

Rippers



The Templar Legacy

THE TEMPLAR LEGACY

By

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Requires the Savage Worlds rules by Shane Lacy Hensley
available at www.peginc.com.

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INTRODUCTION

This adventure is suitable for a small group of Seasoned or Veteran Rippers. Should the characters be higher Rank, increase the number of foes or their abilities. At least one hero should speak French, and Knowledge (History) skill would be of great use. The adventure has more investigation than combat in the early stages, as the heroes try to piece together what occurred.

The plot revolves around the remnants of an old Templar family living in southern France. In the distant past, their family was involved in witchcraft and the failed summoning of a horned god. Recently, a visiting scholar and friend of a Ripper discovered a bronze head engraved with a summoning spell—the very spell used by the Templars in the Middle Ages.

Learning of the discovery, Monsieur Louis Hautpoul, the villain of the adventure, arranges for the professor to be killed to conceal his discovery. Fortunately, he has already telegraphed the Rippers.

The adventure begins in late May, 1892 and has no relation to the main *Rippers* Plot Point. The date may be changed, but requires some minor tweaking of the player handouts.

SAVAGE MELEE DAMAGE

Melee damage in *Savage Worlds* was updated with the release of *Savage Worlds: Explorer's Edition*.

In the original edition of *Savage Worlds*, as in *Rippers*, melee damage was Strength plus a number and, as a Trait roll, could be rerolled with a Benny.

In *Savage Worlds: Explorer's Edition* and newer products, including this adventure, damage is now Strength plus a die type. The second die type is limited to the character's Strength die. Both dice may Ace, but damage is no longer considered a Trait roll that can be rerolled with a Benny.

If you have converted your Rippers campaign to the new style of damage, you can use this adventure as it is written. To use this adventure with the original style of melee damage, simply use the following conversions:

<u>NEW STYLE</u>	<u>OLD STYLE</u>
Str + d4	Str +1
Str + d6	Str +2
Str + d8	Str +3
Str + d10	Str +4
Str + d12	Str +5

SCENE 1: AN URGENT MESSAGE

The Rippers begin the adventure in their lodge. Through one of their standard routes, one of the Rippers (preferably a scholarly type) receives an envelope in the post. The envelope has no distinguishing features on the outside, except for the logo of the local telegraph company.

Inside the envelope is a telegram from an old friend of the character (see Player Handout 1). The telegram was sent from southern France two days ago.

The character's friend, Doctor Emil White, is a professor of medieval archaeology at Oxford University in England and the two learned men have spent many a summer together in France working on papers and archaeological journal reports. Over the last few years, the two became very close and have kept in contact through letters and the occasional visit. The Ripper known to Doctor White knows he bought a small villa in the foothills of the Pyrenees many years ago and the Doctor must be staying there during the summer.

The telegram does not express any urgent requests of the character, but it does indicate the Doctor may be in some sort of trouble with unknown persons.

SCENE 2: A PLEASANT VOYAGE TO FRANCE

The journey to the port of Marseilles on the southern coast of France is relatively comfortable, and takes approximately six days from England and two weeks from America.

Characters wishing to use the ship's library, assuming they are first class passengers, may discover the notes below for themselves. No Investigation roll is required.

From Marseilles, the Doctor's summer retreat is some 300 miles and the Rippers need to use the local public transport system. A train runs from Marseilles to the small town of Arques, which lies only a few miles from the Doctor's house. It leaves every day at 10:00 a.m. and the journey takes only a few hours. Once at the station a horse-drawn cart or a brief walk takes the heroes to the Doctor's summer retreat.



BRIEF NOTES ON FRANCE

The French currency is the franc (F) and is actually a decimal system, unlike the British Imperial system. For the sake of convenience, assume 1F is equal to £1.

The climate in southern France for this time of year is warmer and slightly wetter than the Rippers are used to in their lodge, although the temperature is not unbearable. The proximity of the Pyrenees mountain range means thunderstorms are common during the summer months and they can last for many hours. Although not situated in the Pyrenees proper, this area of France is extremely hilly and much of the terrain is potentially dangerous for the unwary traveler.

There is little public transport available in the area. A train line runs through Arques itself, but the only means of reaching the more remote houses and farms is either on foot or by a friendly farmer offering a ride in his hay-cart.

SCENE 3: SOMEWHERE TO SLEEP

At some point the Rippers may wish to find a hotel or guest house in which to stay. The town of Arques has three such establishments. Although none of them is a luxury hotel by any means, each is comfortable in its own way.

Rippers asking where they can find accommodation in the town are directed to the first two locations. Only if those are full, and word spreads very quickly in such a small town, do the locals point the foreigners towards Madame Claire's establishment.

The first is the farmhouse of Monsieur Pierre de Plantard, a local farmer who has converted his farmhouse's upper floor into a guest house. The rooms are spartan but warm, and the food is wholesome and filling rather than fancy. At a push all the heroes can fit into the two rooms Pierre has spare.

The next is actually in the heart of town and is a guest house run by Monsieur Louis Gilbert and his family. They have run the guest house for almost six years and have a good reputation in the local area. There are six rooms at the house, all of which share a common bathroom, are well-decorated, and have large bay windows which allow plenty of sunlight to filter in. The food is a mixture of local cuisine and more "traditional" French dishes.

Lastly there is the house of Madame Claire Alvar, a known woman of ill-repute. She only has a single room available but the service is very personal. Food tends to be basic dishes, but then again Madame Claire does not expect her guest to be spending much time eating!

SCENE 4: THE PROFESSOR'S VILLA

Doctor White's villa is roughly a mile up the mountainside from town and is fairly isolated. The only other buildings to be seen are a church at least a mile up the mountain and an old stone tower wrapped in scaffolding further beyond.

At first glance the house seems to be deserted. The doors are closed and the window shutters are in place, even though it is a fine, sunny day. Use of the doorbell or calling out salutations elicits no response. Anyone thinking to try the front door finds it unlocked. If no one tries this method of entry, Doctor White's friend may make a Common Knowledge roll to remember the Doctor always kept a spare key in a flower pot on the front porch. Sure enough, the key is in place if the Rippers look.

Once inside, a brief search reveals no one is in the house, nor are there any signs of recent habitation. There are no dirty dishes nor is there any food left out as if someone had prepared a meal, and the fireplace is unlit (and has been for some time).

Rippers who wish to fully search the house may make Notice rolls, with each such roll consuming an hour of time.

Each success and raise nets the heroes one of the following clues, each of which is detailed separately below. The clues to be found are a business card (see below), copies of the strange artwork (p. 3), and the Doctor's diary (p. 3). Of the archaeological finds the Doctor mentions in his telegram, there is no sign.

