the aggressive intentions of an assailant. A surprised character is not allowed to oppose incoming attacks for the length of one tempus: this means that the AP of any attack on a surprised character is equal to the result of the De Bello roll of the attacker. From the following tempus onward, the victim will be fully aware of the danger, and will be able to act normally for the rest of the fight.

ESCAPING COMBAT

A combatant may attempt to disengage and flee from combat by declaring the intention of doing so at the start of a tempus. In the case of a duel, both combatants roll De Corpore: if the result of the character trying to escape beats that of the opponent, the character is now disengaged and may flee. Otherwise, the character attempting to flee is considered to be surprised for the length of the tempus (the opponent rolls De Bello unopposed).

When facing multiple opponents, the De Corpore roll of the character trying to escape must beat all the results of the De Corpore rolls of the opponents to succeed.

Healing

Combat often ends with one or more Custodes in need of recovering from the wounds they received. A character recovers lost hit points through natural healing or first aid.
Natural healing occurs automatically at the end of a prolonged period of rest (a night's sleep, half a day spent resting). The injured character rolls De Corpore against DT 6. If the roll is successful, the character recovers a number of lost hit points equal to the difference between the roll result and the difficulty. If the roll is failed, the character recovers nothing.

First aid can be administered only once, right after a character suffered damage from any source. The healer (who can be the wounded character himself) washes and dresses the wounds, or straightens a dislocated limb or joint. In game terms, the healer rolls De Scientia against a DT 6. If the roll is successful, the character recovers a number of lost hit points equal to the difference between the roll result and the difficulty. If the roll is failed, the character recovers nothing.

Roman Magic

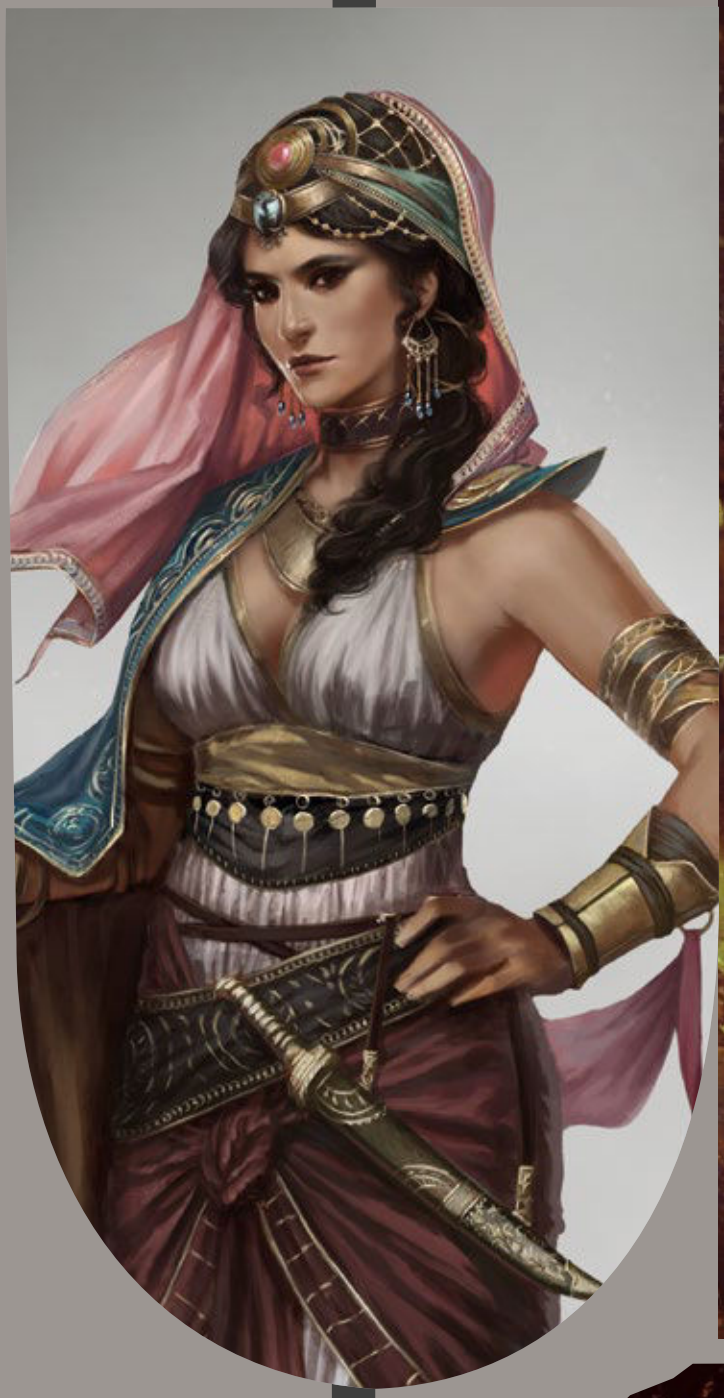
The military and diplomatic strength of the Empire, the extent of its knowledge, the uncommon loyalty it enjoys from populations and rulers so distant and diverse, is based on Roman magic. Ever since the foundation of the city, the magical might of the Caesars has revolved around the art of Divination, ritual practices aimed at foretelling the future, descry past events, read portents and interpret the favour of the Gods. All Roman magic is by its nature aimed to gather information, not to harm or destroy.

The augurs of the Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana are individuals selected among many for their uncommon talent for Divination, and who applied to the study of the art to become official practitioners of imperial magic. Custodes bearing different offices can possess some magic knowledge, but they will never be as proficient as an augur.

There are three main ways to employ the art of Divination: to celebrate a ritual, to use a discipline of interpretation, or to divine the favour of the Gods.

Rolling De Magia

In Lex Arcana, employing the art of Divination is resolved as a normal action requiring a roll of De Magia. The acting player makes a roll against a Difficulty Threshold, a set value if the Custos is attempting a ritual or is trying to divine the favour of the Gods, or determined by the Demiurge rolling 2d6 in the case of a discipline of interpretation.



Rituals of Divination

The rituals of Divination aim at gathering information about individuals, objects or locations that are physically distant from the officiant, or that concern either the past or the future. All rituals are complex ceremonials, requiring a quiet place, concentration and at least one hour.
For a ritual to have any chances to yield significant results, the officiant must have a clear goal in mind – in game terms, the acting player must pose a specific question to the Demiurge, pertaining to a specific person, place, event or object.
A successful ritual allows the officiant to receive a brief vision, appearing on a reflecting surface, or a flame or smoke, etc. The officiant cannot interact with the vision in any way. What information the officiant is able to gather from the vision is up to the players – the ritual does not automatically give any information beyond the vision itself.

Hodie Mihi, Cras Tibi

Ritual Magic

By performing a ritual of Divination, a Custos catches a glimpse of what lies behind the veil between the material and the supernatural world. But the divine world contains the past, the present, and the future mixed together: to make sense of any vision, the officiant of a ritual must look for something specific among the immense vastness of possibilities, focussing on a place, a specific event, a well-known person, and so on.

Ritual of Clairvoyance (DT 9)

The ritual allows to perceive events currently occurring somewhere else, in relation to an object, an individual or a location.
The vision shows briefly the area where the sought object can be found, or the place where the wanted person is currently staying, etc.

Legitimate Questions: *Where is Gaius now? Where is the gladius of the Praetor? What's going on now at the temple we visited yesterday?*

Ritual of Retrocognition (DT 9)

The ritual allows to receive information concerning events that occurred in a recent past in the same location occupied by the officiant.The vision shows something relevant only if the recent events are tied to something the Custodes are currently inquiring into: for example, the officiant asks about what happened in a room where they found a dead body.
Legitimate Questions: *What happened here, the room where Gaius died? Was Gaius killed with a gladius? What happened here, the inner sanctum of the burned temple?*

Ritual of Precognition (DT 12)

The ritual is the most difficult and powerful one a Custos may attempt. It allows to perceive events which are likely to occur in the near future.
The vision shows relevant information only if the officiant asks a question aimed at removing doubts about something that the officiant already knows or suspects will happen.

Legitimate Questions*: Will the man who killed Gaius return here soon to recover his weapon? Will the Praetor leave town tomorrow? Will someone come soon to perform a ritual in the temple?*

Perceiving the Favour of the Gods (DT 6)

Perceiving the favour of the Gods entails a lengthy ceremonial (over two hours) allowing the officiant to guess whether the Gods are looking favourably over the actions of the Custodes, if they are indifferent, or if they are witnessing their deeds with hostility.
A successful roll of De Magia allows the Custos to have a clear response (favour, indifference, or hostility), while a higher degree of success may allow to identify the reasons behind a response.

Disciplines of Interpretation

In addition to the performance of rituals, augurs are taught how to give meaning to natural signs and dreams. Unlike the lenghty rituals of Divination, the disciplines of interpretation only require a few moments of thoughtful reflection.
With a successful roll a Custos can interpret the sign as a favourable response (fas) or as an unfavourable one (nefas) putting it in relation to an action, a place, a person or an object.

Interpretation of Portents

The Custodes can try to find meaning in extraordinary but natural events called omina (sing. omen), considered by augurs to be expressions of the twisted designs of Fate or of the whimsical will of the Gods. Whenever the Custodes witness a phenomenon they think might be the supernatural manifestation of a divine power (e.g. a sudden lightning strike, an animal with fur of unusual color, a bloody moon, etc.), they can interpret the omen to gain insight on the events they are investigating.

Interpretation of dreams

Many consider dreams to be the favoured mean of communication between the mortal world and the divine.
Whenever the Demiurge describes an unusual dream, the Custodes can interpret it and possibly gain a response concerning recent events

THE SORTES

Among the various items that are considered part of the standard equipment of a contubernium of Custodes is a pouch, usually made of leather, containing a number of thin metal tablets with inscriptions. These tablets, called sortes (sing. sors), are used by the superstitious members of the Cohors Arcana to find out more about their destiny during a mission.
At the start of an adventure, put all the eighteen sortes counters provided with this quickstarter in an opaque container (a pouch, possibly). If there are less than five players, remove the tablet(s) bearing the name of the Custodes that are not in play.

Drawing the Sortes

The drawing of the Sortes is a short ritual. When the players intend to perform it, they communicate the Demiurge their intentions, stating how many Custodes in the contubernium are going to take part in the ritual. The ritual has two specific requirements:

First, the drawing of the Sortes can be attempted only once during each game session. Second, to take part in the drawing of the sortes, an individual Custos cannot have participated in the ritual already in the course of the same adventure.

To perform the ritual, each participating player simply draws one tablet from the pouch, inspects it, and then places it face down on the Custos' sheet. When all Custodes taking part in the ritual have drawn a tablet, the pouch is set aside, and won't be used again during the current session.

Using the Sortes

Each sors tablet describes a special opportunity of play, to be applied whenever a player decides, if the requirement written on the tablet are met. The requirements generally describe some specific circumstances, like the use of a Peritia, or the involvement of a specific Custos.

A player may inspect the tablet placed on the Custos' sheet at any time, but it is forbidden to reveal any information about it to the other players, including the Demiurge. The penalty for revealing any information is the displeasure of the Gods: the Custos loses the Fate roll.
The Custodes incur in the displeasure of the Gods also if the game session ends and they haven't used the tablet they drew. This is especially important, as some tablets feature a negative effect…). In this case, they lose the Fate roll for the entirety of the next gaming session. (The exception to this is the 'no effect' tablet – the sors is simply discarded at the end of the session).

ADVENTURE: BY THE WILL OF THE GODS

INTRODUCTION FOR THE PLAYERS

It is spring in Gallia. The player characters have spent the last few days in the praetorian castrum of Lugdunum, the capital city of the province.

A year has passed since their inquisitio, and this is their first official assignment after the rigorous training that has made them Custodes of the Cohors Arcana. A safe task, apparently, as Gallia was conquered centuries ago and its borders are not threatened by enemies of Rome.

At the castrum, the Custodes refer to Marcus Nepos, an old magister of the cursus auguralis, whose wrinkly face is constantly brightened by a benevolent smile. One morning, Marcus summons the Custodes to his lodgings. His expression is less cheerful than usual.

"I have spent the last few days in the grip of an unpleasant feeling. Wherever I look I see strange, unsettling signs... It started with the bizarre flights patterns of a flock of starlings, slowly fading into the northern sky. Then, I noticed that the stump of a long dead tree along the road going north had started producing new sprouts."

