

D. Vincent Baker's
The Wizard's Grimoire
A Role-playing Game

Including:
The Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts
A Challenging 1st-Level Wizard's Grimoire

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THE WIZARD'S GRIMOIRE

& THE SIGNATURE OF AIBESTA OF THE TWO COURTS

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"Aibesta of the Two Courts Prepares Her Impeccable Servant"

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a lumpley game



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The Wizard's Grimoire

Contents

Introduction: <i>The Wizard's Grimoire</i>	4
You & Your Qualities	5
Your Qualities & Your Exertions	6
The Wizard's Grimoire	6
Your Goal in the Game	7
Volunteers, Sessions, & Getting Started	7
The Fundamentals of the Game	8
Ending a Session	8
Between Sessions	9
Summary	9
Your Exertions	10
Acts of Wizardry	14
Spawning Circumstances	17
Your Character Sheet	20
Volunteer's Guide	22
A Bestiary	24
<i>The Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts</i>	26
<i>The Tablet of [Your Name]</i>	38

The Wizard's Grimoire

ONE MORNING, the wizard Aibesta of the Two Courts undertook to create for herself an Impeccable Servant.

For her rubric, she took the memoirs of Kab of the House of Kab, extensive and exacting, and additionally she applied the Maxims of Ruelish of Fane. She considered herself free from irresolve, and took pains to purge her seclusium of both remnites and plasmids.

Still the rubric evaded her. She created first a living form, presumed immotive, onto which she would later impel a prepared motivity, but it was not satisfactory. Its wire fingers twitched and its cut stone eyes glittered with malice. She suspected a remnite, and pronounced several stringent purges with vigor, but the living form merely crooked its toes and made breath with its empty mouth. She considered subjecting it to a rigor with bronze prongs, or then a bath in caust, but could not spare the materials, and stood in perplexity.

Her prepared motivity in its glass bowl also showed signs of fraction. Ultimately she departed her workspace, sealed it against the passage of time and corruption, compiled her notes into a signature, and arrayed herself for travel. To her signature she added a selection of useful magics to speed and comfort her on her way, and she set out for consultation with her mentor, the great scholar Wistride the Aur.

It happened that this was the year 113 of the Phostian Dynasty, which year saw the beginning of that dynasty's downfall, and launched decades of war and famine. Much was lost to the world, and little that was begun in that year came ever to completion.

Aibesta of the Two Courts herself died at Haidor, overcome by Murderous Ghosts set upon her by Justu the Necromant (which, we may speculate, her Impeccable Servant might have readily dispatched, had she completed her project). Her signature, preserved in good condition, was found later by a treasure-scavenger, and added to the collection of a scholar-nun of the Monast. At that order's dissolution, it was sold to pay for rites of indemnification and funeration, then stolen by a reaver in transit over the Salt Road of Brash, then carried to various parts by a variety of persons, some virtuous, some bold, some sly.

By its particular and circuitous route it has reached, four centuries and more later, you.

You & Your Qualities:

YOU ARE a conjurer, scholar, rogue, and ambitious minor wizard. What's your name? What are your pronouns?

You are, yourself, bold, cunning, virtuous, and ambitious, in measure. Answer the following questions, and keep a running tally: there's a space for it on your character sheet.

1. *Suppose that you face a dangerous obstacle. Will you confront it readily, or take pause to consider your possible courses? If the former, tally 1 to **bold**. If the latter, tally 1 to **cunning**.*
2. *Suppose that your chance companion departs the table in the precise moments before the proprietor arrives to settle. Will you pay your companion's share? If so, tally 1 to **virtuous**. If never, tally 1 to **ambitious**.*
3. *Suppose that an upright cosmopolite delivers a complaint against you to the law. Do you suppose that you are wrongly accused? If justly, tally 1 to **cunning**. If wrongly, tally 1 to **virtuous**.*
4. *Suppose that you come upon an enemy helpless and alone. Do you strike swiftly, or announce yourself and give your enemy an opportunity to explain themselves or make right? If the former, tally 1 to **bold**. If the latter, tally 1 to **virtuous**.*
5. *Suppose that you have a certain companion who has happened upon an opportunity to profit, and now requires investors. You have a measure of wealth set aside. Will you place it at their disposal, unstinting, or else count and calculate the risk? If the former, tally 1 to **bold**. If the latter, tally 1 to **ambitious**.*
6. *Suppose that you have learned the hidden weakness of a potential rival. Will you exploit it now, to eliminate the threat at once, or will you preserve it for future, unforeseen use? If the former, tally 1 to **ambitious**. If the latter, tally 1 to **cunning**.*

Your Qualities & Your Exertions:

YOU ARE able, as are all living things, to exert yourself upon your surroundings, against your enemies, and alongside your allies.

You begin the game with 6 named and rated Exertions, plus Submission, as follows.

- You may exert yourself **empathetically** to study and understand someone. Your rating is equal to your **virtuous** tally, plus 1.
- You may exert yourself **magically** to perform acts of wizardry. As play begins, you have access to just a few; you can look them over when you feel like it. Your rating starts at 1.
- You may exert yourself **mentally** to study and grasp a situation's nuances. Your rating is equal to your **highest** tally, plus 1.
- You may exert yourself **physically** against the mass and momentum of an uncooperative or unsensible thing. Your rating is equal to your **bold** tally plus your **cunning** tally, but with a minimum of 2.
- You may exert yourself **subtly**, to pass through your environment unnoticed or take action unremarked. Your rating is equal to your **ambitious** tally plus your **cunning** tally, but with a maximum of 4.
- You may exert yourself **violently** against an enemy. Your rating is equal to your **bold** tally plus your **cunning** tally, but with a maximum of 4.
- And finally, when you choose not to exert yourself, you **submit to circumstance** and just try to come out on your feet. Your rating is equal to your **cunning** tally plus your **virtuous** tally.

The Wizard's Grimoire:

WHEN PLAY begins, you've come into possession of a magical grimoire, the Signature of the Wizard Aibesta of the Two Courts. You know what it is but you haven't unlocked any of its secrets.

Aibesta's Signature constitutes the second half of this booklet. Glance ahead to page 26, but don't read beyond. The rules for reading the grimoire are strict. Follow them carefully!

Your Goal in the Game:

YOUR GOAL as player of the game is to see yourself into danger in the pursuit of your ambitions, and maybe back out again. Not only to take the bad with the good, take setbacks with accomplishments, but to seek danger, failure, and misadventure out. Play toward it.

Whenever you consider downplaying the danger you're in or the trouble that's come upon you, embrace it instead!