THE BUSINESS CARD

The business card is discovered down the side of one of the sofa cushions, and belongs to Arcanum Books, a local shop selling old and rare books. The address of the shop is on the card (see Player Handout 2).

If the heroes visit the shop, go to Scene 5 (p. 3).

THE STRANGE ARTWORK

Hidden under a carpet are the Doctor's sketches of the paintings and murals he discovered in the cellar of the ruined church he was excavating. The pictures show scenes of human sacrifice, of grotesque monsters being worshipped by humans, and a picture of a large horned fiend devouring humans. Seeing the artwork requires a Guts roll to avoid nausea.

The pictures also depict the scenery in the background of the original artwork rather than just concentrating on the central theme. Rippers making a successful Notice roll at -2 realize the background in the paintings matches the background of the local landscape! Certain features, like the church and tower, can easily be made out in the picture and by looking out a window. Other features, such as mountains, are harder to spot due to artistic license and centuries of weathering, but they are there.

None of the pictures are signed, but the notes scribbled on them can be recognized as the Doctor's writing, either by the Doctor's friend or by comparing them to the diary, assuming it has been found.

THE DOCTOR'S DIARY

Hidden inside one of the kitchen drawers is the Doctor's private journal (see Player Handout 3 for an edited version). The journal describes in scant detail the Doctor's recent finds at the church, his theories on what the artwork means, and his fears someone is stalking him. The head referred to in the Doctor's diary cannot be seen anywhere, no matter how hard the Rippers search the villa. The book takes an hour to fully read.

SCENE 5: ARCANUM BOOKS

The shop is run by a little old lady, Madame Edith, who inherited it from her mother, who in turn inherited it from her mother. Madame Edith has no children and knows when she dies the collection is likely to be sold off cheaply to pay for her funeral costs. Madame Edith is in her early sixties, has white hair which she keeps up in a tight bun, uses pince-nez glasses which rest on her long, straight nose, and always wears an embroidered shawl around her shoulders.

The shop is only a small building and the available area is crammed full of books dating from as far back as the Middle Ages. While many of the books are on bookshelves, a fair few are merely piled on the floor. They are not arranged in any particular order, although Madame Edith can find any book she has a copy of within a few minutes.

The hours of the shop are between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The shop is closed for lunch between noon and 2:00 p.m. every day when Madame Edith can normally be found eating her lunch outside of the village church.

Madame Edith knew the Doctor quite well, and the two became friends nearly ten years ago when the Doctor first started visiting the area. She and the Doctor talked about the history of the area for hours at a time, Madame Edith's family having lived in the area for six generations, and the Doctor borrowed many of her books from time to time as part of his research.

When the Rippers visit the shop, Madame Edith is standing behind the counter, reading an old book of poetry. She is friendly to the heroes but only speaks French. If she fails to communicate with the Rippers, she goes into a back room for a few minutes and emerges with a tray of tea and home-made biscuits to make her visitors welcome.

If the heroes can communicate with Madame Edith, she invites them to look her around her shop at their leisure. She happily talks about the Doctor, but has not seen him recently, maybe for a fortnight or so. The last time she saw the Doctor he had just uncovered several artifacts from his dig site at the old church higher up the mountain, and had ordered a book to help with his research. He has yet to come and collect it and she has been too busy to deliver it herself.

If she is told the Doctor is missing she becomes upset and, as she tries to sit down, she falls to the ground. Rippers making a Smarts roll determine Madame Edith is

genuinely distressed by the news of the Doctor's strange disappearance.

If Madame Edith can communicate with the heroes, she informs them the book the Doctor wanted is available to them, if they think it might be useful in their quest to find him. The book is entitled *The True History of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon*, and is written in Latin.

If Madame Edith cannot communicate, the heroes spy the book on the counter. A scrap of paper on which is written "Dr. White," sticks out from inside the cover. Convincing Madame Edith to part company with the book requires a Persuasion roll.

THE BOOK

The book Madame Edith hands the Rippers is a late medieval treatise on the Knights Templar and it does not cast them in a good light. The book is well aged and the ink is fading in places. The cramped handwriting can be hard to read at times. Skimming through the book takes six hours.

Skimming through the book reveals the Templars apparently worshipped a strange god, often portrayed as just a severed head, and to whom they referred as "The Opener," as well as by the more commonly known name of Baphomet (which transliterates into Greek as "wisdom"). More importantly, it actually mentions that a ritual to call forth a dark god was enacted in the area in which the Rippers are now standing.

Other details in the book make mention of two Templar families who lived in the area—the Blanchefort and de Hautpoul families.

SCENE 6: VISITING THE POLICE

Once the Rippers have thoroughly searched the house, they may decide to contact the local police to discuss the disappearance of Doctor White. The local police station is easy to find and is staffed by only five full-time officers.

The police take down statements from each of the heroes, but state they cannot do a lot due to a shortage of manpower. However, they do agree to telegraph the other towns nearby to get them to keep an eye out for the missing Doctor. The Rippers need to leave a contact address with the local police.

The police do know of Doctor White and they respect his work, for every find he makes increases tourism in the area and therefore brings wealth to the rather poor area. Every

year the Doctor would let the police know he was in the area in case they saw lights on at his house.

If the heroes mention the Doctor's diary and his brush with the mystery man, the police show the Rippers the report made by the Doctor and admit upon investigating the area around the villa they did discover footprints, but no other clues. The Doctor stopped calling them about a week ago and they assumed he had returned to England. They have been to the house a few times in the last week as a routine matter but there was nobody home.

Rippers making a nuisance of themselves (rude behavior, making unreasonable demands, etc.) are likely to be arrested on a minor charge, just to teach them a lesson. They are kept in the cells for a few days and then released with a warning. A successful Common Knowledge roll at -2 reveals that although the police have no legal right to imprison the Rippers for these "crimes," by the time the Rippers could contact a higher authority they would be released.

SCENE 7: THE LOCAL MUSEUM

The town of Arques has a small museum just off of the main square, which is run by the town historian, Michel DuPont. The museum is actually his house, but over the years he has converted it into a museum covering the area in and around Arques. The museum is open 7 days a week, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. During the period of noon to 1:00 p.m. Monsieur DuPont has his lunch and, while the museum stays open to the public, he does not give tours.

Although there is no entry fee, visitors are encouraged to leave a donation on exiting the museum. A small gift shop sells postcards and photographs of some of the artifacts, as well as books and replica items of the smaller items, such as coins and necklaces.