"I stayed up for the past two nights to observe the stars, trying to draw an auspicium, an answer from the gods, but all I got was silence and a terrible headache. I'm afraid I'm too old for this! That's why I need your help: You will travel north, to the castrum of Augustodunum. There you will start an investigation and report to me with the results."

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure is divided into three parts, each composed by a number of scenes and leading to the conclusion.

Part 1 - Arrival

The Custodes leave Lugdunum and reach Augustodunum. They gather the first clues talking to the commander of the local garrison and to the legionaries stationed there. Rumors tell of a band of brigands, active around the nearby city of Sidolocus, avoiding capture thanks to some kind of supernatural protection.

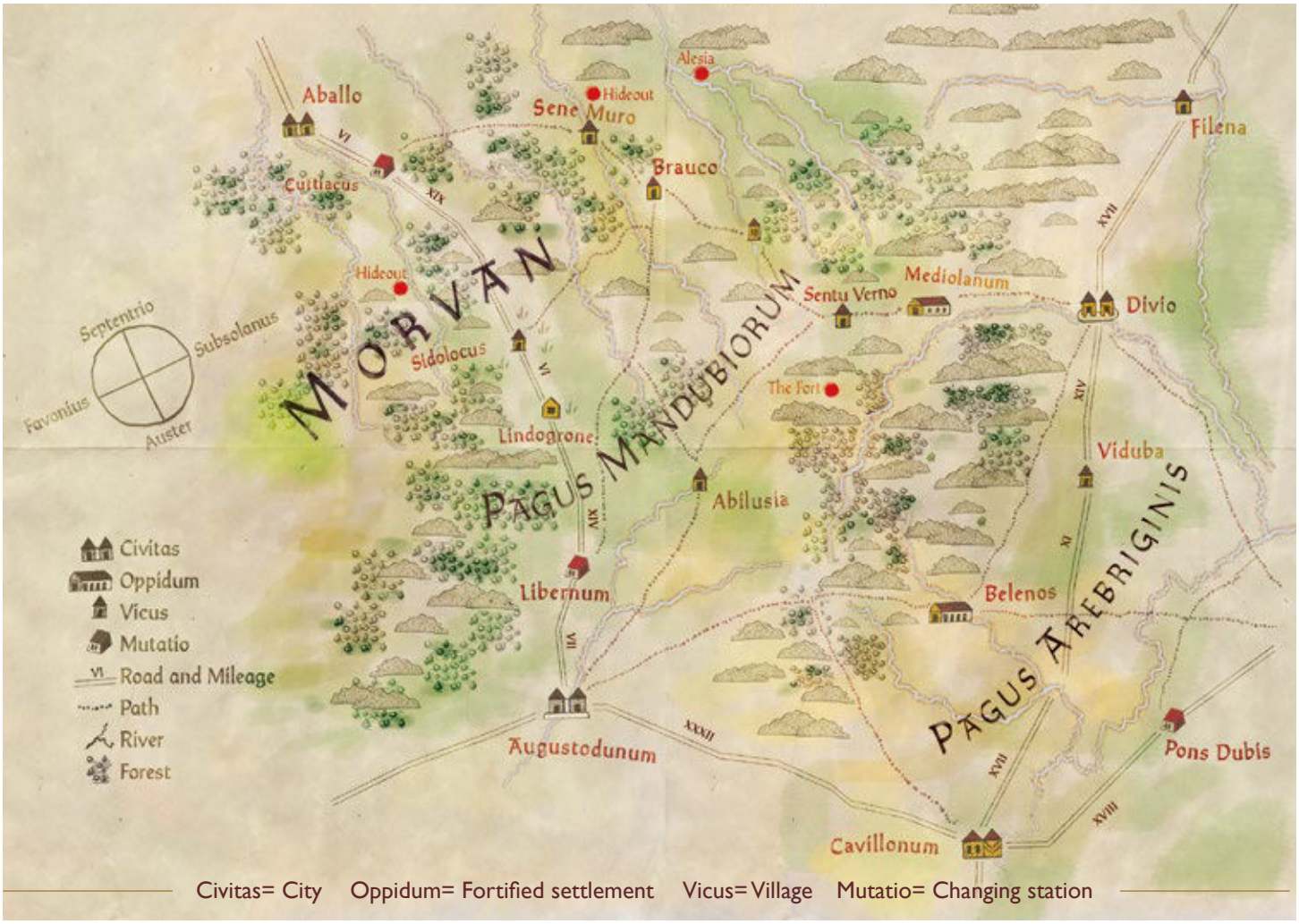
Part 2 - Investigation

The Custodes travel to Sidolocus to investigate. Talking with locals, the Custodes learn that the band of outlaws is led by a certain Brenno and that an unnamed curse seems to be weighing upon the population. At night, the Custodes face hostile hooded spirits prowling the streets of Sidolocus and have to fight for their lives. More information is to be found in the surroundings of the city, and the Custodes start exploring and talking with the inhabitants, possibly obtaining clues about the location of potential hideouts of the brigands.

Clues may lead the Custodes to investigate the nearby mountains and the countryside. While exploring the rolling hills, the Custodes may locate the ruins of Alesia, and end up making camp in the middle of a sudden storm. The ruins of Alesia are the focal point of the awakening of the Gallic gods, and if the Custodes perform a ritual there, they will catch a glimpse of their power.

Part 3 - Ending the Threat

Thanks to their exploration of the local area, the Custodes manage to track down the brigands and to discover their two main hideouts: one in the depths of an old Celtic barrow in the mountains, and the other lying among the ruins of a fort in the countryside. The Custodes have a chance to put an end to the brigands' misdeeds by killing Brenno, or by leading the Roman legionaries to his refuge.



INTRODUCTION FOR THE DEMIURGE

Over five centuries ago, this part of Gallia saw the tragic conclusion of the war between Rome and the Celtic tribes led by Vercingetorix, the great Arvernian warrior king. As every Roman student of history knows, the rebel king was chased by the Roman army and forced to find refuge in the sacred city of Alesia, capital of the Mandubii tribe. There, many died of starvation as the king awaited vainly for a relief army to arrive. Eventually, the Gallic tribes had to admit defeat: the glorious military campaign of Julius Caesar to conquer Gallia had come to an end: Alesia was burnt down, the weapons of the rebel Gauls melted and reforged into the chains used to bind them.

But there is an untold story, one that no Roman knows up to this day. On the eve of the defeat, Vercingetorix appealed to Toutatis, god of war and protector of his people and land. The king pledged his life and dignity, telling his god he would gladly accept captivity, humiliation and finally death if only Toutatis promised to keep the embers of an uprising burning under the ashes. The next day, the proud Vercingetorix surrendered to the Roman commander, stripping himself of his armor and laying his weapons at his opponent's feet…

The Legacy of a King

One of the Roman smiths charged with the task of melting the weapons of the defeated Gauls didn't follow the orders he received: prompted by an unusual dream, he located the sword that Vercingetorix himself carried and stole it. In the following decades, the sword changed hands several times, traveling far from Gallia and eventually becoming part of the treasury of a wealthy Roman family.

One year prior to the beginning of the adventure, Levius Milo, an old eques traveling north from his native Etruria, was attacked by a band of brigands near the city of Sidolocus. Levius was headed for the thermal city of Aquae Segetae, in northern Gallia, to join with his son Drusus, formerly a prefect from the city of Lugdunum. He was carrying presents, including an old sword he used to play with when he was a boy. Levius and most of his retinue were killed in the attack, all the goods and treasure stolen.

The Sword of the Gods

Unbeknownst to everyone, the ancient weapon carried by Levius Milo is the lost sword of Vercingetorix, blessed centu-

ries ago by the god Toutatis. Once it entered Gallia, the power bestowed upon it flared into a new flame, stirring the spirits of land and air, and rousing the gods of Gallia from their torpid slumber.
Now the blade is in the hands of Brenno, one of the brigands that attacked Levius, and since that day it has filled his mind with a strategic cunning he didn't display before, at the same time fueling his hatred for the Romans. One year after the attack, Brenno is no longer the man he used to be: he is now the chieftain of his warband, leading his men in ruthless raids aimed exclusively at foreigners. The treatment he reserves them is vicious, for Brenno has reverted to the more barbaric traditions of his ancestors: he started sacrificing his enemies to the old gods of Gallia, adorning his horse with their skulls. Brenno's reputation has grown, and many warriors have joined his company, now a small army of dangerous rebels.

PART 1: ARRIVAL

SCENE 1: REACHING AUGUSTODUNUM

It takes five days along the Via Agrippa for the Custodes to arrive to the monumental city of Augustodunum. They pass the tall city walls through the southern Gate of Rome in the early afternoon, and turn left to reach the castrum at the western corner of the ramparts.

The castrum is held by a vexillatio (temporary detachment) of the Legio I Martia, a company of hardened veterans. A successful roll of Sensibilitas (DT 6) reveals that the soldiers manning the defenses look even more superstitious than usual, as they all wear charms and display ritual blessings upon their equipment.

After showing their diplomas (official documents) to the sentries at the gate, the Custodes are received by Theodosius Antenor, legatus in charge of the castrum.

Speaking with Theodosius Antenor

After a brief formal introduction, the legatus asks if the Custodes are "the group of scouts sent to deal with the brigands in the north." Judging from their looks that the Custodes need a clarification, Antenor explains:

"The Pagus Mandubiorum, roughly the area between here and the town of Aballo, is a den of murdering brigands, a true thorn in our side. This region is rich, and many locals profit from the dense forests and abundant streams and rivers. Traffic on the Via Agrippa is dense, but everyone is becoming increasingly afraid of being attacked, so much that we had to provide traveling dignitaries and rich merchants with armed escorts."

The legatus unrolls a map of the area, and points to a spot between the cities of Augustodunum and Aballo, explaining that the attacks concentrate on a stretch of road centered on the town of Sidolocus.

"Brigands have always been a threat around Sidolocus, but their audacity has grown, especially since the killing of the father of the former praefectus annonae of the city of Lugdunum, a year ago. In twelve months they have dared more and more, proving to be uncatchable. We established regular patrols in the area, but the territory is vast and I have no men to spare: the number of troops stationed here is insignificant, as Gallia isn't a border province. Moreover, my soldiers are not familiar with this region, as they used to be stationed at the Castrum Rauracense, in southern Germania. I myself was only sent here a few months ago."

"In conclusion, I don't have enough resources here to explore the area without leaving Augustodunum unguarded. But I have to answer to those who have been damaged by the brigands, including Drusus Milo, the Praefectus I told you about, who wants me to find his father's stolen goods and to crucify all of his father's murderers."

Doing research on Alesia

Scholarly Custodes might want to spend some time in Augustodunum looking for written or oral accounts on Alesia. Luckily for them, the local Maenian Schools at the centre of the city are a good place to find such information (the Maenian Schools are Gallic academies of rhetoric, renowned all over the province for the beauty of their architecture and the high number of students).

A few hours spent in conversation with a history teacher rewards them with the information that Alesia was a sacred city and a centre of worship. In the words of Caesar himself Alesia was:

"... located on the top of a hill, in a very lofty position, so that it did not appear likely to be taken, except by a regular siege. Two rivers, on two different sides, washed the foot of the hill. Before the town lay a plain about three miles in length; on every other side hills at a moderate distance, and of an equal degree of height, surrounded the town."

Riding rolls

Marcus Nepos provides the Custodes with riding horses. In gaming terms, players do not need to make any roll when the characters are riding on Roman roads, well-trodden paths, and even open countryside, as all Custodes learn horsemanship as part of their basic training.

A roll is required exclusively when Custodes face a harder challenge, for example galloping after a fugitive, riding on rough terrain, or climbing or descending a steep incline: In such cases, a roll of De Natura (DT 2d6) is required.

Failing the roll results in a fall causing damage for 2d6 (armor protects normally), or 1d6 if the falling character succeeds in a roll of De Corpore (DT 9).

If the Custodes ask the legatus whether his men encountered supernatural phenomena, or portents, Antenor replies that nothing remarkable has happened, except for the peculiar bad luck afflicting the people in the Pagus Mandubiorum.

"Everyone looks nervous and disheartened here, from the patricians in their villas in Sidolocus, to the soldiers, struggling to catch these wretches. Jupiter! Even the horses are skittish in that area!"