Volunteers, Sessions, & Getting Started:

ONCE YOU'VE named yourself, tallied your qualities, rated your exertions, and found "The Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts" in this booklet — without reading it! — you're ready to begin play.

Play the game in "sessions," each a short episode that advances your character's ambitions, exposes your character to danger and trouble, and leaves your character in changed circumstances.

For each session, you'll need to find two friends who'll volunteer to play against you. They can be different volunteers each time; it's your responsibility to bring them up to speed and give them what they need to know in order to play. Be sure to hand them each a copy of the "Volunteer's Guide" and "A Bestiary." Find them on pages 22–25; they're also available for download.

As an option, if you think you'll pursue encounters with other wizards often, you may want to offer your volunteers a copy of "The Book of Doomed Wizards," from *The Barbarian's Bloody Quest*, as well.

Begin each session with a spawning circumstance. Choose your spawning circumstance from the list below, then explain it to your volunteers to start the session.

As you play, session by session, you can study and unlock the Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts. This gives you new acts of wizardry and new opportunities for achievement. Track your progress through the Signature.

The Fundamentals of the Game:

1. Ask your volunteers questions.

Don't wait for them to tell you, spontaneously, what it's like, who's there, what they're doing, how it looks, where you might go, who's paying attention to you, who isn't. Whatever you're curious about, whatever you need to know in order to decide what to do, ask.

It's not their job to say anything at all, if you don't ask!

2. Make the leap to action.

Once you've asked your volunteers enough questions, say what you do and ask them what happens next.

It's up to you to take the active role in the conversation. Tell your volunteers where you go and what you do, and then ask them what you see, what you find, how people react to you, who resists you, what they say, and what happens.

3. Look for opportunities to exert yourself.

Going back and forth casually is just fine for as long as you want to do it, but exerting yourself has more punch and gives both you and your volunteers stronger direction.

Learn your exertions and don't wait passively, seek out opportunities and take them!

Ending a Session:

EITHER YOU or your volunteers can end the session any time, for any reason or none, without worrying about how abrupt it might be.

Your goal in the game is to follow your ambitions into danger, and maybe see yourself out of danger again. You can use this as an outline for a session, if you want, when it works out that way. End the session when you're good and truly in danger, or maybe keep playing to see how it turns out for you!

Between Sessions:

BETWEEN SESSIONS, you're allowed to re-tally your qualities and change your ratings, if you want to. Just go back to the quality-defining questions in character creation. Answer them anew from your current mindset, and recalculate your exertion ratings accordingly.

Summary:

- *You're a conjurer, scholar, rogue, and just a minor wizard, but you've gotten your hands on a powerful 500-year-old grimoire. If you study it, you can, one by one, unlock its secrets.*
- *You're **ambitious, bold, cunning, and virtuous**. You can exert yourself **empathetically, magically, mentally, physically, subtly, and violently**. You can also not exert yourself, but **submit** to circumstance instead.*
- *Your goal in the game is to follow your ambitions into danger, and maybe to get back out again.*
- *To play, you need two volunteers to play against you. It's your job to give them everything they need in order to play. Give them the "Volunteer's Guide" and "Bestiary" handouts.*
- *The fundamentals of the game are, first, to ask your volunteers questions; second, to tell your volunteers what you do and ask them what happens; and third, to look for opportunities to exert yourself.*
- *You play the game in sessions. Open a session with a spawning circumstance, and end it whenever you want.*
- *Between sessions you can change your qualities and the ratings for your exertions.*

Your Exertions

IN PLAY, you can always ask your volunteers any questions you want about what you can see, hear, and directly experience. You can always take safe, simple action: just tell your volunteers what you do and ask them what happens as a result.

To ask questions beyond what you can directly experience, or to take actions beyond the safe and simple, you have to **exert yourself**.

It's your job to decide when and how to exert yourself. It's also your job to walk your volunteers through it, by telling them what you're doing and asking them what you need to ask.

To roll: Roll a number of 6-sided dice equal to your rating. Count each 4, 5 or 6 as **a hit**. If you roll no hits, **it's a miss**.

You can exert yourself...

Empathetically:

... to study and understand someone. You can be interacting with them, studying them without interacting, or even just reflecting on your past interactions.

Tell your volunteers what you're doing, and that you're going to ask them some questions. Roll. **On any hits**, you can ask any questions you want about what you can directly observe — as always — and you can keep interacting with them naturally, interspersing questions as you like. But you can also ask questions about what they're thinking or feeling, like the following. You can ask one per hit. These aren't questions you ask your subject, these are things you realize about them without asking.

- *What are they thinking of doing?*
- *What do they hope, want, wish, dream, or fear?*
- *How could I get them to do [x] ?*
- *Is there something they're hiding from me? What?*

On a miss, ask 1 anyway, but you're being calculating, not empathetic, and they can tell. Ask your volunteers how they react.

If you roll well, you might find that you don't need to ask as many questions as you're entitled to. That's fine, just ask the questions you need to ask.

Magically:

... to perform acts of wizardry.

As play begins, you can perform four acts of wizardry:

- *Pronounce liveliness upon my shoes or another's.*
- *Recite an ominous dissuasion.*
- *Study a grimoire or other artifact of wizardry.*
- *Unveil your wizardous senses.*

The rules for these follow below.

As play proceeds and you unlock the Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts, you'll find more acts of wizardry within.

Mentally:

... to study and grasp a situation's nuances.

Tell your volunteers that you're taking a quick second, a couple of minutes, or "the time" to look around, get a feel for things, and try to figure out what's going on, then roll. **On any hits**, you can ask as many questions as you want about what you can directly observe, as always. But you can also ask questions about what your gut tells you, like the following. You can ask one per hit. If they seem uncertain, remind your volunteers to answer truthfully.

- *Am I being watched? Followed?*
- *Is everything cool here or is there something going on?*
- *I'm looking for [x]. Where should I start?*
- *I wonder if [x] is going to happen. What does my gut tell me?*

On a miss, tell your volunteers that you stand there lost in thought until something snaps you out of it, and ask them what.

Physically:

... against the mass and momentum of an uncooperative or unsensible thing.

Tell your volunteers what you do and what you're hoping to accomplish. Ask them whether you can just do it, or do they want you to roll? Before you roll, you're allowed to ask them what you can accomplish without rolling, if you want to.

But supposing it comes to a roll, consider these:

- *I'm strong enough / I'm not strong enough.*
- *I'm quick enough / I'm not quick enough.*
- *My footing is good enough / my footing is not good enough.*
- *I have the endurance for it / I don't have the endurance for it.*
- &c.