The museum is one of the only ones in the area and displays include artifacts from the Prehistoric, Roman, Visigothic, and Middle Ages eras. Many of the items should really be in a larger museum with decent security but the French authorities do not seem particularly bothered by the "trinkets" kept in Arques. Indeed, security is so lax the Rippers are easily able to pocket smaller items if they are so inclined. Rippers who are caught are reported to the police and jailed, waiting for state police to arrive and take the offenders away.

For an extra franc, Monsieur DuPont is happy to escort visitors around the museum and give a tour of the artifacts. He is a very knowledgeable man, but does not put much faith in talk of the supernatural and the worship of pagan gods.

He has no knowledge of the Cabal, but some of the artifacts in the museum have dubious links to the organization.

Aside from the areas detailed below, other exhibits include flint tools and pot shards from the Celtic period, as well as coins, pieces of mosaic, potsherds, and small pieces of jewelry from the Roman era. During the Roman period of history, the area around Arques was famed for its silver mines and therapeutic hot springs.

VISIGOTHIC EXHIBITS

During the Visigothic era, the town of Arques was actually a city of some 30,000 inhabitants and was the capital of the area. In 410 AD the Visigoths sacked the city of Rome and carried away many priceless treasures, including, it is said, treasures from the Temple of Solomon which the Romans stole in the later part of the 1st century AD. The enemies of the Visigoths accused them of many foul acts, including the worship of dark and inhuman gods who needed blood sacrifices to appease them.

Ancient documents that have survived the ages reveal a great Visigothic treasury was once housed in the area surrounding Arques. To this day, many rumors abound about a vast treasure hoard hidden beneath the landscape. Many locals have spent hours digging holes to try and find the treasure but none gained so much as a single coin.

In the museum, the exhibits include shards of pottery, coins—both Visigothic and Roman—a broken iron sword, and a collection of scrolls. None of the items show any signs of being Cabal-related under casual inspection, but those Rippers spending a few moments examining the finds may make a Notice roll. With success, they notice on one of the coins, labeled as a Visigothic coin minted in the area, there is pyramidal shape with a circle in the center.

Rippers who succeed in a Common Knowledge roll at -2 or Knowledge (Occult) roll determine the pattern is one commonly associated with Freemasons. It can also be found on the American \$1 bill.

TEMPLAR EXHIBITS

During the early Middle Ages, the area was home to a great many of the Knights Templar, a powerful brotherhood of warrior-monks. Many of the castles built in the area belonged to the Templars or their families, including the chateau of Arques, which was built by the Blanchefort family. The Templars were disbanded by the Pope in 1307, and many of their members were tortured and accused of crimes such as sodomy, worshipping a cat, and participating in secret rituals.

Another event that shaped this area of France during the Middle Ages was the Albigensian Crusade, in which the armies of northern France descended upon the area like a pack of ravenous wolves, hell bent on removing the Albigensian heresy from the face of the Earth. Tens of thousands of innocent men, women, and children were slaughtered out of hand. Arques survived the Crusade but the population was decimated by plague in 1360. Shortly afterwards, a band of roving Catalan bandits burnt the town to the ground.

Many legends exist about Templar treasure buried to avoid it being captured by the Church after their main Commanderies were raided by French military forces. As with the Visigothic treasure, hundreds of hours of digging have proven fruitless.

Amongst the exhibits from the Middle Ages are pieces of armor, a collection of swords and maces, bronze and silver coins covering a two hundred year period, pieces of pottery, and a few fragments of scrolls bearing such mundane facts as accounts and legal documents. One of the scrolls actually has the triangle and circle motif, although a Ripper must pass a successful Notice roll to notice this strange design.

The scroll upon which the sigil is drawn is actually a letter between Sir Jean Blanchefort and a Templar colleague, Sir Richard de Hautpoul, which discusses a “forthcoming ceremony.” The scroll is in Latin, and to read it the Rippers must either take it from its glass case (which Monsieur DuPont objects to most vocally) or use Persuasion at -4 to convince Monsieur DuPont to let them view it.

SCENE 8:

AN INTERRUPTED DINNER

During the Rippers’ first evening meal at their hotel, or at Doctor White’s villa if they told police they are staying there, they are approached by two policemen from the local station. They apologize for interrupting the heroes’ meal but ask if they can take a moment of their time to have a private word with them.

Once the heroes are away from any other guests, the police explain to them they have received a telegram from police in Marseilles within the last hour informing them a body they believe to be that of Doctor White was discovered hanging from his hotel room ceiling, a noose made from his belt tied around his neck. The body has been identified by papers found on the dead person’s body, but they would

like someone who knew the Doctor to go and identify the body as soon as possible.

The local police know no other details about the death except the police in Marseilles believe the good Doctor hanged himself for reasons unknown.

SCENE 9: THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

By the time the Rippers arrive in Marseilles the police have cleaned up the crime scene. However, one of the policemen is a student of photography who actually photographs crimes scenes. Since they are convinced the death of Doctor White was suicide they saw no reason in delaying the hotel from cleaning the room at the earliest possible opportunity. Rippers going to inspect the room find just one clue with a successful Notice roll—traces of fine powder. A Common Knowledge roll reveals this is flash powder from a camera.

If asked, the local police admit one of their men photographed the scene. The photographs are not official police evidence, and the officer is not going to let just anyone look at his photos. Convincing him otherwise requires a Persuasion roll or a bribe of £1 or more.

Once they have the photos, the heroes may make a Smarts roll after studying them for an hour. Success reveals the photographs show no means by which the Doctor could possibly have hung himself. There are no stools nearby, and the table and bed are too far away to have aided the Doctor in his suicide attempt. The police have no comment on how the Doctor could have hung himself, saying only that he managed it somehow.

There are other factors the heroes may find strange about this death. The most likely ones are detailed below. If the Rippers seem stuck, allow a Smarts roll to “learn” one of the following facts.

- The police did not find a suicide note from the Doctor explaining his actions. It is unusual for a person committing suicide not to leave a note for their friends and loved ones.
- Why would the Doctor go all the way to Marseilles to kill himself, especially as he had telegraphed the Rippers to come and visit him?
- The Doctor's diary (assuming it has been found) mentions his belief he was being stalked by someone or something. Could whoever was following him have murdered him?

RESEARCHING THE CHURCH

Rippers may decide to research the history of the church by finding the data in books or by asking the locals. The town has no library, but Madame Edith is generally willing to let the heroes browse for as long as they want if they have been polite to her in previous encounters. If she knows Doctor White is dead, she is even more eager to help the Rippers, especially if they tell her they are investigating his death.