Custodes looking at Antenor's map and passing a roll of De Scientia (DT 9) recognize this territory as the area where the battle of Alesia was fought. Here, the divine Julius Caesar besieged the Celtic tribes led by the Arvernian king Vercingetorix. Caesar wrote about the siege at length in the De Bello Gallico, his firsthand account of the Gallic Wars, detailing how he laid siege to the city, and how he fended off the attacks of the Gallic relief force for more than a month. Eventually, famished and beaten, the Gauls surrendered; Caesar took the enemy leaders into captivity and set Alesia ablaze in retaliation. The city was never rebuilt, and, in time, its precise location was forgotten.

Speaking with the soldiers

At the castrum, the Custodes may get in touch with some of the soldiers who have been on patrol in the Pagus Mandubiorum. A successful roll of De Societate (DT 6) yields the following results based on the rolled Degree of Success (consider only the highest DoS among all rolls). Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries preceding it.

I. *"Ah, my friends, this is a bad place indeed. Guarding the frontier in Germania was much better! These brigands are smart enough to avoid our patrols, and as vicious as the barbarians on the border. Sometimes we find what they leave behind... headless bodies along the road or emerging from the bogs they were thrown into. And hunting them is so frustrating! They seem to pass through mires, forests and mountains like they were marching on a consular road, while we can't set foot into a forest without getting tangled in thorny thickets!"*

II. *"We're not going to find them, and neither will you. The gods have forsaken us. The forests here are dreadful and dangerous places, full of shadows and whispers. Water spirits tried to drown me while I was crossing a river! Fortuna is toying with us, I tell you, abandoning us when we most need a bit of luck. Someone must have insulted the gods, and we are all paying for that."*

III. *"But maybe it's them! They have cursed us, or they are protected by dark magic, like the Germanic barbarians. They cannot rely simply on their own cunning and strength to challenge the might of the Roman army and survive!"*

ENTERING PAGUS MANDUBIORUM

The region known as the Pagus Mandubiorum is a district encompassing the former territory of the Mandubii Celts.
No Roman settlement existed here until four centuries ago, when Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, governor of the newly established Gallia province, laid down a road network radiating from the provincial capital, Lugdunum.

Along these roads mutationes (stations where riders and drivers could purchase the services of wheelwrights, cartwrights, and veterinarians) and mansiones (establishments where people traveling on official businesses could lodge, eat, and refresh themselves) were built at regular intervals, to allow fast and comfortable travel. Residential areas started to develop next to these mutationes and mansiones, changing the outlook of the region. As a consequence, some of the settlements in the Pagus are of Celtic origin (as the Gallic names Aballo, Abilusia, Brauco, Lindogrone and Sentu Verno suggest) while others are Roman (Cuttiacus, Libernum, Sidolocus, etc.).

The Pagus stretches between two important sections of the Via Agrippa: one leading north-east towards the province of Germania, the other leading northwest towards the shores of the Oceanus Britannicus. Minor roads and paths connect the various vici (settlement, sing. vicus) in the area, mainly between the two cities of Aballo and Divio.

The territory is mostly hilly agricultural land, marked by ancient forests, groves, raspberry and blackcurrant bushes, wooded hedges surrounding fields and farms, and tree-lined rivers. Several hundred farms dot the landscape between Sidolocus and Sentu Verno, ranging from small crofts tended by a single family, to large farms, hosting dozens of laborers and slaves. The whole country is divided in plots, bordered with wicker fences and thorny hedges. Cereals are farmed on large portions of land: emmer, spelt, barley, millet, and wheat, which, at this time of the year, grows as tall as a man. Where no crop has been planted, shepherds tend their flocks, helped by their trusted herd dogs. The country is criss-crossed by paths and trails, and bustles with activity as laborers and carts pulled by oxen and donkeys come and go.

The Morvan (Black Mountains, in Celtic) is a rough forested area which features a few mountains and the tallest hills of the Pagus Mandubiorum. Part of this area extends north of Sidolocus and is crossed by the section of the Via Agrippa leading to Aballo.

The Custodes can ride leisurely along all roads and paths: riding is slightly faster than walking and less tiring over long distances. When crossing open countryside, fording rivers, and traversing hills and mountains the traveling speed becomes roughly the same for horses and people.

Traveling Distances

The approximate travel times given below can give the Demiurge an idea of the distances in the Pagus Mandubiorum:

- Cavillonum - Augustodunum (road): 8 hours riding, more than 10 hours on foot.
- Augustodunum - Abilusia (path): 4 hours riding, more than 5 hours on foot.
- Augustodunum - Sidolocus (road): 6 hours riding, 9 hours on foot.
- Sidolocus - Aballo (road): almost 6 hours riding, 8 hours on foot.
- Sidolocus - Brauco (path): more than 3 hours riding, 5 hours on foot.
- Sidolocus - Sentu Verno (off-road): 8 hours.
- Abilusia - Sentu Verno (path): 4 hours riding, almost 6 hours on foot.

The Awakening of the Gallic Gods

The power bestowed by Toutatis upon the sword of Vercingetorix is stirring the old gods of Gallia to rise and oppose the Romans. The bad luck affecting all foreigners crossing the Pagus Mandubiorum is caused by the hostility of the various gods and goddesses, each in their specific area of influence. Currently limited to the lands surrounding Alesia, the sacred city of the Gauls, this hostility might soon spread elsewhere, should a leader rise to stand for the Gallic cause.

The Custodes are an obvious target for the ill-will of the Gallic gods. As soon as they enter the Pagus Mandubiorum (shortly after leaving Augustodunum) they start to experience unusual occurrences:

- For each day spent in the area, the Custodes witness or suffer the consequences of a supernatural event.

A number of these weird occurrences are described in the adventure, but should a day pass and no episode is provided by the text, the Demiurge can employ the following tables to generate a random event.

- To determine the details of a supernatural event while the Custodes are in Sidolocus, roll 1d6 on Table 2.
- If the Custodes are in the open exploring the Pagus Mandubiorum, roll 1d12 on Table 1.

Since Sidolocus is of Roman foundation, the Demiurge can slightly modify events from Table 2 to affect not only the Custodes but also local citizens of Roman origin; conversely, as most of the Celtic settlement lies in the countryside, events from Table 1 are most likely to affect exclusively the Custodes.

TABLE 1: SUPERNATURAL EVENTS OUT IN THE PAGUS MANDUBIORUM.

All results increasing the DT of a Peritia roll last until the following day.

1	**Belenus** God of light	The light of the day dims, as if obstructed by thick, dark clouds. As Belenus shields the land from Apollo, raise by 3 the DT of all rolls of De Magia.
2	**Belisama** God of lakes and rivers	The Custodes are wading a shallow stream when the current suddenly becomes much faster, threatening to drag away one of the Custodes (selected randomly). The Custos must pass a roll of Coordinatio (DT 6) or fall and hit the slippery rocks of the riverbed, suffering 1d6 damage.
3	**Borrum** God of wind	Strong gusts of wind start battering the Custodes as soon as they attempt to use a ranged weapon. Raise by 3 the DT of all rolls of De Bello when using ranged weapons.
4	**Carnonos** God of animals	Mice have eaten the provisions of the Custodes. A Custos attempting to forage for food rolls De Natura (DT 9): for each Degree of Success the Custos has found food for everyone for 1 day.
5	**Cimialcinnus** God of paths	A successful roll of Ingenium (DT 9) makes the Custodes ralize that they have already passed the same crossroad at least twice: it seems that whatever path they take they end up in the same place. To escape the loop they must leave the path and succeed in a roll of De Natura (DT 6). Otherwise, they become lost and waste 1 day.
6	**Epona** God of horses	The Custodes' mounts try to run away (see also Scene 2: "A bumpy ride").
7	**Etnosus** Bird god of death	Bird god of death. Suddenly, a murder of crows bursts out from the treetops and dives onto the Custodes in a flurry of black feathers and sharp beaks. Each Custos suffers damage for 1d6. Then the malicious birds fly away.
8	**Litavis** Goddess of the landscape	Wherever they go, the Custodes seem to find the worst possible environmental conditions: terrain is covered in dew and made slippery, humidity is intolerable, firm paths unexpectedly turn into bogs, lush vegetation grows everywhere, etc. Raise by 3 the DT of all rolls of De Corpore.
9	**Ogmios** God of eloquence	The Custodes struggle to find the words to express even the simplest concepts. Raise by 3 the DT of all rolls of De Societate.
10	**Sucellus** God ofwoods and fields	Landmarks seem to change position constantly. The Custodes must succeed in a roll of De Natura (DT 9) or become lost and waste 1 day.
11	**Taranis** God of thunder	Lightning strikes the camp of the Custodes, dealing 1d12 damage to all Custodes.
12	**Toutatis** Tribal protector of the Gauls	All opponents of the Custodes, both human and bestial, gain the Fate Roll.

TABLE2: SUPERNATURAL EVENTS IN SIDOLOCUS

All the results increasing the DT of a Peritia roll last until the following day.

1-2	**Ked** The evil mother goddess.	In the night, a band of Genii Cucullati (see Antagonists) enters Sidolocus to torment infants of Roman descent.
3	**Meduio** God of drunkenness.	The Custodes are inebriated, even if they have drunk only a couple of cups of watered-down wine. Raise by 3 the DT of all rolls of Ingenium, Sensibilitas, De Magia, and De Scientia.
4	**Ogmios** God of eloquence.	The Custodes struggle to find the words to express even the simplest concepts. Raise by 3 the DT of all rolls of De Societate.
5	**Pipius** God of domestic birds	A brood of chickens springs out of a coop, furiously attacking the Custodes with pointed beaks and sharp talons, dealing damage for 1d6 to every character before scattering among the alarmed crowd.
6	**Rosmerta** Goddess of fertility and abundance	As the Custodes wander around town, they buy bread and moretum (a cheese-and-herbs spread) from a street stall. Halfway through the meal, a Custos realises the food has turned into a rotten mass teeming with maggots. Treat this as a Toxic (1d10) attack (see Appendix 2: Antagonists).

PART 2: INVESTIGATION

SCENE 2: SIDOLOCUS

Sidolocus is a country town, less than 30 miles north of Augustodunum. What was once a mere waystation on the Via Agrippa is now home to about 4000 people. Away from important centres in the Imperial infrastructure, Sidolocus doesn't feature important any architectural landmarks: its many temples are rather small, and the only large public structures are the forum, the old mansio, and the nearby thermae.

It takes about a day for the Custodes to reach Sidolocus from Augustodunum, but nothing is as easy as it seems.

A Bumpy Ride

The Custodes witness the first supernatural event halfway to their destination, as they travel on the road between the villages of Libernum and Lindogrone: their horses start rearing and bucking without apparent cause, as Epona, goddess of horses, spurs them to desert their riders.

All Custodes must roll De Natura (DT 6) or be thrown to the ground for 2d6 of damage, as their mounts unhorse them and ride away. Recovering an escaped mount requires one hour (half an hour if all members of the recovery party are mounted). Once recaptured, the horses will not try to escape again for the current day.

At Destination

The Custodes lay their eyes for the first time on the town of Sidolocus as the road emerges from a copse. On their left, the sun is falling behind a series of tall, wooded hills; on their right, the land rolls gently in folds and undulations, colored green and yellow by plots of different crops.

Right before them, the town lies in a wide valley floor, among wet pastures and marshes. After the magnificence of Augustodunum, Sidolocus looks unimpressive, little more than an oversized country village.

A successful roll of De Scientia (DT 9) indicates that the settlement cannot be of ancient foundation: the disposition of its buildings follow the pattern of Roman construction, and the village has no ramparts or walls around it, a clear sign that Sidolocus must have been built after Gallia was pacified.

When the Custodes start descending the slope leading to the town, their eyes are caught by the shapes of four crucifixes lining the road. As they get closer to the first houses of Sidolocus, details color the scene in tragic tones: along the left side of the road a group of men and women mourn, praying the many gods of the Gallo-Roman religion.

On the other side, an armed soldier stands guard before the crosses.

Behind the guard agonise four men, stripped naked, wrists and heels nailed to the wooden beams. Around their necks hang the tituli crucis, wooden panels indicating the cause for their punishment. Given the discontent for the seemingly uncatchable brigands in the countryside, the Custodes don't even need to read the tituli as they already suspect the cause for the execution: receptatores, accomplices (see box on Latrones).