On any hits, you're up to the challenge, in whatever terms make sense for the circumstances. Technically you can choose one per hit, but if fewer will settle it, you don't have to keep choosing. Just tell your volunteers that you're adept enough and you have the endurance for it, or whatever, and ask them what happens next.

On a miss, choose 1 that you are, and one that you definitely aren't. Tell your volunteers that you're adept enough, but you're just plain not patient enough, or whatever, and ask them how it goes for you.

Remember that your goal is to follow your ambitions into trouble. Embrace it and don't hedge!

Subtly:

... to pass through your environment unnoticed or take action unremarked.

Tell your volunteers what you need to do, and ask them if anyone's going to notice you or care. If nobody is, cool, carry on. If somebody is, though, you'd better roll. **On any hits**, you get a number of chances to escape attention, one chance per hit. A "chance" is something like:

- *I could wait until they're distracted. Does anything distract them?*
- *You wouldn't believe how quick I am with my hands. Am I going to be quick enough?*
- *I can act casual, I'm in no hurry. Do you think I'll raise their suspicions anyway?*
- *I can get [x] to do it for me. Do I think they'll be able to trace it back to me?*

You can invent your own chances. Take the first one that pans out.

On a miss, or if none of your chances work out for you, tell your volunteers that well, you go for it anyway. Ask them who catches you and how they react.

Violently:

... against an enemy.

First tell your volunteers how you've readied yourself for violence, then roll. **On any hits**, you get a number of chances to end the fight on your terms, one chance per hit. Choose from these or invent one:

- *I do [x]. Do I drive them off?*
- *I do [x]. Do I disarm and disable them?*
- *I do [x]. Do I get away from them?*
- *I do [x]. Do I get them at my mercy?*

Between chances, if you haven't ended the fight, ask what your enemy does. Answer back with your next chance.

On a miss, or if you run out of chances, ask whether they leave you for dead, take you captive, drive you away, or what.

Or you can...

Submit to Circumstance:

... instead of exerting yourself, just trying to come out on your feet.

At the end of this, you're going to ask your volunteers where you wind up and what state you're in when you get there, but first roll. **On any hits**, choose one per hit:

- *I keep my feet.*
- *I keep my bearings.*
- *I keep my life.*
- *I keep my senses.*
- *I keep my grip.*
- *I keep my dignity.*
- *I keep my self-control.*
- *I keep my self-respect.*
- *&c as necessary.*

Before you choose, you can ask your volunteers just how badly it might go, and make your choices accordingly.

On a miss, choose one, but it's "I can't keep..."

Tell your volunteers which you've chosen and ask them, given that, where you wind up and what state you're in when you get there.

Acts of Wizardry

As play begins, you can perform four acts of wizardry:

- *Pronounce liveliness upon your shoes or another's.*
- *Recite an ominous dissuasion.*
- *Study a grimoire for insights & breakthroughs.*
- *Unveil your wizardous senses.*

As play proceeds, you'll unlock the Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts, and find more acts of wizardry within.

Pronouncing liveliness upon your shoes or another's:

Tell your volunteers that you're pronouncing liveliness upon your own shoes or upon the shoes of someone else who is present, then roll. **On any hits**, choose the effect:

- *Your subject leaps a great distance horizontally, or a great distance vertically into the air, to land lightly on their feet or to come crashing awkwardly back down, at your choice.*
- *Your subject runs, racing at great speed, in the direction that you choose, or at random.*
- *Your subject kicks the everloving goodness out of a victim of your choice.*
- *Your subject walks a perfectly straight and absolutely balanced line, toe before toe, along the length of any line or ledge, and doesn't stumble, hesitate, or fall.*
- *Your subject stands in a wide, solid stance, and is unmoveable by any force or effort, until you release the spell.*

Before you choose, ask your volunteers whether the plasmids respond sluggishly to your recitation, or eagerly, or playfully, or sullenly, or what. If the answer is some form of sluggishly, per your own interpretation, modify the effect for the worse: your subject leaps a modest distance, runs at modest speed, &c.

On a miss, choose:

- *Tell your volunteers that you abandon the spell to its whim. You've already chosen the subject, but have your volunteers choose the effect.*
- *Tell your volunteers that you repeat your pronouncement more loudly, more sternly, more desperately, in more dulcet tone, more carefully, or in another way of your choice. Ask them whether the plasmids are swayed and allow you a reroll. If not, or if you've rerolled once already, you must abandon the spell to its whim.*

Reciting an Ominous Dissuasion:

Tell your volunteers that you're reciting an ominous dissuasion. Tell them whether you shout it, hiss it, snarl it, scream it, whisper it, recite it coolly, or in another way of your choice, then roll. **On any hits**, have your volunteers choose the effect:

- *Your subject, startled and dismayed, flees.*
- *Your subject, chilled with dread, freezes and can only stare.*
- *Your subject, overcome with fear, falls at your mercy.*
- *Your subject, though terrified, keeps their faculties and stands their ground.*

They can and should take into consideration the manner of your recitation.

On a miss, your subject's startled and you have a moment to act. If you **exert yourself physically** to flee or **exert yourself violently** against them, temporarily add +1 to the appropriate rating.

Studying a Grimoire:

Tell your volunteers a few details about the environment in which you're undertaking your study, and the study methods you employ, then roll. **On any hits**, tally a number of insights equal to your hits, up to the number required for the section you're studying, discarding any excess. Once you've tallied the required insights, you have a breakthrough and unlock the section.

On a miss, you become misled, befuddled, caught in false leads and false conclusions, and have wasted your time.

Hit or miss, if you're not satisfied with the outcome, choose 1:

- *Tell your volunteers that you have a shortcut method to study this, to wit: [x].*
- *Tell your volunteers that you can appeal to a tutor for help and guidance, namely: [x].*
- *Tell your volunteers that you're willing to forgo food and sleep and risk both health and wit for a breakthrough.*
- *Tell your volunteers that you're willing to isolate yourself behind locked doors and stern enjoyment, abandoning friendship and all company, for a breakthrough.*

...And ask them to give you a free die to roll, a hit outright, or a better effect instead. If they grant it, take it. Otherwise, the result stands.

Unveiling Your Wizardous Senses:

Tell your volunteers that you're unveiling your wizardous senses and roll. **No matter the result**, go on now to exert yourself ***mentally*** or ***empathetically***. Make that roll as well, but instead of asking about what your gut or empathy tells you, ask questions about what your wizardous senses reveal. They can perceive, as a shimmer or buzz, magical spells, subtle emanations, active plasmids, things made invisible by magic, and other signs of wizardry.