For every four hours spent searching through the bookshop, each Ripper may make an Investigation roll. Those who succeed learn a fact from the selection below, assuming they can read either French or Latin—there are no books in English.

Heroes wishing to wheedle any information out of the locals must make successful Streetwise rolls, as well as buy several rounds of drinks at one of the inns. Each roll is assumed to take four hours of such socializing. Of course, Rippers using this method of gaining information must speak French!

- The church was built by the Blanchefort family, who were once powerful nobles. The Blanchefort family lived in the area until the late 1800s, when the last male died without issue. Rumors surrounded the family's strange habits and they were often accused of performing black masses and of witchcraft, although no formal charges were ever brought against them.
- The church was built in the early 12th century and was used exclusively by members of the Knights Templars. The Blancheforts were once important Templars in this area and fabulously wealthy.
- Many members of the Blanchefort family were buried in the crypt of the church but no one has been able to find an entrance to the crypt. Local superstition has it the family members have not decayed in their coffins, but have remained as fresh as the day they died through black magic. Some even believe the family are vampires and prey on local animals.
- The church fell into disuse some 45 years after the dissolution of the Templars (roughly 1360 AD). The locals shunned the church, fearing the Blancheforts had defiled it with strange and ungodly rituals. None of the locals was brave enough to order the church knocked down for fear of supernatural retribution, and so it gradually succumbed to the elements.

- The Doctor's diary lists the archaeological finds recovered from the church, but there was no sign of any of the finds at the Doctor's house. Were the finds so valuable someone murdered the Doctor to acquire them?

Unless the Rippers can come up with concrete evidence foul play was involved, the police have no desire to change their conclusion that Doctor White committed suicide.

SCENE 10: THE DOCTOR'S BODY

The body of Doctor White is being kept in the police morgue at Marseilles until someone can legally identify the corpse. If the Rippers wish to inspect the body, rather than merely identify it, they must make a successful Persuasion roll. However, unless a hero is a qualified doctor, consulting detective, or other such type, there is a -6 penalty to this roll.

The most noticeable feature about the Doctor's body is the massive bruising around the ribcage. The police report states the bruising is from the body falling on the ground when the belt by which it was hung was cut from the ceiling. A successful Healing roll determines the bruising is more like that of something being wrapped around the chest and squeezing very hard.

There is very little bruising around the neck where the belt was tied. A successful Healing roll allows the inspecting Ripper to deduce Doctor White may have been dead before he was hanged!

Doctor White was in fact killed by a winged fiend summoned by the local cultists, who feared the Doctor was too close to the truth. The Doctor was snatched from his villa by a winged fiend shortly after sending the telegram to the Rippers and carried to Marseilles where cultists staged his suicide.

SCENE 11: THE BLANCHEFORT FAMILY CHURCH

The church where Doctor White was working is situated roughly three miles from the town of Arques, further up the mountainside. Reaching it takes around an hour on foot and slightly less on donkey. Automobiles, if one can find

one locally, have no chance of making the climb! The view of the town below is lovely, and Doctor White's villa can be seen as well. The only thing further up the mountainside is the old stone tower and its scaffolding.

The church is partially ruined, with two walls missing and much of the roof gone as well. Signs in English and French dot the area and declare the area is an archaeological dig under the supervision of Doctor Emil White. A small wooden hut contains the excavators' digging tools. Opening the wooden door is easy and it only takes a few moments of brute force to cause it to swing open.

The Doctor spent much of his time digging through parts of the floor, trying to find the supposed crypt of the Blanchefort family. A large trapdoor has been installed in the floor where the Doctor managed to dig through to the cellar below. Lifting the trapdoor is easy—it is not locked, only held in place by a large rock. This reveals a flight of narrow steps descending into the inky darkness. A broken padlock lies nearby and can be noticed on a successful Notice roll.

At the bottom of the steps is the Blanchefort family crypt. The area is dotted with stone sarcophagi bearing the Blanchefort coat of arms and giving the noble titles of those buried within. Rippers trying to open the sarcophagi must make a Strength roll at -2.

Inside the coffins are the skeletal remains of the Blanchefort family member mentioned on the outside. For each tomb opened by the heroes, roll a single d6. On a result of 6 the tomb contains more than just a body.

Inside that particular coffin is the body of a member of the Blanchefort family with a great sword placed along their body. The sword goes from the crown of their head right down to their feet. The blade is made of cold iron. This sword is only discovered once. After it has been found keep rolling the dice, to keep the heroes guessing, but ignore the result.

On the wall opposite the one the Rippers entered by are a set of murals and pictures. Closer investigation shows they have been badly damaged, and a successful Notice roll reveals the damage is extremely recent. On a successful Common Knowledge roll, the heroes notice the artwork is strikingly similar to the pictures found at the Doctor's villa.

Rippers searching the church crypt may make Notice rolls at -2. Those who succeed feel a draft blowing from part of one of the walls. Closer examination reveals wind is blowing through the cracks from some sort of tunnel beyond. To remove the wall takes roughly three hours of hard digging and the work is not quiet. Excavation tools can be found in the hut at the main dig site.

The tunnel slopes slowly upward. A hero making a successful Common Knowledge roll determines the tunnel slope and direction would cause it run almost directly underneath the tower situated farther up the mountain.

The tunnel is roughly five feet to a side and walking along it involves stooping slightly. The walls show signs of ancient tool marks. In total, the tunnel is some three miles long and is pretty much straight. Thick, inky darkness fills the tunnel to such a degree that even the non-claustrophobic begin to feel edgy and the feeling of suffocating is almost overwhelming.

The far end of the tunnel is blocked by a single large stone. Removing the stone requires a Strength roll at -4. Up to three characters can cooperate on this task. Beyond is the cellar of the tower.

SCENE 12: THE TOWER CELLAR

The cellar of the tower is a roughly circular chamber, some forty feet across. Aside from the entrance created by the Rippers, there are five more tunnels leading off into darkness. A small set of stairs leads to an opening in the ceiling, over which is a layer of concrete. The wooden door that once filled the hole lies on the floor, smashed into pieces. The stench of death fills the room.

In the center of the chamber is a 3 foot high marble pillar with the words "Seat of the Head" engraved on the top in Latin. This is where the Templars kept the brass head upon which was engraved a spell to open a portal to Hell.

Against the far wall, by the stairs, is a small wooden chest which shows signs of great age. The lid is easily opened and inside is a small, age-worn book (see below), a robe bearing a red croix-patte on the chest, and a small silver dagger, which is still razor sharp.