A WARMER WELCOME

Once they get into town, the Custodes can look for an accommodation on their own if they prefer to investigate incognito, or they can contact the city officials. If they choose to stay on their own, the Custodes find along the main road a decent stabula, an inn accommodating them and their mounts. The innkeeper is happy to have some new guests:

"It's good to see that not everybody is afraid of the brigands! Everybody here is terrified. We don't feel safe even in town, and bar ourselves in after nightfall. By the way, please do not to come back too late tonight."

If they ask around to meet some town authority, they are addressed to Macrus Florus Bibaculus, head of the local curia (city). Once Bibaculus has seen the Custodes' diplomas, he will be noticeably relieved by their presence and will happily lodge them in the old mansio. If the Custodes ask Bibaculus about the situation in town, he will reply:

"We are doing everything we can with the meagre resources we have: a few tresviri nocturni patrol (night patrols) the town at night, and, thanks to occasional support from the authorities of Augustodunum, we have made some progress in the countryside as well."

"I'm sure you've seen the criminals we captured last week. We must be harsh on those who help the brigands, as it is the only way to discourage others from supporting Brenno and his men. But even these extreme measures are not enough to reassure my fellow citizens: traffic on the Via Agrippa has decreased, and everyone in Sidolocus is less prosperous as a consequence."

THE HOODED SPIRITS

As they lie in their beds, the Custodes struggle to fall asleep. Something about the town makes them restless and uneasy. Sleep finally arrives later in the night, until the Custos with the highest Sensibilitas rating suddenly wakes up: faint scratching is heard coming from outside the nearest window, followed by a faint giggling sound.
If the Custos gets up to investigate, then many childish voices are heard whispering, only to fade away with the scuttling of light hurried steps. If the Custodes leave their lodgings to investigate the noises, they witness the second supernatural instance of the malevolence of the Gallic gods: Ked, the evil mother goddess, sends the Genii Cucullati (see Appendix 2: Antagonists) into Sidolocus to torment the infants of Roman families! When the Custodes get out, the streets are unnaturally silent and empty: no patrician is seen returning home with his slave escort; no drunken lout is making a racket on a brothel's doorstep; no prostitute offers herself to lustful clients. A thin slice of moon barely allows the Custodes to distinguish their surroundings. Suddenly, they hear a muffled scream. Running in the direction of the noise, the Custodes reach a house. From inside the building they hear the wail of an infant and the fearful voice of a woman whispering a broken lullaby. An instant later, a group of small shadows scurry out of a window to slip into a side alley: they are no more than 3 feet tall, cloaked in large hoods concealing their features. They soon disappear from sight, leaving behind the echo of faint giggling.

If the Custodes give chase to the creatures, they must succeed in a De Corpore roll (DT 9). If they succeed, the characters keep up with the running shadows; otherwise, they lose them immediately. Whether the Custodes succeed in the De Corpore roll or not, they start hearing the same faint giggling noises coming from streets and alleys all around them, suggesting the presence of many more creatures in addition to those they spotted.

A FIGHT

Wandering through the streets, the Custodes will eventually turn a corner and spot a pulsating shape in an alley, a few yards away. They only realise the shape is a bunch of small creatures huddling over the body of a man when several beings leap towards them.

If no one had succeeded in the De Corpore roll to pursue the creatures, the characters will be surprised. Custodes who succeeded are not surprised, but have outrun their comrades and must fight alone until the others arrive in the next tempus.

Once the fight starts, the Custodes will be able to catch only glimpses of their opponents: gnarly elongated fingers with long curved talons, gripping bronze daggers and nasty curved hooks; the only visible feature under the hood is an unnaturally wide mouth filled with sharp teeth, stretched in an evil grin. The creatures fight fiercely, but after four tempora they flee, disappearing in the darkness. If the Custodes inspect the area once the fight is over, they discover that the bodies of the fallen enemies are nowhere to be found: the creatures disappeared, hood and all.
The Custodes can now check the conditions of the fallen man. If no one had succeeded in the De Corpore roll to to pursue the Genii Cucullati, the man will be dead; there are no open wounds on the body, and only a successful roll of De Scientia (DT 9) will reveal the man died by suffocation. If the Custodes managed to keep up with the creatures, the man will be simply unconscious and will regain his senses after a while: he is a tresvir nocturnus.

"I was patrolling the streets when I thought I heard something behind me, like light footsteps. I tried to turn around, but I realised I could neither move, nor breathe! I fell to my knees and then everything went dark, until I woke up and saw you."

LATRONES

Romans call hostes the people they are currently at war with, latrones people guilty of murder or theft (whoever seizes goods, animals, or people) and receptatores people responsible for assisting others in committing a crime. When criminals are caught, they are either deported or, in the case of heinous crimes, crucified or fed to ferocious beasts in the arena.

Outside the boundaries of the city of Rome, it is the duty of a Provincial Governor to fight crime, employing tresviri nocturni (night patrols), vigiles (who also fight fires), private militia and, if they are available, troops from the legions stationed in the area.

Otherwise, the ordinary administration of a city (maintaining order, collecting taxes, providing road maintenance, etc.) is the responsibility of the officials of the local curia (city).

SCENE 3: CITY MATTERS

The day following the raid of the Genii Cucullati sees the atmosphere in town become tense: the households visited by the hooded spirits are terrified, as many children are exhausted by lack of sleep. Any interaction with the local population becomes more difficult: Raise by 3 the DT of all rolls of De Societate. If the tresvir nocturnus from the previous scene is dead, raise the DT by 6 instead.

LOCAL RUMORS

If the Custodes walk around Sidolocus asking for information they must succeed in a roll of De Societate (DT 6). The resulting information is based on the DoS of the roll. Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries preceding it.

The information comes from two separate encounters.

The first encounter is with a local craftsman, who interrupts his work at the potter's wheel to speak with the Custodes about the brigands.

I. *"There have always been brigands in the area, but we started worrying when they slaughtered a Prefect and his escort, about a year ago. Bring weapons and men if you must travel, or you risk ending up in a ditch with your head cut off!"*

II. *"The mountains to the west, the Morvan, are wild and mostly deserted, so it's easy to imagine the bandits finding refuge there. The countryside, though, is as good a hideout as the mountains. Yes, there are hamlets scattered all around, but you could march for days without encountering a soul."*

"If you want to know more about the Morvan, ask Annius, the charcoal burner: he lives in a hut up there and comes to the market to sell his charcoal. The market will open in three days."

III. *"To be fair, I should say that those brigands intend to do little harm to locals... most of their victims are rich, foreign merchants, passing through here on their way to Lutetia or Durocortorum. They make better targets than the local shepherd or farmer!"*

The second encounter is with a middle-aged woman who has been following the Custodes for a while. Judging from the clothes she wears she is a household slave from a rich Roman family.

I. *"Brigands? Yes, I heard, but why should I care? If you choose to live as a savage, out there, you deserve to be robbed! We are having our share of trouble here in town... this city is cursed, you must help us!"*

II. *"Juno is punishing us! Axes, pestles and besoms can't protect our cradles, nor our bullae and lunulae!"**

III. *"For us Romans, this has been one whole year of misery! No joy, no rebirth; only a dwindling hope."*

*A roll of De Scientia (DT 6) yields the following clarifications: Juno tried to kill Hercules and thus Romans sometimes associate her with infant mortality. Axe, pestle and bosom are implements used in rites to invoke divine protection onto a newborn baby. Bullae and lanulae are amulets to protect young boys and girls.

SCENE 4: THE CHARCOAL BURNER

If the Custodes want to talk to Annius, the charcoal burner, they must wait three days for the market to open. Every week, local farmers and artisans gather in the forum of Sidolocus to sell and barter their products. The stalls display mostly local products: eggs, poultry and game, greens and vegetables, nuts, oil and wine. A handful of foreign merchants sell spices, salt, and perfumes.

Talking to Annius

The Custodes wander around the marketplace for a while, looking for the charcoal burner. Once they find him, they meet Annius, a grizzled aging woodman, and his old dog, Celer. The first thing the Custodes notice about Annius is that half of his face is badly burnt and so swollen that one eye is almost closed; the other is that he must have been a Roman soldier, as he bears the tattoo of an eagle on his right calf. After Annius has let his good eye wander on the Custodes for a few moments, he greets them by saying:

"You certainly don't look like you are here to buy my charcoal. What are you looking for, then?"

Soon after the Custodes start asking their questions, it appears clear that Annius is suffering painfully from his burns and needs rest. If asked about the burns, he answers that he recently discovered that his current occupation is not that much safer than being a soldier after all: he had a freaky accident with a wood pile that collapsed and he was burnt by the charcoal under it (Annius is also suffering from the peculiar bad luck brought by the Gallic gods).

Annius will be much better disposed towards the Custodes should they attempt to relieve his pain. A Custos succeeding in a roll of De Scientia (DT 6) is able to clean and dress the wound properly, getting Annius to talk. The Custodes obtain information based on the DoS of the roll. Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries preceding it.

I. *"Did I see anything unusual in the mountains? I don't know, but my trusty Celer here has been uneasy lately and that made me cautious. Sometimes, when I am returning to my hut in the evening, I feel as if something is watching from behind the carved stones, from the dark entrances to the barrows of old, from the shadowy thickets, as though something in the forest was alive."*

II. *"I don't know what it is; maybe it is the outlaws you are looking for, maybe it's just the imagination of a man living alone in the forest. What I know is that I sharpen my gladius every day now, just like old times. I hear the brigands started taking in more and more people. Rumour has it that they replaced the old leader and that the new one is a ruthless but clever individual who is responsible for their good fortune."*

III. *"If you really want to find them, I say you should start from the valley of the Cusinio. It is a stream that springs in the Morvan and flows northward through Cuttiacus and Aballo. I suspect an acquaintance of mine, a local hunter, to have joined the brigands. He changed his usual hunting grounds all of a sudden, and I know he built a hut far up into the mountains, by the Cusinio."*

SCENE 5: EXPLORING THE MORVAN

If the Custodes head for the mountains, they leave Sidolocus by a narrow path leading west, through the mires and towards the hills. Soon, they enter well-maintained deciduous woods, where many trees show traces of being tended to: fallen branches are tidily stacked and sheltered from the rain, and clear paths criss-cross the terrain free of undergrowth. As the Custodes venture farther into the hills of Morvan, the wilder the forest becomes: paths become trails, and the tidy forest around Sidolocus gives way to a tangle of fallen trees and ferns.

Each Custos is allowed to make two rolls for each day spent exploring the Morvan looking for the brigands' hideout. The first roll represents the characters looking for tracks; the second represents the chance the Custodes have of actually locating the hideout.

Tracking the Brigands

Looking for tracks is accomplished with a roll of De Natura (DT 9); all Custodes can try, but only the highest DoS among all rolls will be taken into account. Depending on the Degree of Success, the Custodes obtain the following information:

I. The search finds a multitude of tracks but cannot single out anything of relevance. It seems that a lot of people use the forest to get timber and firewood and to hunt, and many beasts live here (there are tracks indicating the passage of wild boars, deer, hares, roes, foxes and wolves). The Custodes must continue their search.

II. A group of people seem to have passed and to have made an attempt at covering their tracks. This is not what hunters do, this is the mark of brigands. The search for their hideout is on.

III. The Custodes have located a solid set of tracks, partially cancelled by an overt attempt at sweeping them out. The search for the brigands' hideout is on.

Locating the Forest Hideout

Finding the hideout in the Morvan requires at least one Custos to succeed in a roll of De Natura (DT 21). The Custodes enjoy several cumulative bonuses:

+3 if they found a solid set of tracks (DoS III above);

+6 if they have been given directions by Annius at the market;

+3 for every day after the first they spent exploring the Morvan (except for those wasted due to the hostility of the Gallic gods, see box The Awakening of the Gallic Gods).

On a success, the Custodes locate the hideout in the valley of the Cusino (see Scene 8).

Creatures of the Forest

A group of wild animals, summoned by Carnonos, god of beasts, attacks the Custodes on the first night they spend in the hills of Morvan!

There is one beast for each Custos, selected from the following list (in order): stag, bear, wolf, boar, and lynx (e.g. if there are three Custodes, the boar and the lynx won't appear in this scene).

The attacking animals (see Appendix 2: Antagonists) are no different from any other member of their kind, save for their eyes, which a Custos with Sensibilitas 9 or higher sees burning with a dark reddish blaze.