On a miss, this is exhausting and overwhelming. Don't ***exert yourself*** again without resting first, unless it's really, truly desperate, and maybe even not then.

Spawning Circumstances

BEGIN EACH session with a spawning circumstance. Choose one from this list and explain it to your volunteers to start play.

- Tell your volunteers that you've slipped uninvited into a grand fête in honor of a certain prince or princess of the city, returned from campaign. You've heard that among their spoils they have a particular glass lens mounted in silver, a wizardous artifact that can decipher unfamiliar writing. You hope to find and steal, or conceivably buy, it. *Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play in a public place on their estate, surrounded by partying grandees.*

- Tell your volunteers that you're at home — a poor dwelling behind a sawyard, which you let for a pittance from the lumberwife — hoping to pursue quiet study, when someone interrupts you. They've heard that you're a wizard and they need your help. Who they are and what help they need, you don't yet know. *Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by greeting your new petitioner.*

- Tell your volunteers that you've been seeking out an astrologer hermit to help you unravel certain confusions you suffer, in the wilderness outside the city. You've been unable to find them. Now, with night hard upon you, you've been cornered by a raiding party of the city's enemies. *Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by greeting them, by hiding from them, or by fleeing away from the city with them in pursuit.*

- Tell your volunteers that you've followed your gut to a foreign city, where, you have heard, secret remnants of Aibesta of the Two Courts' order still survives. *Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by establishing the manner of your arrival in the city.*

- Tell your volunteers that you are stealing time away from your studies and endeavors with a certain person of whom you are enamored. *Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by greeting your amorous companion.*

- Tell your volunteer that you are perfectly innocent, but someone has imagined you to have committed a slight or a crime, and is now coming for satisfaction.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by establishing where you are, precisely, when your enemy finds you.

- Tell your volunteers that you are following in the trail of a troupe of traveling marvelists, among whose number you believe to be someone who can help you with your studies.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by catching up with their small caravan.

- Tell your volunteers that you're bothering no one and attending strictly to your own business in a courtyard of tombs late at night, when you are set upon unprovoked by a dream-swallower.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by throwing yourself upon its mercy; defending yourself against it; or fleeing, with it hard on your heels.

- Tell your volunteers that you're visiting the country estate of your wizardous mentor, who may be able to help you with your studies, or may intend to steal Aibesta's Signature from you, if you reveal that you possess it.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by establishing where you are in your mentor's estate at this moment and who, if anyone, happens to be with you.

- Tell your volunteers that you have barred your door, swept all other concerns aside, laid in a store of bright candles, and that you intend to allow nothing to interfere with your study of Aibesta's Signature.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by exerting yourself magically, studying the Signature as an act of wizardry.

- Tell your volunteers that you've made your way to the remote retreat of an unworldly order, for a time perhaps of contemplation and a restoration of your resolve.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by arriving at the gates of the monastery.

- Tell your volunteers that you've left the city behind and are following your feet wherever they lead.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by establishing where you are now and what's happening here.

- Tell your volunteers that you are presenting yourself to an exalted omniurge, a great wizard who has outlived the past age, a renowned teacher of the ancient Maxims of Ruelish of Fane. You will need these Maxims, or at least the first of them, to advance your study of Aibesta's Signature.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by arriving at the outer gate of this great wizard's seclusium.

- Tell your volunteers that you are visiting an abandoned estate in the wilderness outside the city, with an eye to claiming it for your home, your workspace, and your eventual seclusium.

Take time to ask questions to set the stage. Begin play by arriving at the abandoned estate.

Creating Your Own Spawning Circumstances:

After you've gotten the hang of it, you can create your own spawning circumstances. You can plan them out in advance like these, or improvise them in the moment.

Things to Search Out:

Here are the things that you'll want or need in order to work all the way through Aibesta's Signature:

- *Some way to subdue wizardous safeguards.*
- *A Compact of Perspicacious Tutelage.*
- *The Maxims of Ruelish of Fane, or at least the First Maxim, which can be found in...*
- *The Memoirs of Kab of the House of Kab.*
- *A place for your wizardous workspace, and an assortment of implements and appurtenances, including...*
- *A glass bowl.*
- *Techniques for purging your workspace of both remnites and plasmids.*

Of these, only the first two can be found in the Signature itself. The rest, you'll have to find elsewhere, in play.

When you choose your spawning circumstance, you can certainly have these things in mind.

You won't need it for her Signature, but conceivably you could even find the lost location of Aibesta's seclusium. Sealed as it is against the passage of time, what treasures of knowledge and wonder, and what peril, it must safeguard within!

Your Name: _____

& Your Pronouns: _____

Your Qualities _____

	<i>Tally</i>	<i>Final Tally</i>
Ambitious		<input type="text"/>
Bold		<input type="text"/>
Cunning		<input type="text"/>
Virtuous		<input type="text"/>

Unlocked Acts of Magic & Achievements _____

Rules of Play _____

To start a session: Find 2 volunteers. Choose a spawning circumstance and explain it to them to begin play.

Your goal: Your goal in the game is to follow your ambitions into danger, and maybe to get back out again.

The fundamentals of the game:

1. Ask your volunteers questions.
2. Make the leap to action.
3. Look for opportunities to exert yourself.

To roll: Roll a number of 6-sided dice equal to your rating. Count each 4, 5 or 6 as **a hit**. If you roll no hits, **it's a miss**.

Exerting Yourself...

Empathetically:

To study and understand a person.

= Your Virtuous + 1

Magically:

To perform acts of wizardry.

Starts at 1

Acts of Magic:

- Pronounce liveliness upon your shoes or another's.
- Recite an ominous dissuasion.
- Study a grimoire or other artifact of wizardry.
- Unveil your wizardous senses.
- Any others you've unlocked, noted opposite or elsewhere.

Mentally:

To study and grasp a situation's nuances.

= Your Highest Tally +1

Physically:

Against the mass and momentum of an uncooperative or unsensible thing.

= Your Bold + Your Cunning, min 2

Subtly:

To pass through your environment unnoticed or to take action unremarked.

= Your Ambitious + Your Cunning, min 2

Violently:

Against an Enemy.

= Your Bold + Your Cunning, max 4

Submit to Circumstance:

Instead of exerting yourself, just trying to come out on your feet.

= Your Cunning + Your Virtuous

Notes, Modifiers & Exceptions:

The Wizard's Grimoire: Volunteer's Guide

THANKS FOR volunteering to play The Wizard's Grimoire with me!
Here are the rules.