THE LAST OF THE BLANCHEFORTS

Once the Rippers have had a chance to examine the finds in the tower basement have each of them make Notice rolls (based on sound). Those who succeed hear distinct scraping sounds from several of the other tunnels. Rippers who go to investigate the noises or who wait for more than a few minutes run into the last members of the Blanchefort family.

From the tunnels emerge a total of ten humanoid figures whose flesh has a distinctive, almost rubbery look and who wear scraps of tattered clothing. The stench of death emanates from their semi-decomposed bodies. After centuries of dealing in black arts, the Blanchefort family have devolved into flesh-eating ghouls.

The pack descends upon the hapless Rippers, howling in hunger and rage, their claws and teeth bared for combat. Because of the number of ghouls present, heroes must make a Guts rolls.

RESEARCHING THE TOWER

Rippers may decide to research the history of the tower by finding the data in books or by asking the locals. This uses the same mechanics as the sidebar on page 6.

- The tower was built by the Blanchefort family, who were once powerful nobles. The Blanchefort family lived in the area until the late 1800s, when the last male died without issue. Rumors surrounded the family's strange habits and they were often accused of performing black masses and of witchcraft, although no formal charges were ever brought against them.
- The tower was built in the early 12th century and was used exclusively by members of the Knights Templars. The Blanchefort family were important Templars in this area and were once fabulously wealthy. The tower was used by the Templars to watch over Arques and the mountain passes that lead to it. It was kept garrisoned at all times up until the Templar's dissolution.
- After the Papal dissolution of the Knights Templar in 1316, the forces of the Church descended upon the tower and tore it down almost to its foundations. Members of the Blanchefort family rebuilt the tower in the early 15th century, but during a thunderstorm a lightning bolt removed the top twenty feet. Since then no attempt has been made to rebuild the tower until Monsier Hautpoul and Sons' restoration.

One of the elder members of the family, Anne de Blanchefort, has a very limited knowledge of magic. She spends three actions summoning a pack of winged fiends, giving the beasts a description of the heroes in the summoning charm. The other ghouls try to protect her while she does this. The fiends turn up as detailed in Scene 14.

The ghouls pursue the Rippers as long as they remain underground, but do not venture into the sunlight for any reason. Of course, if the Rippers have entered the tower basement at night they can expect to be hounded by the ghouls until either they are all dead, the ghouls have been killed or driven off, or the heroes reach the safety of the town, into which the ghouls do not enter.

GHoul (10)

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Tracking d8

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

- **Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Infravision:** Ghouls halve penalties (round down) for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- **Keen Nose:** Ghouls get +2 to Notice and Tracking rolls against living targets.
- **Paralysis:** Victims of a ghoul's claw attacks must make a Vigor roll at -2 or be paralyzed for 2d6 minutes.
- **Undead:** +2 Toughness; +2 to recover from being Shaken; No additional damage from called shots; Immune to disease and poison.

DIARY OF A MADMAN

The diary was written by one Raymond de Blanchefort, a member of the Templars in the early-mid 13th century and a practitioner of black magic. He became involved with unclean magic through documents brought back from the Holy Land by other Templars. After the failed summoning, Raymond's mind snapped and he ended his life by leaping from the tower at Arques in an insane attempt to re-summon a horned god through self-sacrifice.

The diary gives a long and detailed description of the Templars' first attempts to summon a horned god. It lists in great detail the ritual required to bring the dark god forth, gives the names of the knights who partook in the ceremony, and ends with a graphic portrayal of what happened when the ritual failed. The handwriting of the author is consistent throughout the diary, which spans almost five months, except for the last chapter in which the handwriting is shaky and broken up by insane ramblings about "chants in the darkness" and "eyes of burning light."

A hero making a successful Notice roll can determine the writing is that of the same man who wrote the rest of the book.

A hero making a Knowledge (History) roll at -2 knows Raymond de Blanchefort was a member of the Knights Templar who fought in the Fourth Crusade and reportedly dabbled in pagan arts, the knowledge of which he acquired from the Holy Land. Raymond met a tragic end, according to history anyway, when he was killed after falling from a guard tower into the valley below.

SCENE 13: THE TOWER

The tower visible from the villa and in the artwork is actually part of a chateau. The chateau is an imposing structure and a substantial part of the bailey wall and gateway are still intact. The site is not easy to defend as it occupies only a gentle rise in the landscape, and its massive walls were necessary substitutes for the natural defenses enjoyed by fortresses commanding more important positions.

The tower, which is intact except for the top twenty feet, is four stories (almost 60 feet) high. Scaffolding surrounds the tower and a sign next to it states, in French, that restoration work is being performed on the top levels by Monsieur Hautpoul and Sons. It gives an address in Arques at the bottom of the sign. A Ripper making a successful Knowledge (History) roll knows the Hautpoul family were once members of the Knights Templar and were very influential in the area around Arques. The door to the tower is locked and a sign hanging from it proclaims it is dangerous to enter.

Forcing open the door (enough time requires no die roll), the heroes find themselves at the bottom of a large stairwell which winds up. A trapdoor in the floor has been concreted

RESEARCHING THE HAUTPOULS

The Rippers may decide to research the history of Monsieur Hautpoul or his family by finding the data in books or by asking the locals. This uses the same mechanics as the sidebar on page 6.

- The Hautpoul family has lived in the area since the Middle Ages, when they were a powerful Templar family.
- The Hautpouls and the Blanchefort family once ruled the area, although the Blancheforts held more temporal power as they built the church and the tower.
- The Hautpoul family was once thought to be dabbling in black magic. Although weaker temporally than the Blancheforts, they were treated by the Blancheforts as if they were equals.

over at some point in the past and it is impossible for the heroes to find it.

The tower has many rooms in it but all of them are empty and are devoid of any clues useful to the Rippers. Once at the top levels of the tower, the heroes have a commanding view of the area around Arques, including a spectacular view of the town itself. Those wishing to reach the very top must make a Climbing roll, with failure causing the hero to make an Agility roll or fall the 20 yards to the hard ground below. There is nothing at the very top, except a slightly better view of the landscape.

SCENE 14: A NIGHTTIME VISITOR

If the heroes encountered the ghouls of the Blanchefort and were the focus of the winged fiend summoning then the next night the foul creatures come looking for them.

The fiends herald their arrival by crashing in on the heroes through a window. Check for Surprise.

Monsters will try to grapple one hero. Once a fiend has grabbed a hero, it carries him into the air before dropping him from a great height. The fiend rises its full Pace each round until it reaches a height of 50 yards, whereupon it releases its cargo. Damage from the fall is 5d6. The fiends fight to the death.