The beasts attack without warning: Custodes on watch must succeed in a roll of Sensibilitas (DT 3d6); sleeping Custodes roll Sensibilitas too, but the DT for their roll is equal to 3d6+6. If no Custos succeeds, the whole contubernium will be surprised for the first tempus of combat. Surprised or sleeping characters will be ready with weapon in hand in 1 tempus, although they won't have the time to don any armor.

The attacking animals show no fear of steel nor fire and attack the Custodes relentlessly until they are all slain. Their ferocity is so unnatural that after 3 tempora the Custodes must succeed in a roll of Ratio (DT 2d6) or be shaken and start to fight defensively (reduce the AP of an attack by 3, whether the Custos is attacking or defending).

Scene 6: Exploring the Countryside

If the Custodes choose to investigate the countryside surrounding Sidolocus, they follow a cobbled road heading east through fields and marshes. Each Custos is allowed to make three rolls for each day spent exploring the countryside looking for the brigands' hideout.
The first roll represents the characters looking for information on the whereabouts of the brigands; the second represents the chance of the Custodes of finding the ruins of Alesia; the third represents the chance the Custodes have of actually locating the hideout.

Exploring the Pagus

Gathering information from the inhabitants of the Pagus Mandubiorum requires the Custodes to travel across the territory and speak to many people; altogether, they will make only two encounters worthy of playing out in detail, each requiring a successful roll of De Societate (DT 6). As usual, the Custodes obtain information based on the DoS of the roll, and every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries that precedes it. The first encounter is with an old woman sitting on a stool by the threshold of a small farm, husking fava beans into a wicker basket.

I. *"I heard what they say about the brigands, but I'm not afraid. I doubt Brenno wants to harm any of us... he is from around here, and I remember him as a boy. Hearing he became such a vicious man surprises me though."*

II. *"Brenno was never the meanest, nor the brightest. I frankly don't understand how he has succeeded in becoming such a threat! If you want me to tell you if I saw him around, you are out of luck: I'm losing my sight, and he could well be hiding in my pigsty, for all I know. Anyway, there are hundreds of places to hide in this land: the hills are full of ruins and the tombs of the old folks extend under the earth for miles..."*

III. *"The largest ruin of all is on a hillock at the confluence between two rivers, north of Brauco. No one goes there, as they say it's haunted. I know where it is because I got lost once, when I was a little girl. I don't think the brigands go there as they might prefer to stay closer to some settlement, like Sene Muro or Aquae Celeres, to get food."*

Optional Encounter

As the Custodes approach the farm described above, they notice a group of children looking upwards into the foliage of a tall tree beside the road. One of the children asks "Excuse me sirs: could you help us get our ball back? We were playing follis (a sort of volleyball) and the ball got stuck on a tall branch." If one of the Custodes climbs the tree to recover the ball (no roll reVquired), ask for a roll of Sensibilitas (DT 6). On a success, the Custos not only gets the ball, but also finds an old wooden figurine of a horseman stuck in a recess between two branches. If the Custodes retrieve the ball, add 1 to the Degree of Success of the De Societate roll with the old woman, 2 if they found the figurine.

The second encounter is with a couple of slaves toiling at the edge of a field, a boy and an a older man. The two will gladly take the chance to chat with the Custodes, as this allows them to catch their breath.

I. *"Brigands? I think they are no brigands, sir, no one was robbed around here, nor we have been bothered by such people." "Don't listen to the boy, good masters. Well, we had some problems with them: they stole two goats from the farm of Carinus two years ago. Also, Icilius thought a weasel was eating his chicken, and it was them instead!"*

II. *"But they stopped doing that, didn't they?" "Yes, sure! But they didn't turn good, did they? They stopped stealing chicken, and they started murdering people! I wouldn't be surprised if they were behind the death of the young master." "You know the son of the dominus wandered away and drowned! You are trying to blame them because you should have kept watch over the boy!"*

III. *"Whatever... in any case, those scoundrels must be stopped! I can tell you they don't hide around here, or we would know. Maybe they hide among some ruins out there, on the hills. There are so many ruins that several villages were built using stones taken from there. Like Sene Muro or Aquae Celeres, for example. You could try there."*

If the Custodes succeeded with a DoS of III, ask for a roll of Sensibilitas (DT 9): on a success, they notice the younger slave, already somewhat defensive towards the brigands, flinches when the older man mentions the village of Sene Muro.

Finding Alesia

Starting from the second day they spend exploring the Pagus Mandubiorum, all Custodes are allowed to make a roll of De Natura (DT 21). They enjoy several cumulative bonuses:

+3 if they guessed Alesia must be somewhere in the Pagus Mandubiorum looking at the map in Augustodunum;

+3 if they found the description of the place made by Julius Caesar;

+6 if they have been given directions by the old woman at the farm;

+3 for every day after the first spent roaming the countryside (except for those wasted due to the hostility of the Gallic gods, see box The Awakening of the Gallic Gods).

On a success, the Custodes find the ruins of Alesia (see Scene 7).

Locating the Country Hideout

Finding the hideout in the countryside requires at least one Custos to succeed in a roll of De Natura (DT 21). The Custodes enjoy several cumulative bonuses:

+3 if they managed to get some hints from a ritual (see Frequently Performed Rituals, at the end of this booklet);

+3 if they found clues about the possible hideouts of the brigands by people living in the countryside;

+6 if they have noticed the young slave was concerned when the Custodes were advised to go to Sene Muro;

+3 for every day after the first spent exploring the countryside (except for those wasted due to the hostility of the Gallic gods, see box The Awakening of the Gallic Gods).

On a success, the Custodes locate the hideout in the vicinity of Sene Muro (see Scene 8).

SCENE 7: GHOSTS OF ALESIA

If the Custodes have successfully located the ruins of Alesia, they travel north, beyond the villages of Brauco and Aquae Celeres. They reach a narrow valley between two rivers as the sun is slowly disappearing behind dark rolling clouds.

The Custodes start looking for a sheltered place to camp for the night while the low rumble of the incoming storm reverberates in the plain.

Suddenly, barely visible in the fading light, the skeletal remains of old buildings reveal themselves to the eyes of the Custodes, as they jut out of the vegetation at the top of a lonely hill.

The hill rises for about two hundred meters above the valley floor, where two river courses run to meet to the north, and is surrounded by steep cliffs in every direction, except at the eastern and western extremities: the ideal place for a fortification.

A Stormy Welcome

The Custodes strike camp before darkness falls, among a smaller complex of ruins at the foot of the hill. They barely have time to put up a tent before the clouds start pouring torrential rain on them. The night is illuminated by bright flashes for hours on end, as the storm rages on through the night, but it feels particularly violent at the top of the hill.

During the storm, the Custodes may attempt a roll of Sensibilitas (DT 9). On a success, they sense that the veil separating the mortal world and what lies beyond is thin at the top of the hill, and that a ritual performed there would probably be both very powerful and dangerous.

If the Custodes realise the storm is an omen, a portent, they may try to interpret it with a roll of De Magia (DT 6). Based on its Degree of Success, the Custodes obtain the following information:

I. The gods are in turmoil.

II. The gods have been challenged.

III. The gods have drawn the Custodes here, to take them where it all began.

The Ruins

The following morning, the thunderstorm gradually leaves its place to a uniform cloud cover, with distant thunder and sparse flashes of lightning. If the Custodes climb the hill, they discover that vegetation has grown so tangled and thick that they must struggle step after step, working their way upwards using their blades: a successful roll of De Natura (DT 6) makes them realise that nobody has come here in a long time.

A Custos succeeding in a roll of De Scientia (DT 6) is able to make sense of the ruins, obtaining information based on the DoS of the roll. Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries that precedes it.

I. The ruins are what remains of a large Celtic hillfort. The settlement is surrounded by a rampart in the Gallic style, and smaller residential buildings are clustered at the base of the hill (where the Custodes have camped the previous night).

II. The settlement was probably destroyed by a fire. While most buildings are houses, many others can be identified as temples, indicating that this settlement was a particularly significant place of worship.

III. The Custodes uncover a number of inscriptions; among the fading lines, the words IN ALISIIA are still readable, and this allows them to identify without error the site as the Gallic oppidum of Alesia, capital of the Mandubii Celts, site of the last stand of the coalition of Celtic tribes led by king Vercingetorix against Julius Caesar's troops in 701 AUC.

Piercing the Veil

If the Custodes perform a ritual of Divination on top of the hill of Alesia, at first they find it simply very easy to perform (DT reduced by 3).

When everything seems to be going well and the officiating Custos is receiving a response, a cloud of sooty air engulfs the top of the hill, depriving the Custodes of their sight and nearly smothering them. Then, a faint distant glow grows to light an otherworldly violet sky. Set against the purple glow, the Custodes see colossal shapes fighting an earth-shaking battle, throwing thunderbolts at each other, hurling mountaintops, and fighting with gigantic spears and swords!

Suddenly, one of the colossal figures turns and notices the Custodes: it is man-shaped, and its head is crowned by antlers. Wild boars, bears and wolves scurry at its feet. A roll of De Magia (DT 9) identifies the figure as the Gallic god Carnonos. The colossus removes the torc he wears around its neck and throws it at the Custodes. Lightning strikes the jewel as it touches the ground, blinding and stunning the Custodes, and ending the vision.

When the Custodes recover, they see that a blackened hole has opened in the ground where the thunderbolt fell in the vision. From the opening a creature slithers out: it is the longest snake the Custodes have ever seen, two feet in diameter, and from its massive head stick out two curved horns.

The Ram-headed Serpent hisses furiously as it springs towards the Custodes: they must fight it or perish (see Appendix 2: Antagonists). The serpent continuously slithers around the ruined pillars and crumbling walls of Alesia, making it harder to attack with ranged weapons (the DT is raised by 3).

When the serpent is killed, it dissolves in a haze of whiteish smoke.

Other Investigation

Going to Aballo or other places in the area gives no new leads. The locals are either oblivious to the activities of Brenno and his band and have nothing to add, or are sympathisers and do not reveal anything to the Custodes.

The Wrath of the Gods

Alesia was indeed built upon sacred ground and was an important centre of worship for the Mandubii tribe. Devotees flocked here from all over Gallia, to feel the presence of their gods, so close to be barely out of the mortals' reach. Today, the gods are still there and the presence of the Custodes upsets and displeases them, as they act in the name of the gods of Rome.

By coming here, the Custodes are challenging the wrath of the Gallic gods and will now be constantly vexed by them: from this moment on, as long as the Custodes stay in the Pagus Mandubiorum, the Demiurge will generate two random supernatural events each day.

PART 3: ENDING THE THREAT

SCENE 8: THE HIDEOUT

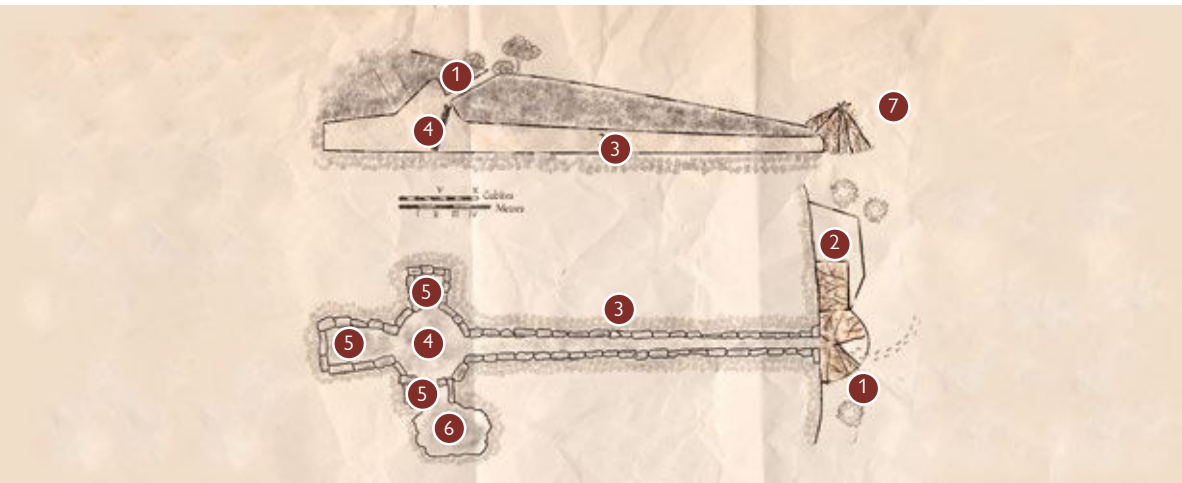
Whether the Custodes have discovered the brigands' forest hideout in the Morvan or the country hideout in the Pagus Mandubiorum, the encounter is the same: the description of the Celtic barrow that follows is to be adapted to the location required.