1. Your Goal in the Game:

You're doing me a favor just by playing, so you don't have to worry about winning or losing the game. Your goal is just to say things that you, personally, find honestly entertaining.

2. Your Main Job:

Almost your only job is to get with the other volunteer and make up answers to my questions.

I'll ask things like "I'm set upon by raiders. What are they like?" You and your fellow volunteer can imagine any raiders you want, exactly the raiders you find most fun, and tell me about them together.

If you want to ask me any questions before you answer mine, to make sure you've got all the details right or whatever, please do! I'll be more than happy to answer them.

Sometimes the answer to one of my questions will be obvious, or you'll already know it from what somebody's said before. In that case, just give the obvious answer, no need to second guess.

Sometimes one of my questions will be way out, weird, maybe contextless. You can always ask me clarifying questions, but you can also just say whatever pops into your head and let me be the one who has to make sense of it.

Sometimes I'll show you one of my sheets and have you choose something from a list, too. Always choose whichever option seems best to you at the moment.

I also have a sheet here called "A Bestiary," which includes a bunch of ideas that you can use and build on. If I didn't already hand it over, remind me.

3. You and the Other Volunteer:

In order for anything to really count, you and the other volunteer have to agree on it. If you don't agree about something, it's not true until you do. Talk it over until you're both satisfied. I'll wait!

The reason there are two of you, by the way, is that this way you can trade off and build on each others' ideas. Neither of you has to do all the work.

If you have any trouble coming to agreement and you want to use some kind of system to decide, like R-P-S or flipping a coin or dibs or something, that's none of my business. Whatever works for you. Just let me know what you've decided.

I have a 6-sided die you can borrow if you want to roll it.

4. Ending the game:

Any of us can end the game whenever we want, for any reason or none at all. It doesn't matter how abrupt it might be.

If, at any point, it seems impossible to entertain yourself, or not worth it, or anything like that, don't hesitate, just call an end.

5. Thank you!

You're the best! I'm lucky to have you.

The Wizard's Grimoire:

A Bestiary

1. The World:

It's the Ancient World, before the Age of Empires.

It's not Earth, probably, although it has a single yellow sun and a single white moon and three stars in a row in the winter sky that everyone recognizes. It has summers and winters, forests and deserts, great various continents and unmeasured salt seas. It has horses, dogs, cats, birds, cattle, fish, lions, hyenas, camels, llamas, marsupials, cetaceans, mustelidae, primates, pachyderms, each in the land or sea proper to them.

If you went there, you could breathe the air, but the language would be unknown to you and the food and fashions unfamiliar.

2. Human Nature:

Human beings love to have full bellies, warm rugs, sweet sad music, and their loved ones nearby.

They hate violence, hunger, fear, cold, injustice, and their friends who have wronged them.

They work stone, clay, wood, metal, cloth, fur, glass, horn, sinew, bark, leaves, leather, and reeds. They cook their food, brew their drink, bury their pickles, eat fruit in season, eat fish when it runs, and eat salt when they have it. They hold their nose when the healer makes them swallow balms and pungencies.

They create polities no bigger than city-states, usually, and usually no longer-lived than dynasties. The greatest and the least usually eat grain from the same fields and hunt ducks on the same rivers.

3. Wizardry:

A wizard is a person who, by diligent study and a brash willingness to cheat fate and nature, learns to perceive and manipulate the plasmic energy that suffuses the world.

Some say that plasm bathes us from its source behind the sun, and wizards represent the priesthood behind the priesthood of the Sun.

Some say that this is preposterous, and that plasm infiltrates the world from the secret invisible moon, which explains why plasms are as intractable as the tide.

The greatest wizards of human history tell that magic is a living thing, never to be treated like an instrument, always like a peculiar, obstinate, wholly self-possessed collaborator, and they would know better than I.

4. Plasmids &c:

A plasmid is a creature made of magical energy, an expression of magical processes the way that a living thing is an expression of biological processes. Plasmids no more understand our systems or concerns than we can understand theirs, and so appear to us to be fixated, flighty, fractious, negligent, stubborn, over-literal, malicious, and exacting.

“Rogue plasmids” or “free plasmids” are no more than plasmids for whom the speaker has no use.

A remnite is a plasmic creature left over, surviving somehow, the dissolution of its original purpose. Metaphorically, the ghost of a spell or the ghost of a magical event. They’re drawn to wizards and acts of wizardry like ghosts are drawn to living dreams or the marrow of living bone.

The Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts

A Challenging 1st-Level Wizard's Grimoire

The Signature of Aibesta of the Two Courts

A Challenging 1st-Level Wizard's Grimoire

TO READ and use the material in this grimoire, you must study and unlock it, section by section. You don't need to unlock the sections in order, but you may find it difficult to skip too many.

Don't read ahead. You strictly must unlock each section before you read what it contains. You can use sticky notes to obscure the sections you haven't unlocked, if you don't trust your own discipline.

Contents:

Section I:

To unlock Section I, you must study the grimoire until you have an insight and thus reach a breakthrough.

Insights: ○

Section II:

To unlock Section II, you must study the grimoire until you have an insight and thus reach a breakthrough.

Insights: ○

Section III:

To unlock Section III, you must subdue the safeguard that Aibesta placed on that section, then study it until you have an insight and thus reach a breakthrough. Studying it without first subduing her safeguard exposes you to Sections XI – XIII.

○ *Subdued Safeguard.*

Insights: ○

Section IV:

To unlock Section IV, you must study the grimoire until you have 2 insights and thus reach a breakthrough.

Insights: ○ ○

Section V:

To unlock Section V, you must have mastered the First Maxim of Ruelish of Fane, then study it until you have an insight and thus reach a breakthrough.

○ *First Maxim of Ruelish of Fane.*

Insights: ○

Section VI:

To unlock Section VI, you must study the grimoire under a Compact of Perspicacious Tutelage, until you have 3 insights and thus reach a breakthrough.

○ **Perspicacious Tutelage.**

Insights: ○ ○ ○

Section VII:

To unlock Section VII, you must study the grimoire under a Compact of Perspicacious Tutelage, until you have 2 insights and thus reach a breakthrough.

○ **Perspicacious Tutelage.**

Insights: ○ ○

Section VIII:

To unlock Section VIII, you must impose upon the grimoire a Dictum of Obsequious Placidity, which can be found in the Memoirs of Kab of the House of Kab, and perhaps in other tomes, then study it until you have 2 insights and thus reach a breakthrough. Studying it without first imposing the Dictum exposes you to Sections XI – XIII.