WINGED FIENDS (1 PER HERO)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Persuasion d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 7 (1)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +1:** A winged fiend's scaly hide provides Armor +1.
- **Claws:** Str+d4.
- **Flight:** Winged fiends fly with a Pace of 6 and a Climb of 3.



- **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Winged fiends take +4 damage from cold iron weapons.
- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** These demons suffer a -2 penalty to Fighting attacks against anyone brandishing a holy symbol.

SCENE 15: VISITING THE HAUPTPOULS

At some point the Rippers may wish to speak to Monsieur Hautpoul about his restoration work at the tower. He can be found at his office in Arques during the day and at his house during the night. Monsieur Hautpoul is in fact a cultist who can trace his ancestry back to the age of the Templars, when his family was involved in the Templar plot to bring a horned god to Earth. The cultists are once more trying to bring forth a dark god and want to keep nosey intruders away from the tower. The restoration work is merely a ruse as the tower is already tall enough for the summoning ritual's purpose.

Although Monsieur Hautpoul is willing to talk to the heroes, he has very little to tell them. He relates that although the tower was built by the Blanchefort family, the Hautpouls and the Blancheforts have ties going back to the Middle Ages, when both families were prominent members of the local Templar Prefecture. The tower was disused for many years after the dissolution of the Templars, and only in recent years did Monsieur Hautpoul decide that rebuilding the top levels would pay homage to his once-prestigious ancestors.

During the meeting, observant heroes may notice (through the use of Notice) a ring on Hautpoul's left index finger bears the pattern of a triangle and circle. Any Ripper who mentions this is met with a brief moment of icy silence, followed by Hautpoul explaining he picked it up in Paris many years ago because he thought the design was unusual.

If the Rippers become pushy or accusing, Monsieur Hautpoul ends their meeting, telling them he has an important business meeting elsewhere. Violent heroes are answered by some of Hautpoul's workers, armed with wooden clubs. While they won't kill any of the heroes, they happily give them a sound thrashing. Rippers who resort with lethal force face arrest, a trial, and lengthy imprisonment—being a Ripper does not place one above the law.

Once the Rippers leave, Hautpoul goes into hiding until the night of the ritual. He intends to take no chances.



MONSIEUR LOUIS HAUPTPOUL

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10
Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d12, Notice d4, Knowledge (Witchcraft) d10, Persuasion d8, Spellcasting d12+2
Status: 10
Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Reason:** +0;
Toughness: 9
Hindrances: Delusional (thinks the horned god will give him power)
Edges: Improved Level-Headed, Improved Nerves of Steel, Improved Tough as Nails, New Power, Master (Spellcasting), Power Points (x6), Wizard
Gear: Cursed knife (Str+d8, wounds can only be healed naturally).
Special Abilities:

- **Arcane Background (Magic):** *Bolt* (beam of black light), *blast* (hellfire), *deflection* (shadowy appearance), *invisibility* (flash of smoke). (40 Power Points.) Hautpoul also has the power to induce nightmares, but only uses it once during the adventure.
- **Weakness (Magic):** Takes +4 damage from magical attacks.

HAUPTPOUL'S THUGS (3 PER HERO)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8
Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6
Charisma: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Reason:** +0;
Toughness: 6
Hindrances: Loyal (to Hautpoul)
Edges: Sweep
Gear: Club (Str+d4)

SCENE 16: SEARCHING FOR CLUES

The Rippers may wish to search Monsieur Hautpoul's Arques office after dark. Security is fairly lax as he is not expecting any trouble. However, his special dogs live at the office and these protect the premises from casual intruders.

Entering the office quietly requires a successful Lockpicking roll. Smashing down the door or breaking the windows is

an option, but within 1d10 rounds several locals come to investigate. Use the stats for innocents (*Rippers*, p. 119).

Once inside, the heroes must contend with Hautpoul's pets—a pack of devil dogs. Use the rules for Surprise.

DEVIL DOGS (1 PER HERO)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d10, Stealth d4, Survival d4, Tracking d8

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 9 (2)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +2:** A devil dog is covered with bony plates and spines, providing it with +2 Armor.
- **Fear:** Anyone who sees a devil dog must make a Guts roll.
- **Fleet Footed:** Devil dogs have a d10 running die.
- **Go for the Throat:** If a devil dog gets a raise on its attack roll, it strikes its opponent's least armored location.
- **Horrid Bite:** The bite of a devil dog is charged with supernatural energy, and inflicts Str+d8 damage.
- **Immunity (Fire):** Devil dogs take no damage from fire.
- **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Demons take +4 damage from cold iron weapons.
- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** Devil dogs suffer a -2 penalty to Fighting attacks against anyone brandishing a holy symbol.

THE OFFICE

Inside, the office consists of three rooms. The smallest is a small toilet and washroom, where Monsieur Hautpoul can freshen up during the day. The second room is the main office, containing a desk, several plush chairs, a small coffee table, a telephone, and a waste paper bin. The last room is the filing room, where the company's files are kept for safety.

Naturally, the Rippers are going to want to snoop around and search for clues—why else would they break in? There are three obvious places to search and each of them contains a clue. Characters who search these areas may make Notice rolls to find useful information.

In the waste bin, there is a crumpled piece of paper (amongst many others there) referring to the collection of a package Hautpoul had shipped from Arques. The letter (see Player Handout 4) is postmarked the same day Professor White's body was found, although this requires a second successful Notice roll at -2 to deduce, unless the heroes specifically check the postmark, in which case the information can be revealed immediately.

In the filing cabinet, filed under "Private Transactions" is a letter from an antiques dealer in Marseilles, dated two weeks ago (see Player Handout 5). The letter refers to the authenticity of an artifact shipped to the dealer by Monsieur Hautpoul. The letter confirms the authenticity of an item referred to only as the "head." The address of the dealer is given. The head refers to the head found in the church by Prof. White, and it is now safely hidden in a secret cave in the mountains (i.e. the heroes cannot find it no matter how hard they search).

Inside the desk drawer is a page from an old book. It is written in Latin and refers to astronomical alignments. The book refers to the alignment of certain stars, and a hero making a successful Common Knowledge roll at -2 or Knowledge (Occult) roll determines such an alignment occurs in two days' time. The alignment occurs two days from whenever the Rippers find the document—if they do not discover it, then the alignment occurs one week after they arrive in France.

SCENE 17: BAD DREAMS

If the Rippers have left signs of a break-in and remain in Arques or were violent or too inquisitive towards Hautpoul, he uses his fell magic spell to attack them the next night.