THE CELTIC BARROW

At the beginning of their career, the brigands used to have a single hideout on the Morvan, not far from Sidolocus. When their number began to grow, Brenno started to scout the region, looking for possible refuges. Now, several hideouts are scattered in a one-day walk radius from Sidolocus.

At any moment inside the barrow there is a number of armed brigands equal to the number of Custodes. they are all men, with the exception of a woman, who is the lover of one of the bandits.

The barrow is an artificial hill, covered by sparse vegetation, shrubs, and some isolated trees. Raised against the foot of the hill is a small, conical wooden hut, with a small enclosure nearby. The hut seems deserted, as no light nor smoke comes out of it.



1 The hut is composed of long poles and branches arching towards the centre, covered with a thick layer of brush and vegetation providing insulation from cold and weather. Inside, a couple of raised beds sit around a central hearth. A moveable wooden panel leaning against the side of the hill covers the entrance to the barrow (area 3). The panel hides a very simple alarm device: a string tied to the bottom of one of the planks of the panel rings a bell in the central room of the barrow (area 4). Removing the panel without disarming the alarm triggers it and alerts the bandits in the barrow. Looking for a trap reveals the device (roll of De Scientia, DT 3), otherwise it's much harder to notice it (roll of Sensibilitas, DT 9).

2 Wicker fences enclose a paddock wide enough for several horses. A wooden canopy covered with branches and brush provides shelter to a mule, which is gently grazing the short grass of the paddock.

3 Flat slabs of stone line the sides and ceiling of the tunnel leading into the barrow. A faint light comes from the inside. The tunnel is about 30 yards long; it is low and narrow at the entrance, barely 2 feet wide and 1 yard and a half high, but it widens progressively, doubling its width and height where it opens into area 4. In any case, the small size of the tunnel doesn't allow shields to be brought into the barrow.

4 This circular room lies at the centre of the barrow. Its walls are made of flat boulders and its roof is made of overlapping slates forming a conical roof. Four openings lead to three side chambers (areas 5) and to the access tunnel (area 3); a wooden ladder gives access to a tunnel dug through the ceiling (area 7), three meters above the floor.

5 These chambers once housed the mortal remains of Gallic chieftains. Any treasure kept here was stolen long ago, and the brigands have made their sleeping quarters here. A few blankets, goatskins of wine, food, and some worthless trinkets are all there is. The brigands are dozing here when the Custodes start exploring the barrow.

6 This chamber was dug recently to allow the barrow to accommodate more people. Unlike the other rooms, it is filled with timber posts and wooden planks

7 This passage was dug by the brigands, to connect the outside with the central room (area 4) of the barrow. On the outside, the entrance is concealed by a camouflaged mobile hatch (finding it requires a successful roll of De Natura with DT 12).

The Brigands' Tactics

If the brigands have been alerted by the alarm in area 1, they wait for the Custodes to enter the access tunnel, then they all leave through the upper tunnel, removing the ladder so the Custodes can't follow them, and return to the hut. Their plan is to block the Custodes inside the barrow and to attack them one by one as they try to get out through the narrow opening.

If the brigands are unaware of their presence, the Custodes can sneak inside the barrow with a roll of De Corpore (DT 6).

If they succeed, the brigands are surprised in the first tempus of the fight. If they are not surprised, they will manage to get their weapons but not their armor.

The brigands fight to the death: their determination increases their Attack Potential by 3 throughout the fight (attacking and defending).

A Solid Lead

When the fight is over, the Custodes can interrogate the woman that was with them. She is terrified, as she knows the punishment that awaits the receptatores (crucifixion). As a consequence she will quickly tell them what she knows about the leader of the brigands.

Brenno is a very charismatic man and a strategic genius who has turned a few petty criminals into a well-trained and well-equipped company of fighters. Following his lead, the brigands have carried out many attacks over the last year, aiming at increasingly better targets. They refuse to attack locals, targeting exclusively the 'invaders', as Brenno calls the Romans.

Brenno has proved uncatchable so far, for he never stays in the same place for more than a few days. But a couple of days earlier, a merchant was robbed on the way to Aballo, and the band has split to confuse its pursuers. Brenno went with about a dozen men to a fort on the hills between Sentu Verno and Abilusia.

Calling for Aid

The Custodes must hurry if they want to catch Brenno, as he will be gone again in two days or less. Knowing time is against them, the Custodes can barely find the time to go back to Sidolocus and hope some legionaries stationed there can help them. If they do so, once they get to the town mansio, they will find a patrol coming from Augustodunum and going to Aballo on an escort mission.
The group consists of a number of legionaries equal to 15 minus the number of Custodes, and is led by Forgall, a signifer (standard-bearer officer). Once Forgall has been shown the Custodes' diplomas and the situation has been explained to him, he will abandon his mission to support the Custodes in attacking Brenno's fort.

SCENE 9: BEHEADING THE SNAKE

Thanks to the directions provided by the captured woman, the Custodes find the fort easily. They approach the stronghold sheltered by woods and tall grass, but they have to stop at a distance to avoid alerting potential sentinels.

A Custos succeeding in a roll of De Bello (DT 6) can make a tactical evaluation of the fort, obtaining information based on the DoS of the roll. Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries that precedes it.

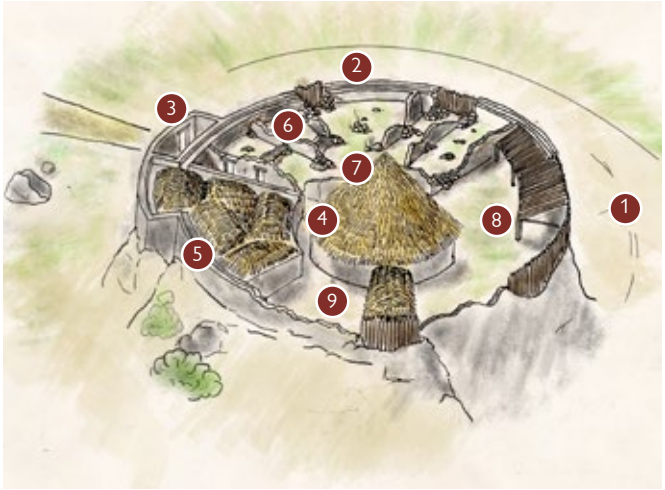
I. The fort is surrounded by a grassy plain, so approaching the fort in broad daylight is impossible. Trying to ambush the brigands as they exit the fort leaves them too many chances to escape, especially if they are mounted.

II. The fort has only one entrance, which is likely to be heavily guarded and very difficult to break through. The curtain wall though is lower on one side, right above a scarp.

III. There are always three sentinels on the wall, and they patrol on regular shifts (the DT of all tests to avoid sentinels is decreased by 3).

Ambushing the Bandits

Any attempt at ambushing the brigands as they leave the fort fails. The plain surrounding the fort is too wide and open to allow for hiding.
If Brenno and his men spot the Roman party they will flee, riding away on the grassy slopes of the hill. If the Custodes give chase on horseback, they face the malevolence of Epona (see The Awakening of the Gallic Gods) and lose control of their mounts, giving Brenno the time to escape. This close encounter makes him go into hiding, taking with him a part of the loot to restart his activities elsewhere.



1 The old ditch that used to encircle the fortification has been dug anew, but it is shallower than normally required for an effective defense.

2 The crumbled ramparts have been rebuilt to a reasonable standard: part of the wall has been replaced by a wooden palisade, and only a section above a steep scarp has not been completed, as climbing from that side is very difficult.

3 The only access to the hillfort is through two offset doors at either end of a roofless rectangular room. The room is built so that while the outer door can be broken open with a ram, the inner door cannot, due to the lack of run-up space. The absence of a roof allows the defenders to shoot attackers as they crowd into the room.

4 This corridor leads from the inner door to the roundhouse and the other areas of the fort. Three doors lead to the brigands' living quarters (area 5) and, on the opposite side, three gaps give access to the front yard. The access corridor is so narrow that a single person can block it. People in this area can be targeted by ranged attacks coming from the curtain wall.

5 A series of connected thatched buildings. Here sleep the brigands of Brenno's band. The rooms are warm and wide, with cots, piles of firewood, some supplies and small trinkets.

6 This open area is what is left of some of the living quarters of the old fort. Brenno and his men haven't rebuilt anything in here, and the area is cluttered with debris and rests of walls.

7 The roundhouse is the largest building in the fort, and is the lodging of Brenno and of his most trusted men. The roundhouse has three levels: on the ground floor is the main living area, lit and warmed by a central hearth; a ladder leads to the first floor and the bedrooms; a hatch on the floor of the ground floor opens onto an underground cellar, accessible with another wooden ladder; here are kept some supplies and the hoard of the brigands.

8 This area holds the stables and pens. Here, the brigands keep hens, geese and sheep, which provide them with eggs, milk and (occasionally) meat. Wooden shelters protect the horses of the band. If the Custodes enter this area, Pipius and Epona (see The Awakening of the Gallic Gods) stir the animals into making a big fuss, neighing, honking and squawking, severely reducing the chances of the Custodes to go unnoticed (the DT of all rolls to avoid sentinels increases by 3).

9 This backyard is occasionally used as storage.

Brenno has made his headquarters in an ancient hillfort. The buildings inside the curtain wall have been partially rebuilt, reinforcing especially the roundhouse, the stables, and a number of houses. The rest is an empty shell of crumbled dry walls. Stones and debris have been cleared off, both to repurpose them to rebuild the stronghold and to allow the horses to move around without risking injury.

Brenno stays in the roundhouse and most of his men are housed in the residential area by the front gate.

Sneaking into the Fort

The Custodes can climb the ramparts to enter the fort. The wall is not too high, but the ditch outside increases the overall height. The Custodes need a successful roll of De Corpore (DT 6) to climb the wall and enter the front yard. Avoiding the sentinels requires good timing and a roll of Ingenium (DT 2d6).

Climbing the escarpment is more difficult and requires a test of De Corpore (DT 9) but no sentinels can reach the area above as there is no wall there, so sneaking in will require only a test of De Corpore (DT 6). From there, Custodes can either get into the back yard or the court yard.

Once inside, the Custodes may attempt to open the main gate from the inside. To do so, they have to pass under the nose of the sentinels with a roll of De Corpore (DT 9). On a failure, the sentinels raise the alarm before they get to the inner door. It takes four additional Tempora to open both doors.

Depending on the Degree of Success, the action will have the following outcome:

I. The Custodes open the inner door before they the alarm is raised; it takes one additional Tempus to open the outer door.

II. The Custodes manage to open both doors; no alarm is sounded, but if the Custodes want to re-enter the fort they must pass another test of De Corpore (DT 6). If they fail, they have been spotted and the sentinels sound the alarm.

III. The Custodes manage to open both doors. They can either wait at the door or move wherever they want inside the fort.

We're under Attack!

If the alarm is sounded, the brigands will get out of their beds ready to fight. It takes 2 Tempora for the seven brigands currently sleeping in the living quarters to get out. When they do, they will have weapons and shield, but no armour. It takes 5 Tempora for Brenno and his five guards to exit the roundhouse ,but the extra time gives them the chance to don their armor.
As soon as the brigands emerge from their lodgings, they will close the doors if they have been opened, or attack any Custodes who want to keep them open. If the doors are still closed, three brigands will scout the inside of the fort, while the remaining four will climb the wall and shoot arrows from above. If there

is the need to block the corridor, for example if the legionaries managed to break through the main gate, three brigands will be enough to block the way, given the small width of the passage. When Brenno exits the roundhouse, he will stay back, ready to face a flanking attack, to assist the defenders in the corridor, or to push back assailants trying to climb the walls.