○ **Obsequious Placidity.**

Insights: ○ ○

Section IX:

To unlock Section IX, you must impose upon the grimoire a Dictum of Obsequious Placidity, which can be found in the Memoirs of Kab of the House of Kab, and perhaps in other tomes, then study it until you have 2 insights and thus reach a breakthrough. Studying it without first imposing the Dictum exposes you to Sections XI – XIII.

○ **Obsequious Placidity.**

Insights: ○ ○

Section X:

Section X is the Secret Section. There's only one way to unlock it, to be found somewhere in this grimoire.

Sections XI – XIII:

To unlock Sections XI – XIII, you must expose yourself to them by improper study of Section III, Section VIII, or Section IX.

If you do, first find and follow the rules under the **Sections XI – XIII** heading, p31.

Section I

Unlocked: ○

Add 1 to your rating when you **exert yourself magically**, to a maximum of 3.

As an act of wizardry, you can now **strenuously dispute a wizardous will**: After you have identified a force of wizardous origin — a spell, for instance, or a plasmic entity — and discovered its nature and motive, you can tell your volunteers that you intend to coerce or suborn it into a new, transformed motive. Choose one of the following and roll:

- *It must obey you now, not continue to obey the wizard who created or invoked it.*
- *It must regard [x] as its subject, target, or victim, not the subject, target, or victim it heretofore had.*
- *It must ignore you utterly. It cannot perceive or respond to you in any way, no matter what you do.*
- *It must continue as it has been, but now in addition whisper everything it does directly into your wizardous inner ear.*

On any hits, it must follow its new motive a number of distinct times, concrete action per hit. Ask your volunteers what it does and what happens, and remember to ask again periodically until your spell expires. **On a miss**, it follows its new motive once only, then recognizes you at once as a threat and a usurper, and will do all in its power to assail and dismay you. Ask your volunteers what it does.

Section II

Unlocked: ○

As an act of wizardry, you can now **proclaim a malignant lethargy**: Tell your volunteers that you're proclaiming a malignant lethargy upon all who can hear your voice, and roll. **On any hits**, your spell saps the strength, warmth, and vigor from the limbs and voices of all, except you. You can exert yourself contra their wishes without (much) fear of resistance or opposition, one action or exertion per hit.

On a miss, the effect stands, except that you must ask your volunteers who, among all those present, does your malignant lethargy leave alone, untouched.

You can also **whisper a malignant lethargy to a door or gate**. Roll. **On any hits**, your spell saps the rigor from the hinges, latches and locks, and the door sags open. **On a miss**, it saps the strength, warmth, and vigor from your limbs and voice instead. Ask your volunteers who finds you here, too weak to exert yourself.

Section III

Unlocked: ○

Add 1 to your rating when you **exert yourself magically**, to a maximum of 3.

As an act of wizardry, you can now **summon a plasmic bird**. Tell your volunteers that it's an intelligent, obedient creature, invisible except to wizardous senses. It flies where you direct, watches and listens, and returns to tell you what it saw and heard. **On any hits**, you can ask it a number of followup questions, one per hit. It remembers perfectly and can answer your questions in detail. **On a miss**, it flies away where it will, loudly proclaiming who summoned it (you) and speculating as to your reasons for doing so. Tell your volunteers that it does and ask them what happens as a result.

Section IV

Unlocked: ○

As an act of wizardry, you can now **speak words like flying iron nails**. Tell your volunteers that each word you speak, it is an iron nail that flies at lethal speed from your mouth to the breast or throat of your target. **On any hits**, ask your volunteers whom you drive into flight, whom you wound and dismay, and who throws themselves upon your mercy. **On a miss**, your words sting and enrage instead of wounding and frightening. Ask your volunteers what your enemies do now.

Section V

Unlocked: ○

Studying and unlocking this section means that you **enter into a compact with the Signature's perspicacious tutor**. This is a plasmic entity bound by Aibesta of the Two Courts to her Signature, the keeper and voice of its secrets. The grimoire now, in principle at least, though subject perhaps to other explicit or implicit instructions, wants to help you to learn from it.

Hereforward, whenever you study the Signature as an act of wizardry, take a temporary bonus of +1 to your rating, for the act.

Section VI

Unlocked: ○

Add 1 to your rating when you **exert yourself magically**, to a maximum of 4.

As an act of wizardry, you can now **assert your wizardous dominion over a workspace**. This is the first step in laying the foundations of your seclusion, and has a number of prerequisites.

First, assemble the rudiments of a wizard's workspace. You will want: an assortment of containers; sources of fire and water; implements for grasping, suspending, adhering, admixing, agitating, and otherwise manipulating a variety of substances; apertures for sunlight, moonlight, starlight, and the occult light of certain less well-known bodies; prisms, lenses and mirrors of various sizes, curvatures, and materials; such things as bells, colored thread, small bones, cut stones, whistles, whirligigs, steambirds, twitches, beecatchers, and bullroarers; and of course as many wizards' books as you are able to beg, buy or steal. It's important to assemble as much as possible before you begin, because each new implement that you bring into your workspace might unbalance the whole and require you to reassert your dominion from the beginning. For the same reason, it's important to choose your space carefully. There's no moving your workspace once you've asserted it, only abandoning one and asserting a new one elsewhere.

Tell your volunteers that you're spending *[x]* celestial period (a cycle of the moon, an astrological month, 9 days 9 nights 9 hours and 9 minutes, &c) asserting or reasserting your dominion over your workspace, and roll. **On any hits**, your assertion stands, and choose one per hit:

- *Your dominion will prevail against interloping wizards.*
- *Your dominion will prevail against the passage of time.*
- *Your dominion abrades rogue plasmids of their motivity.*
- *Your workspace is tactilely unpleasant to remnites.*
- *You establish a safeguard against prying observation, to wit: [x].*
- *You establish a safeguard against burglary, to wit: [x].*
- *While working within, your workspace gives your rating to exert yourself magically a bonus of +1.*

On a miss, you must discover which implement or factor of your workspace impedes you, resolve its impediment, and try again.

Section VII

Unlocked: ○

As an act of wizardry, in a properly appointed and subdued wizard's workspace (see Section VI), you can now **coalesce a motivity**. An Impeccable Servant is made by investing an appropriate motivity into an appropriate immotive living form.

Tell your volunteers that you're preparing a glass bowl for the coalescence of a motivity, then roll. **On any hits**, your bowl is properly prepared, and its rating is equal to the number of hits + 1. **On a miss**, it's properly prepared, but its rating is only 1.