Have each Ripper make a Spirit roll opposed by Hautpoul's Spirit. Should the Spirit roll fail, the character receives no sleep. On a roll of 1 on the Spirit die, regardless of the Wild Die, the character has terrifying nightmares and must make a roll on the *Rippers* Fright Table. With a critical failure, he rolls on the Fright Table at -2.

In all cases of failure, the character gets no benefit from sleeping. Check the **Sleep** section in the *Savage Worlds* rules for details.

SCENE 18: THE ANTIQUES DEALER

The Rippers may wish to pay the antiques dealer mentioned in the letter in Hautpoul's filing cabinet a visit. The train leaves Arques only once per day, so the Rippers will be away overnight (although they could use a carriage to get back). If the heroes have left signs of a break-in at Hautpoul's office then they are followed on the train, otherwise they have a safe journey.

The antiques dealer's shop is in one of the quieter districts of Marseilles, situated between a baker and a bookstore. The shop is open between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. every day, except Sunday.

Inside, the shop is full of curiosities, antiques of all types, and novelties. The owner, Monsieur Gerard, is never far from the main shop and is always eager to help customers find exactly what they are searching for. When the heroes enter, he is dusting a 17th century French cabinet.

Gerard politely inquires as to how he can help the Rippers (in French naturally). If they say they are merely browsing, then he asks if there is anything specific they are looking for. Monsieur Gerard knows his antiques and heroes knowledgeable in the subject (if any) are very hard pressed to catch him out.

If the Head is mentioned, Monsieur Gerard is temporarily caught unawares (a successful Notice roll allows a hero to spot this). After regaining his composure, he nods once or twice and then says a bronze head was brought into the shop a while back and he dated it to the 13th century. He quickly goes on to add that although this is a very rare find, it is not entirely unusual as this part of France has long associations with the Knights Templar, who venerated a severed head.

Further questions are avoided by Gerard saying he has an important meeting with a client and must leave immediately. Violent Rippers can try to scare him into revealing more, but he is completely afraid of Hautpoul and reveals nothing more, preferring death as a better alternative. If the heroes begin searching his shop he shouts he is being robbed and 1d6 constables arrive in two rounds.

CONSTABLES (10C)

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d8, Streetwise d6

Status: 5

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Reason:** +0;

Toughness: 6

Hindrances: Vow (uphold the law)

Edges: Stout Hearted

Gear: Baton (Str+d4)

SCENE 19: A SHOT IN THE BACK

If the Rippers were followed by one of Hautpoul's agents, he makes his presence known now. A single shot rings out,

smashing the shop window, and blasting Gerard in the head. He falls down dead.

Check for Surprise. Fast moving Rippers rushing to the window spot a man outside running off down the street. Although a chase is likely, the man soon loses the heroes in the streets and crowds of Marseilles. However, during the chase he does drop his gun, which the heroes can find with a successful Notice roll. The gun is a revolver and has four bullets left in the cylinder.

The police are on the scene in 1d10 minutes, so the Rippers need to hurry if they wish to search the antiques shop. A successful Notice roll reveals a small, elaborately carved statue of a Knight Templar in one of the display cases. A hero making a successful Knowledge (History) roll dates the statue to the 13th century. Although the statue is of no relevance to the adventure, it is likely to be thought of as such by the players.

SCENE 20: THE RITUAL

The ritual to summon forth the horned god is destined to take place atop the tower on the night pointed to in the scrap of paper in Monsieur Hautpoul's desk drawer.

On the night in question a group of thirty cultists, all from the local area, ascend the mountain to the tower to prepare for the summoning. They arrive at 10 p.m. and take two hours to prepare the area.

At exactly midnight Monsieur Hautpoul begins the invocation, a low chanting, soon accompanied by the other cultists. Over the next two hours the chanting increases in intensity until it reaches a crescendo, at which point the summoning is complete.

If the Rippers are present and wait until the end of the ritual before they act, the ritual succeeds and the horned god is summoned (this will teach them not to hang around waiting for gods to be summoned).

Things go from bad to worse at this point as two of the cultists drag forth the necessary sacrifice from the tower—Madame Edith! If the heroes still haven't acted, the horned god slaughters the poor old lady. Rippers watching this must make a successful Guts check or roll on the Fright Table.

After devouring her corpse, the horned god communicates with Hautpoul, offering him power in return for more sacrifices. Hautpoul readily agrees and offers the god the whole of Arques as a sacrifice! Rippers still watching see the god charge down the mountain at a great speed and into the town. The screams of the inhabitants fill the night air. After the carnage ends, in a little over ten minutes, the

horned god returns to his own dimension, leaving the town of Arques devoid of life.

If the Rippers are still present at this point then they are truly blessed and damned to know they were in part responsible for the atrocity that took place. Killing Hautpoul now is a token gesture as the damage is done.

STOPPING THE RITUAL

The Rippers can stop the ritual by one of several methods.

Firstly, they can try to blow up the tower. Although guaranteed to stop the ritual, there is no dynamite in or around Arques. Trying to demolish the tower by hand is next to impossible in the time remaining.

Secondly, they can kill Hautpoul just before the ritual starts. Although effective, they are likely to be killed by the thirty ravenous cultists who attack them without regard for their own life. Sadly, two other cultists know the ritual.

Thirdly, they can kill Hautpoul during the ritual. This has the effect of aborting the ritual and also giving the Rippers two rounds to flee before the cultists recover from their shock and start hunting them down. The nearest cover from where the heroes can see the ritual in safety is 60" away.

EVIL CULTIST (30)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Occult), Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Charisma: +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 5

Gear: Cold iron knife (Str+d4)



THE HORNED GOD

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d12+2, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d10, Intimidation d12+2, Persuasion d12, Taunt d10

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 17(4)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** The horned god's tough pelt is worth 4 points of Armor, and covers its entire body.

- **Breathe Fire:** The horned god can breathe fire in the shape of a Cone Template. All those within the cone must make an Agility roll or suffer 2d10 damage. Anyone hit by the flames has a chance of catching fire.

- **Fear -2:** The first time someone sees the horned god, they must make a Guts check at a -2 penalty.



- **Immunity (Fire):** The horned god takes no damage from fire.
- **Improved Frenzy:** The horned god can make two Fighting attacks each round at no penalty.
- **Large:** Attackers are +2 to attack rolls due to the beast's size.
- **Natural Attacks:** The horned god can attack with massive jaws, slashing claws, scything tails, and protruding horns. These attacks do Str+d6 damage.
- **Size +6:** The horned god stands over 20 feet tall.
- **Weakness (Cold Iron):** Demons take +4 damage from cold iron weapons.
- **Weakness (Holy Symbol):** The horned god suffer a -2 penalty to Fighting attacks against anyone brandishing a holy symbol.