Attacking the Fort

If the Custodes have been joined by Forgall's soldiers, the effects of their support can be evaluated as follows:
At the start of each tempus, the legionary leader (either Forgall or one of the Custodes) rolls De Bello with a variable DT:

• DT 12 if the legionaries are outside, trying to storm the walls;

• DT 9 if they are attacking the entrance door after the door has been opened from within;

• DT 6 if they managed to enter the fort and are fighting in the front yard.

If the roll fails, one legionary has been wounded and the assailants find themselves in a disadvantageous position: the next roll of De Bello suffers a penalty of -3.

Otherwise, apply the following options, based on the Degree of Success:

I. The two factions stand their ground; no one is wounded.

II. One of the brigands has been wounded.

III. One of the brigands has been wounded and the assailants gain a small tactical advantage: the next roll of De Bello enjoys a bonus of +3.

IV. One of the brigands has been killed outright, and the assailants manage to push back the defenders. If the fight was at the walls or at the door, the brigands are pushed in the front yard; if the fight was in the front yard, the brigands are pushed inside the roundhouse.

Each legionary can withstand four wounds before being forced to retreat from the fight; a brigand can withstand three before surrendering.

If the brigands are forced to retreat inside the roundhouse, they will barricade the door and descend into the underground chamber, blocking the hatch. At this point it's basically impossible to get the brigands out of the cellar and a siege must follow. The Custodes have time to ask Augustodunum for reinforcements. After a couple of days, Brenno asks to negotiate on behalf of his men and, like Vercingetorix did 500 years before, he surrenders to the Romans asking for his men's lives to be spared.

SCENE 10: RESOLUTION

With Brenno defeated, Vercingetorix's vengeful will diminishes once again and the region returns to normality. All supernatural events cease abruptly and the Custodes, legionaries and inhabitants of the Pagus Mandubiorum are filled with a sudden sense of relief. Soldiers cheer and celebrate on the streets, thanking the Custodes for breaking the curse afflicting them.

The legionaries take care of gathering the brigand's hoard and transport it to Augustodunum, where the cornicularius legati legionis, the treasurer under the command of the legatus, will supervise the process of restitution. The Custodes are asked to escort the convoy in charge of the transportation.

When the Custodes reach Augustodunum they are received by Theodosius Antenor. The legatus thanks them for their actions, declaring his satisfaction for the arrest of Brenno (or for his death or disappearance from the area).

If the Custodes want to examine the hoard, looking for something that might have caused the change in Brenno, they will be allowed to do so, but they will be frustrated by the length and tediousness of the bureaucratic process. First, an inventory of the stolen goods is accomplished; then, the inventory is compared with the lists of consignment notes provided by the relatives or commercial partners of the robbed merchants looking for matches; finally, any identified good will be returned to whoever can legally claim it.

Truth be told, the Custodes don't know what they are looking for, and the variety of wares stolen by the brigands is such that nothing really stands out; considering the weapons alone,

A JOB WELL DONE

Vercingetorix's sword lies among the dozens weapons carried by the mercenaries of the assaulted convoys and among those that were transported to be sold.

When the Custodes return to Lugdunum, Marcus Nepos greets them and asks them to relate the events they witnessed. The tale takes the most part of a night and, after much talking and many cups of wine and refreshments, the Custodes finally fall silent.

The old magister mutters to himself for a while, reflecting on the words of the Custodes, and then mumbles "Well done, well done indeed" before rising and heading to his lodgings with a thoughtful look on his face...

APPENDIX 1

FREQUENTLY PERFORMED RITUALS

The Custodes will often attemp Rituals of Divination to find clues about what is happening to them. Here follows a list of the most common ones.

The Favor of the Gods

The Custodes may attempt to gauge the disposition of the gods towards them. To do so, they must roll De Magia (DT 6), obtaining information based on the DoS of the roll. Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries preceding it.

I. The Roman gods grant their favor to the Custodes.

II. For some reason beyond the grasp or the officiant, the gods are restless.

III. The gods count on the Custodes to carry out an endeavour.

Clairvoyance

The Custodes may perform a Clairvoyance ritual to try and locate the brigands. To do so, they must roll De Magia (DT 9), again obtaining information based on the DoS of the roll. Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries preceding it.

I. The Custos sees a group of men, resting on the grass by a grove, their riding horses fettered nearby. The men are clearly very relaxed: some are eating cheese and dark bread and drinking from a goatskin. One of them, probably the leader, is standing away from the other men, gazing in the distance.

II. Behind the leader, there is another figure, barely visible in the vision. It looks like a tall warrior, with long reddish hair falling on his shoulder, bearing a spear and an oval shield. No man in the group seems to acknowledge his presence.

III. The band is camped on a hill, and the two men standing are looking down towards a settlement built on the portion of land isolated by a river bight. The warrior whispers something into the leader's ear, who seems to shake off his thoughts. He then orders the others to get going, as they can't stay too long in the same place.

Retrocognition

The Custodes may attempt a ritual of Retrocognition on the place where one of the attacks took place; to do so, they must roll De Magia (DT 9), obtaining information based on the DoS of the roll. Every entry after the first includes the information contained in the entries preceding it.

I. The Custos sees several men fighting on the road. Some of them seem to be the armed escort of a richly dressed man who lies on the ground, shuddering with fear.

II. The melee ends abruptly when a dozen horsemen charge into the fray, thrusting with lances and slashing with their swords.

III. One of the horsemen rides a horse adorned with human skulls.

Precognition

It is impossible to provide examples on the use of Precognition in a game of Lex Arcana, as the ritual depends on the information possessed by the Custodes at any given moment.

Asking to see where the next attack will take place may yield results only if the Custos officiating the ritual already has an idea about where an attack is more likely and the ritual will only serve to confirm the supposition.

APPENDIX 2

ANTAGONISTS

Some of the adversaries faced by the Custodes possess special powers or can perform special attacks. The following list provides explanation for all the special mechanics presented in this adventure:

SPECIAL POWERS:

Charge	The creature dashes into melee attacking with its natural weapons. If the creature is the attacker in the first tempus of a fight, increase its AP by 3.
Crushing	As soon as the creature inflicts at least 1 point of damage, it grapples its victim, who is blocked (its De Bello drops to 0) and unable to act. At the start of each tempus, the wrapped victim rolls Vigor (DT equal to the damage value of the creature) to break free; on a failure, the victim is crushed and suffers damage equal to the damage value of the creature (armor does not offer protection). If the crushing creature suffers damage from a different source, it releases the victim.
Disease (X)	This creature is able to spread a disease, either magically or physically. The victim is allowed to oppose this power with test of a Virtus specified in the description of the creature (DT X).
Immortality	This creature cannot be killed by mortal means. When the creature's Hit Points drop to zero, it is out of combat, but it is not dead.
Fate Roll	This creature has the benefits of the Fate Roll thanks to its consecration to a deity or for some intrinsic magic qualities. This skill works exactly as per the Custodes.
Swift retreat	This creature is able to disengage at will from combat and can flee from it in any given moment.
Toxic	This creature is venomous (or, sometimes, poisonous). If this creature inflicts at least 1 point of damage, the victim is poisoned. A poisoned character must make a test of Vigor (DT X): if the test is successful, the victim has gotten off the toxin with no other ill-effects, otherwise it suffers damage equal to the difference between the two values rolled (the armour does not protect); this test must be repeated every 8 hours, until the character passes the test of Vigor or he dies. An attempt of curing the poisoning can be made once per day: curing poisoning requires a successful test of De Scientia (DT12).

ANTAGONISTS

The following write ups summarise the ratings of each adversary using the following format: Value indicates a type of die, followed by the number of dice to be used to generate the listed characteristics of the adversary.
Special powers indicate whether the creature possesses any special abilities, among those described above.

	Value	1 die	2 dice	3 dice	Weapons	Armour	Shield	Special power
Bear	12(d12)	Damage	De Bello De Corpore	Hit Points	/	/	/	/
Boar	6(d6)	Damage	De Bello	De corpore Hit Points	/	/	/	Charge
Brenno * brigand's leader	8(d8)	Ratio	De Bello De Natura Hit Points	De corpore Sensibilitas	Gladius (6) Arcus (6)	Lorica plumata (4)	Clipeus (2)	Fate Roll
Brigand	6(d6)	Ratio Sensibilitas	De Bello De Natura Hit Points	De Corpore	Gladius (6) Arcus (6)	Levis Lorica (3)	Parma (1)	/
Genius * cucullatus	6(d6)	Damage	De Bello Hit Points	De Corpore De Natura	/	/	/	Disease (1 die), Fate Roll, Swift Retreat, Immortality
Lynx	6(d6)	Damage	Hit Points	De Bello De Corpore	/	/	/	Charge
Ram-horned* serpent	10(d10)	De corpore Damage	De Bello	Hit Points	/	Scaly skin (3)	/	Crushing, Toxic (2 dice)
Stag	10(d10)	De Bello Damage	Hit Points	De corpore	/	/	/	Charge
Wolf	6(d6)	Damage	Hit Points	De Bello De Corpore	/	/	/	/

* **Brenno** was a common brigand, content with slashing money bags and the occasional throat. A strange fate has made him the chosen of Vercingetorix, and under his divine guidance he has proven to be clever and audacious. But the legacy of the king of the Arverni is probably to weighty a burden for his modest ambition...

***Genius cucullatus:** These creatures are nameless archaic spirits of the Gallo-Roman religion. The only name the Romans have given them means simply hooded spirits. The genii appear only at night and can use their Swift Retreat power to return to the darkness whence they came. If they choose to do so, or if they are reduced to zero Hit Points, they disappear into thin air and cannot appear again until the following night.
If they manage to ambush a character, they can use their Disease power to suffocate them. The victim must succeed in a roll of Vigor (DT 1d6 for each genius using the power) or will be paralysed and asphyxiate, dying in a number of tempora equal to the victim's rating in Vigor.

***Ram horned:** Denizens of bogs and marshes, these legendary creatures are often associated with the Gallic gods. They face their opponents charging them with their curved horns and then by attempting to constrict and crush them with their spires.

SAMPLE CUSTODES

Name	Gaius Valerius
Province of Origin	Italia
Praefectura	Graeciae et Italiae
Office	Explorer
Hit Points	26

GAIUS VALERIUS

Your name is Gaius Valerius. You were born 21 years ago in Aquileia, a small town in the northern part of the province of Italia. You spent your early years in the countryside surrounding your town, and the memories of those hills and woods never leave you, even when you are far away. One day, you decided to try and join the Praetorian guard, and you travelled many miles to Mediolanum. There, you underwent many tests and your remarkable aptitude towards the wilderness made you stand out from the others. It didn't come as a surprise when the officers of the Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana enlisted you to be trained as an Explorer.

VIRTUTES

Vigor	12	(2d6)
Coordinatio	13	(d10+d3)
Ingenium	10	(d10)
Auctoritas	8	(d8)
Ratio	10	(d10)
Sensibilitas	12	(2d6)

PERITIAE

De Bello	14	(d10+d4)
De Natura	17	(d12+d5)
De Societate	6	(d6)
De Magia	8	(d8)
De Scientia	6	(d6)
De Corpore	14	(d10+d4)

EQUIPMENT

Armor: **Lorica plumata**	protection value 4 (d4)
Shield: **Clipeus**	parry rating 2
Weapon: **Glaudius**	damage value 6 (d6)
Weapon: **Arcus**	damage value 6 (d6)

Name	Aulus Antilochus
Province of Origin	Aegyptus
Praefectura	Africae et Syriae
Office	Scholar
Hit Points	18

AULUS ANTILOCHUS

Your name is Aulus Antilochus, and there aren't many who believe that you are only 26 years old. The reason for such incredulity is that it took you only a few years to rise as one of the best engineers of your generation. You have worked on some of most spectacular works undertaken in the magnificent city of Alexandria, and your skill has been praised by the governor of the province of Aegyptus himself. But two years ago something happened during the return trip from the city of your family, ancient Ptolemais: you witnessed the aftermath of an attack against a village of colonists, a massacre that could have been perpetrated only by a supernatural creature. A week after, you volunteered to enter the Cohors Arcana, putting your knowledge to the service of the Empire as a Scholar.