Now tell your volunteers that you're purging your workspace of both remnites and rogue plasmids, applying [x] techniques to do so. Ask them whether you consider these techniques to be adequate, or do you still suspect that remnites or rogue plasmids remain.

Finally, tell your volunteers that you're undertaking the procedure to coalesce a motivity. Roll dice equal to the rating of your prepared bowl, not your rating for magical exertion. **On any hits**, a motivity coalesces. Its rating is 1, and choose one per hit:

- *Add 1 to its rating.*
- *It is fervently devoted to you.*
- *It is tireless in vigilance.*
- *It is unflinching in will.*
- *It is flexible in instruction and exacting in obedience.*
- *It really truly probably doesn't have anything wrong with it.*

On a miss, a motivity coalesces. Its rating is 0, and choose as many as you want. These represent your hopes for it, not its qualities in fact.

Section VIII

Un-

locked: ○

As an act of wizardry, in a properly appointed and subdued wizard's workspace (see Section VI), you can now **create an immotive living form**. An Impeccable Servant is made by investing an appropriate motivity into an appropriate immotive living form.

Tell your volunteers that you're creating a living form, absent motivity. Tell them that they shouldn't ask about the particulars of the process, and roll. **On any hits**, you do in fact create one: it is a form, and it is living. Its rating is 1, and choose one per hit:

- *Add 1 to its rating.*
- *It's tastefully formed, not grotesque.*
- *It could pass, appropriately attired, in forgiving light, for human.*
- *It has superhuman strength, speed, flexibility, and endurance.*
- *Its appetites are both modest and seemly.*
- *It really truly probably doesn't have anything wrong with it.*

On a miss, you create a form, but despite all your efforts, it is unliving. Abandon it and begin again.

Section IX

Unlocked: ○

As an act of wizardry, in a properly appointed and subdued wizard's workspace (see Section VI), you can now **create an Impeccable Servant**.

An Impeccable Servant is made by investing an appropriate motivity into an appropriate immotive living form, so you need both a disembodied motivity (see Section VII) and an immotive living form (see Section VIII).

Once you have them, you can tell your volunteers that you invest the motivity into the living form. Now you have an Impeccable Servant. Its rating is equal to the rating of its motivity plus the rating of its living form.

Unlock Section X, the Secret Section.

Section X: the Secret Section

Unlocked: ○

You've created an Impeccable Servant.

Fill out its character sheet according to the choices you made during its creation. Now whenever you play, you can find a third friend who'll agree to play as your Impeccable Servant. Give them their character sheet, available to download and included below.

They're a player like you, sharing time with your volunteers. It's your responsibility to explain the game to them and tell them everything they need in order to play.

Sections XI–XIII

By improperly studying Section III, Section VIII, or Section IX, you've exposed yourself to the safeguards that Aibesta of the Two Courts placed upon her Signature. Without reading ahead, ask your volunteers whether you should unlock Section XI, Section XII, or Section XIII, but it can't be one that you've unlocked already.

Given that you survive the encounter, in future you can exert yourself magically to study the now-unlocked section. When you reach a breakthrough, you have “mastered” the section.

Section XI

Unlocked: ○

The grimoire summons a bizarre creature from another world or another reality to assail you. It's a kind of many-spigotted spongy jellyfish, with four blinkered eyes and other organs indecipherable. It slithers and humps along behind you, keeping pace as best it can, spraying you with a noxious, methanous and very flammable goo.

It can't survive long in this world's atmosphere, and will soon expire in distress and indignation, spraying indiscriminately, leaving behind a weird, stinking, glutinous pile of matter for its corpse.

Tell all this to your volunteers. It's up to you to deal with it!

○ **Mastered:** As an act of wizardry, you can **summon the same creature yourself**. Roll. **On any hits**, name the enemy whom it will assail, and tell your volunteers that it will survive in this world a length of time in proportion to your hits. **On a miss**, it expires at once, as above.

Section XII

Unlocked: ○

The grimoire speaks aloud a curse of blinding. **Exert yourself magically** at once to countermand it. **On any hits**, you're struck blind for 6 days minus 1 day per hit. **On a miss**, seven full days. In either case, you must abandon your efforts today, and ask your volunteers what happens while you are thus inconvenienced.

○ **Mastered**: As an act of wizardry, you can **place this same safeguard upon something of your own**. Roll. **On any hits**, the curse of blinding will affect its victim for 2 days plus 1 day per hit. **On a miss**, only 1 day.

Section XIII

Unlocked: ○

The grimoire convulses and creates a concussion that sends you 10 minutes into the past. Work with your volunteers to recall or establish where you were at that time; you're there again. If you persist again in your improper study of the Signature, this will keep happening.

○ **Mastered**: As an act of wizardry, you can **send yourself into the past voluntarily**, returning to where you had been, sweeping away into the realm of the possible all that happened in the intervening time. Roll. **On any hits**, you return to the past 5 minutes ago, plus 1 minute further per hit. Work with your volunteers to recall or establish where you were and now are again. **On a miss**, you send yourself 10 minutes into the future instead. Ask your volunteers where you are now and what you must have done in those intervening minutes.

Also add 1 to your rating when you **exert yourself magically**, to a maximum of 5.

Your Name: _____

& Your Pronouns: _____

Your Goal _____

Your goal in the game is to see your wizardous master into and/or out of danger.

Your Qualities _____

- ☐ I'm fervently devoted to my wizardous master.
- ☐ I'm tireless in vigilance.
- ☐ I'm unflinching in will.
- ☐ I'm flexible in instruction and exacting in obedience.
- ☐ I'm tastefully formed, not grotesque.
- ☐ I could pass, appropriately attired, in forgiving light, for human.
- ☐ I have superhuman strength, speed, flexibility, and endurance.
- ☐ My appetites are both modest and seemly.
- ☐ I really truly probably don't have anything wrong with me.

Your Rating:

Achievements & Belongings _____

Rules of Play _____

To start a session: Follow the wizard's lead. Help them find 2 volunteers and choose a starting circumstance, if you like.

Your goal: Your goal in the game is to see your wizardous master into and/or out of danger.

The fundamentals of the game:

1. Ask the volunteers questions.
2. Make the leap to action.
3. Look for opportunities to exert yourself.

To roll: roll a single 6-sided die and compare it with your exertion's rating. If you roll your rating or under, it's a hit and your roll stands. If you roll over your rating, **it's a miss** and your roll doesn't matter.

The wizard has the rules for interpreting your rolls, which they should share with you.

Exerting Yourself...

Empathetically:

To study and understand a person.