SCENE 21: AND IF THEY MISS THE CLUES

If the Rippers have not discovered the clues and put two and two together by now then they may be in trouble. Have each hero make a Notice roll at -4 to notice several small bonfires near the tower on the night of the ritual. These should be spotted no more than one hour before the end of the ritual.

If the heroes do not pay any attention to them, they must do battle with the horned god when it arrives, lest they suffer the same fate as the rest of Arques.

EPILOGUE

There are two possible endings for this adventure. With Hautpoul dead and the ritual a failure or the god defeated, the Rippers have saved the unsuspecting town of Arques from destruction and can also acquire the bronze head for themselves. The head allows any Rosicrucian or priest with an Arcane Background to summon a horned god. The summoner must be Veteran Rank and expend 15 Power Points to summon the creature, which is not bound to obey the summoner's wishes.

The non-cultist locals are unlikely to believe claims of summoning horned gods, but will believe devil-worshipping took place. The local police are likely to want to question the Rippers though.

If Arques is destroyed, then the heroes had best flee the area with what little sanity they have remaining. The French authorities investigate the matter but cannot solve the case (all the people missing, but the town undamaged). The cultists who survive move to different areas to start other cults. Hautpoul goes into hiding for at least a decade to study his new-found knowledge.

REALITY CHECK

Both the town of Arques and the tower exist. Likewise, the Blanchefort and de Hautpoul families also existed and were actually Templar families. However, Arcanum Books, the museum, and everything else are figments of the author's imagination.

PLAYER HANDOUT 1

TELEGRAPHIC DISPATCH

IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

**ELECTRIC
TELEGRAPH
COMPANY**



ARQUES
FRANCE

16th May 1892

Come quickly STOP Am at holiday home STOP
Have made exciting finds STOP Need your
advice STOP Use discretion STOP Doctor
Emil White STOP

THE COMPANY APPRECIATES SUGGESTIONS FROM PATRONS CONCERNING SERVICE.

HANDOUT 2

«(LIVRES D'ARCANUM)»

Tous les livres sont des trésors: enrichissez-vous.

Madame Edith
Arques♦France

This card is entirely in French and would be what Madame Edith would normally provide.

«(ARCANUM BOOKS)»

Tous les livres sont des trésors: enrichissez-vous.

Madame Edith
Arques♦France

If your French is poor or you don't want to say *Livres d'Arcanum* all the time, use this hybrid.

«(ARCANUM BOOKS)»

All books are treasures: enrich yourself.

Madame Edith
Arques♦France

For those who are curious, this is the card translated entirely into English.

HANDOUT 3

30th April:

Have arrived in Arques for another season of digging. My research has given me valuable insights into the church of the Blancheforts and I am certain we will find the missing crypt without having to destroy the entire church. The locals have been friendly as usual and many of the young boys are eager to earn some money acting as my laborers. Will report my presence at the villa to the police tomorrow.

3rd May:

Have been busy at the dig. I believe we are only a few hours away from reaching the missing crypt.

4th May:

At last we have found it! After nearly six centuries a human has once more walked among the dead of the Blanchefort family! It was more than I could have hoped for. I have already found several minor pieces but I know there is more. I shall wire the French authorities for permission to open the crypts.

6th May:

Digging in the crypt has revealed a most magnificent find! A carved bronze head of human proportions! The head has writing on the back but I cannot make it out. I shall spend the next few days trying to decipher it whilst the diggers catalogue the finds.

8th May: Have been called to the dig site. Whilst cleaning one of the walls a digger has uncovered some artwork hidden beneath a thin layer of plaster.

Afternoon

I have seen the artwork for myself and must say that I was horrified by its content. What madness caused the artist to paint such scenes, and what does it mean?

9th May: I have copied down the artwork for safety as the paint is very flaky and could crumble away before it can be preserved. I have ordered the dig halted whilst I continue on the translation of the head text.

10th May: Received a strange visit today from a man I have never seen before. He asked me how the dig was going and was very persistent I tell him about all the finds. When I explained about the minor finds and said that was all I had found he became quite loud, demanding to know what else I had discovered. Only telling him my colleagues would be around for drinks in a few minutes caused him to leave.

11th May: Reported the strange man who visited me to the police. Have made a breakthrough on the head text. It seems to be a ritual incantation of some sort.

12th May: Whilst walking through town this evening I was convinced that someone was following me. Several times I got glimpses of someone darting into doorways behind me. Maybe I have been working too hard. I am now certain that the text on the bronze head is a ritual incantation. Could this be one of the actual heads that the Templars were supposed to worship? What a find!

HANDOUT 3 - CONTINUED

13th May: Rain kept me at the house all day. Thought I saw someone lurking around the garden.

14th May: Still raining. There is definitely someone watching the house. Once the rain stops I shall go to the police.

15th May: Rain stopped. Went to police. They said they shall investigate the area around the villa for clues. Maybe I should get a second opinion on the head text from my old friend?

16th May: Have asked my old friend to have a look at the finds. I am now convinced someone is following me and they want the artifacts. What do those designs mean?

17th May: Someone tried breaking in to the house today. I shouted loudly and they fled. The police came again but do not have the manpower to keep a permanent eye on the place. Maybe I should put the finds into their care?

18th May: I cannot take much more of this. All last night I kept hearing strange voices in my head and I keep seeing the images from the church wall. They must be important but what can they mean? What were the Blanchefort's doing in that crypt? The dig continues slowly now as many of the workers have gone to work at the tower.

20th May: Have had very little sleep recently. Those voices keep talking to me in that God-forsaken tongue!! Leave me alone! I have sent the rest of the diggers away.

21st May: When will he come? Oh, to see a friendly face again. The voices....they do not stop.

22nd May: Need sleep.....cannot continue like this much longer.....the voices.....they are coming for me soon!

HANDOUT 4

All praise the Gate!

I have received the
package you sent from
Arques. It has been
suitably dealt with.

Your obedient servant.

HANDOUT 5

GA

Dear M. Hautpoul,

I have had sufficient time to study the Head you sent me. I am please to be able to confirm your suspicions were correct. The Head does indeed date from the 13th century, as can be told by the bronze casting method. The inscription at the rear also confirms your suspicions.

Congratulations on this find! With any luck we shall be able to unlock the Gates of Hell successfully. I look forward to seeing you for this momentous occasion.

Your obedient servant,

Gerard Saint-Clair

GERARD'S ANTIQUES • MARSEILLES