VIRTUTES

Vigor	8	(d8)
Coordinatio	6	(d6)
Ingenium	16	(d10+d6)
Auctoritas	12	(2d6)
Ratio	14	(d10+d4)
Sensibilitas	9	(d6+d3)

PERITIAE

De Bello	10	(d10)
De Natura	6	(d6)
De Societate	9	(d6+d3)
De Magia	12	(2d6)
De Scientia	18	(3d6)
De Corpore	10	(d10)

EQUIPMENT

Armor: **Lorica Plumata**	protection value 4 (d4)
Weapon: **Scramasax**	damage value 5 (d5)
Weapon: **Frombola**	damage value 3 (d3)

Name	Elektra Ziais
Province of Origin	Dacia
Praefectura	Orientis
Office	Fighter
Hit Points	29

VIRTUTES

Vigor	16	(d10+d6)
Coordinatio	10	(d10)
Ingenium	10	(d10)
Auctoritas	14	(d10+d4)
Ratio	8	(d8)
Sensibilitas	7	(d4+d3)

PERITIAE

De Bello	17	(d12+d5)
De Natura	8	(d8)
De Societate	14	(d10+d4)
De Magia	7	(d4+d3)
De Scientia	6	(d6)
De Corpore	13	(d10+d3)

ELEKTRA ZIAIS

Your name is Elektra, and you are 23 years old. Your father was a rebel chieftain, hunting Romans in the mountains of Dacia, and the first time you drew a sword was to fight the legionaries of the Empire. Then, your tribe accepted the terms offered by the Caesars, and your mountains became part of the Roman Empire. The wisdom of the Roman diplomats impressed you, and you decided to see with your eyes the land from where they came from. You reached the province of Italia as part of a travelling ludus, a company of gladiators. Your prowess in the arena of Capua attracted the interest of the Praetorian guard, and they enlisted you as a Fighter for the Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana.

EQUIPMENT

Armor: **Lorica squamata**	protection value 5 (d5)
Shield: **Scutum**	parry rating 3
Weapon: **Ensis**	damage value 8 (d8)
Weapon: **Toxon**	damage value 7 (d4+d3)

PENDARAN MAB ELAD

Your name is Pendaran, son of Elad. Many years have passed since you were a child, scurrying around in the shadow of Hadrian's Wall, in northern Britannia, but one thing hasn't changed: dream visions come to you at night, and you can see what others can't in the flight of birds, or in the barking of dogs. When the Praetorians first came to your village, you already had a reputation for being close to the gods. They took you with them to Londinium, and from there you boarded a ship headed for Rome. In the centre of the Empire you studied the art of Divination, integrating the knowledge of a Roman Augur with the ancient wisdom of your own folk.

Name	Pendaran mab Elad
Province of Origin	Britannia
Praefectura	Occidentis
Office	Augur
Hit Points	16

VIRTUTES

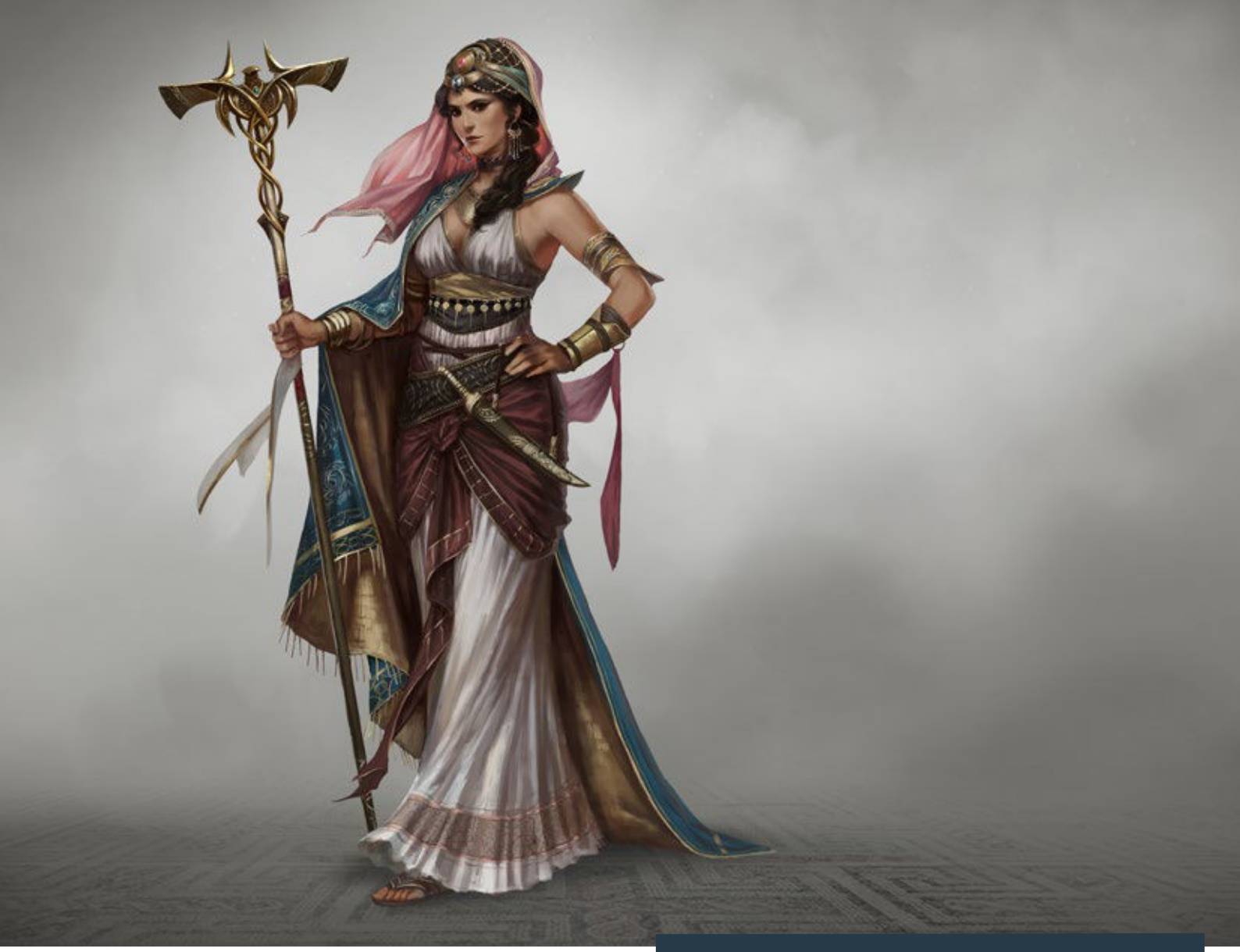
Vigor	8	(d8)
Coordinatio	10	(d10)
Ingenium	14	(d10+d4)
Auctoritas	6	(d6)
Ratio	9	(d6+d3)
Sensibilitas	18	(3d6)

PERITIAE

De Bello	8	(d8)
De Natura	15	(d10+d5)
De Societate	6	(d6)
De Magia	18	(3d6)
De Scientia	10	(d10)
De Corpore	8	(d8)

EQUIPMENT

Armor: **Levis Lorica**	protection value 3 (d3)
Weapon: **Club**	damage value 4 (d4)
Weapon: **Frombola**	damage value 3 (d3)



Name	Zenobia Euergetes
Province of Origin	Asia
Praefectura	Orientis
Office	Diplomat
Hit Points	21

ZENOBIA EUERGETES

Your name is Zenobia. You were born 24 years ago in Pergamum, in the province of Asia, not far from the ruins of the ancient city of Troy. Your parents were wealthy merchants, and you spent your childhood travelling along the trade routes of your land, to visit the rich Greek cities of the coast. You have seen hundreds of different folks and heard the speech of a thousand lands, dreaming one day to visit each and every one of them. And maybe you might, now that you have entered the Cohors Arcana, invested with the office of Diplomat, the cursus protected by the god Mercury.

VIRTUTES

Vigor	10	(d10)
Coordinatio	8	(d8)
Ingenium	10	(d10)
Auctoritas	14	(d10+d4)
Ratio	17	(d12+d5)
Sensibilitas	6	(d6)

PERITIAE

De Bello	10	(d10)
De Natura	6	(d6)
De Societate	18	(3d6)
De Magia	6	(d6)
De Scientia	14	(d10+d4)
De Corpore	11	(d6+d5)

EQUIPMENT

Armor: **Levis Lorica**	protection value 3 (d3)
Weapon: **Scramasax**	damage value 5 (d5)
Weapon: **Securicula**	damage value 5 (d5)

THE SORTES

PERMITTE DIVIS CETERA **PORTENT** Pass this tablet to the Demiurge. Beforethe end of the session you will witness an ominous event.	NON POTEST PRIUS MORTEM ADFICIER, QUAM VENERIT FATUM **GAIUS VALERIUS** If the corresponding Custos just got hit by an attack (but before rolling for damage) reveal this tablet to turn The attack into a miss.	DE INCERTO CERTA NE FIANT, SI SAPIS, CAVEAS **BLESSING OF MARS** If you or another Custos rolled **De Bello**, reveal this tablet to raise the degree of success by one level.
IN SOMNIS VERITAS **DREAM** Pass this tablet to the Demiurge. Before the end of the session you will experience an ominous dream.	NON POTEST PRIUS MORTEM ADFICIER, QUAM VENERIT FATUM **PENDARAN MAB ELAD** If the corresponding Custos just got hit by an attack (but before rolling for damage) reveal this tablet to turn The attack into a miss.	DE INCERTO CERTA NE FIANT, SI SAPIS, CAVEAS **BLESSING** If you or another Custos rolled **De Corpore**, reveal this tablet to raise the degree of success by one level.
NUNE ME ROJAS?, NUNE... CONSULTS? TEMPUS ABIT IAM **NO EFFECT**	NON POTEST PRIUS MORTEM ADFICIER, QUAM VENERIT FATUM **ELEKTRA ZIAIS** If the corresponding Custos just got hit by an attack (but before rolling for damage) reveal this tablet to turn The attack into a miss.	DE INCERTO CERTA NE FIANT, SI SAPIS, CAVEAS **BLESSING OF APOLLO** If you or another Custos rolled **De Magia**, reveal this tablet to raise the degree of success by one level.
NUNE ME ROJAS?, NUNE... CONSULTS? TEMPUS ABIT IAM **NO EFFECT**	NON POTEST PRIUS MORTEM ADFICIER, QUAM VENERIT FATUM **ZENOBIA EUERGETES** If the corresponding Custos just got hit by an attack (but before rolling for damage) reveal this tablet to turn The attack into a miss.	DE INCERTO CERTA NE FIANT, SI SAPIS, CAVEAS **BLESSING OF DIANA** If you or another Custos rolled **De Natura,** reveal this tablet to raise the degree of success by one level.
SE CEDUES PERDERE, NOLO NI CEDUAS FORTUNA CUSTOS PERIT **BAD LUCK** If you or another Custos rolled for an action (any non combat) and succeeded, reveal this tablet to turn the success into a failure.	NON POTEST PRIUS MORTEM ADFICIER, QUAM VENERIT FATUM **AULUS ANTILOCHUS** If the corresponding Custos just got hit by an attack (but before rolling for damage) reveal this tablet to turn The attack into a miss.	DE INCERTO CERTA NE FIANT, SI SAPIS, CAVEAS **BLESSING OF MINERVA** If you or another Custos rolled **De Scientia**, reveal this tablet to raise the degree of success by one level.
CREDITS QUOD DECUNE? NE FORE STULTUM **RUMOURS** Reveal this tablet to ask the Demiurge to confirm or deny the authenticity of a rumour.	AUDENTIS FORTUNA IUVAT **FORTUNA** If you or another Custos rolled for an action (any non combat) and failed, reveal this tablet to turn the failure into a success.	DE INCERTO CERTA NE FIANT, SI SAPIS, CAVEAS **BLESSING OF MERCURY** If you or another Custos rolled **De Societate**, reveal this tablet to raise the degree of success by one level.

"Then Romulus shall receive the sceptre of his race, and found the walls of Mars, and call the people Romans. I have given no limits or duration to their possessions: I've given them empire without end."

Virgil, Aeneid

HISTORICAL-FANTASY ROLEPLAYING IN A ROMAN EMPIRE THAT NEVER FELL

In Lex Arcana, you are a Custos (warden) of the Cohors Auxiliaria Arcana, sent by the Emperor to the four corners of the world to further the study of arcane lore, investigate forbidden cults, and face the threat posed by dangerous supernatural creatures.

This quickstart contains the rules for Lex Arcana in an abbreviated form, 5 pre-generated characters and an introductory adventure set in Gallia - By the Will of the Gods.

QUALITY GAMES