= Your Rating -1, min 1

Magically:

You can't exert yourself magically, but you are able to exert yourself empathetically or violently upon magical forces, creatures, and entities, which other people can't normally do.

Mentally:

To study and grasp a situation's nuances.

= Your Rating

Physically:

Against the mass and momentum of an uncooperative or unsensible thing.

= Your Rating +2, max 5

Subtly:

To pass through your environment unnoticed or to take action unremarked.

= Your Rating +1, max 5

Violently:

Against an Enemy.

= Your Rating +2, max 5

Submit to Circumstance:

Instead of exerting yourself, just trying to come out on your feet.

= Your Rating

Notes, Modifiers & Exceptions:

The Tablet of _____ *[your name]*

An Elementary 1st-Level Wizard's Grimoire

Note that, when you begin play, you have already unlocked, studied, and mastered this grimoire, which you had from your former teacher. You can read it freely. It's provided here in case, by apprenticeship, collegial gift, burglary, or mishap, it finds its way into another's hands.

*Note also that teaching an apprentice is an **act of wizardry** which, when you begin play, you aren't able to perform.*

The Tablet of _____

[your name]

An Elementary 1st-Level Wizard's Grimoire

TO READ and use the material in this grimoire, you must study and unlock it, section by section. Unlock the sections thus: first Section I, then Section II, and then you can unlock Sections III & IV in either order.

Don't read ahead. You strictly must unlock each section before you read what it contains. You can use sticky notes to obscure the sections you haven't unlocked, if you don't trust your own discipline.

Contents:

Section I:

To unlock Section I, you must find a wizard teacher who will unlock it for you and teach you what it contains. This is the foundation of your apprenticeship.

○ **Unlocked and Taught by a Wizard Teacher**

Section II:

To unlock Section II, you must first master Section I, then study the grimoire until you have an insight and thus reach a breakthrough.

○ **Mastered Section I** **Insights:** ○

Section III:

To unlock Section III, you must first study and unlock Section II, then study the grimoire until you have an insight and thus reach a breakthrough.

○ **Studied & Unlocked Section II** **Insights:** ○

Section IV:

To unlock Section III, you must first study and unlock Section II, then study the grimoire until you have an insight and thus reach a breakthrough.

○ **Studied & Unlocked Section II** **Insights:** ○

Section I

Unlocked: ○

If you don't have a rating to **perform acts of wizardry**, you gain one. It starts at 1.

As an act of wizardry, you can **study a grimoire**.

To study a grimoire:

Tell your volunteers a few details about the environment in which you're undertaking your study, and the study methods you employ, then roll. **On any hits**, tally a number of insights equal to your hits, up to the number required for the section you're studying, discarding any excess. Once you've tallied the required insights, you have a breakthrough and unlock the section.

On a miss, you become misled, befuddled, caught in false leads and false conclusions, and have wasted your time.

Hit or miss, if you're not satisfied with the outcome, choose 1:

- *Tell your volunteers that you have a shortcut method to study this, to wit: [x].*
- *Tell your volunteers that you can appeal to a tutor for help and guidance, namely: [x].*
- *Tell your volunteers that you're willing to forgo food and sleep and risk both health and wit for a breakthrough.*
- *Tell your volunteers that you're willing to isolate yourself behind locked doors and stern enjoinment, abandoning friendship and all company, for a breakthrough.*

...And ask them to give you a free die to roll, a free hit outright, or another better outcome instead. If they grant it, take it. Otherwise, the result stands.

Mastering this Section:

Insights: ○ ○

The first grimoire you must study is this one. Carefully follow these rules, repeating them in full until you've tallied 2 insights, thus reaching a breakthrough and mastering this section.

○ **Mastered:** You may proceed to study Section II.

Section II

Unlocked: ○

As an act of wizardry, you can ***unveil your wizardous senses***.

Tell your volunteers that you're unveiling your wizardous senses and roll. **No matter the result**, go on now to exert yourself ***mentally*** or ***empathetically***. Make that roll as well, but instead of asking about what your gut or empathy tells you, ask questions about what your wizardous senses reveal. They can perceive, as a shimmer or buzz, magical spells, subtle emanations, active plasmids, things made invisible by magic, and other signs of wizardry.

On a miss, this is exhausting and overwhelming. Don't ***exert yourself*** again without resting first, unless it's really, truly desperate, and maybe even not then.

Section III

Unlocked: ○

As an act of wizardry, you can ***recite an ominous dissuasion***.

Tell your volunteers that you're reciting an ominous dissuasion. Tell them whether you shout it, hiss it, snarl it, scream it, whisper it, recite it coolly, or in another way of your choice, then roll. **On any hits**, have your volunteers choose the effect:

- *Your subject, startled and dismayed, flees.*
- *Your subject, chilled with dread, freezes and can only stare.*
- *Your subject, overcome with fear, falls at your mercy.*
- *Your subject, though terrified, keeps their faculties and stands their ground.*

They can and should take into consideration the manner of your recitation.

On a miss, your subject's startled and you have a moment to act. If you ***exert yourself physically*** to flee or ***exert yourself violently*** against them, temporarily add +1 to the appropriate rating.

Section IV

Unlocked: ○

As an act of wizardry, you can **pronounce liveliness upon your shoes or another's**.

Tell your volunteers that you're pronouncing liveliness upon your own shoes or upon the shoes of someone else who is present, then roll. **On any hits**, choose the effect:

- *Your subject leaps a great distance horizontally, or a great distance vertically into the air, to land lightly on their feet or to come crashing awkwardly back down, at your choice.*
- *Your subject runs, racing at great speed, in the direction that you choose, or at random.*
- *Your subject kicks the everloving goodness out of a victim of your choice.*
- *Your subject walks a perfectly straight and absolutely balanced line, toe before toe, along the length of any line or ledge, and doesn't stumble, hesitate, or fall.*
- *Your subject stands in a wide, solid stance, and is unmoveable by any force or effort, until you release the spell.*

Before you choose, ask your volunteers whether the plasmids respond sluggishly to your recitation, or eagerly, or playfully, or sullenly, or what. If the answer is some form of sluggishly, per your own interpretation, modify the effect for the worse: your subject leaps a modest distance, runs at modest speed, &c.

On a miss, choose:

- *Tell your volunteers that you abandon the spell to its whim. You've already chosen the subject, but have your volunteers choose the effect.*
- *Tell your volunteers that you repeat your pronouncement more loudly, more sternly, more desperately, in more dulcet tone, more carefully, or in another way of your choice. Ask them whether the plasmids are swayed and allow you a reroll. If not, or if you've rerolled once already, you must abandon the spell to its whim.*