

GAME INTRODUCTION

Malleus is a Live Action Roleplaying Game Club where members dress up like 15-17th century people and squabble over evil glowing green rocks, *Witchstone*, that are found in the forest. Members join Factions, each themed in its own way, who compete and collaborate to plunder treasure and drive off nightmarish monsters, also portrayed by members. Malleus is a collaborative, immersive game set in a comically dismal dark fantasy setting that just barely resembles late Renaissance Earth.

JOINING THE CLUB

Malleus is a private game where all members have applied to participate. Having an existing member vouch for you is extremely helpful, as is building a good reputation participating at other Larps.

Qualities that Malleus looks for in new members are:

- **Staying in Character** - not breaking immersion
 - **Interest in Good Costume & Decor**
 - **Sportsmanship** - playing for fun, not to win.
 - **Playing to Lift** - willing to roll with the IG consequences and/or lose.
 - **Good Attitude**- being fun, kind, honest, patient, chill.
- Apply on the website and be patient. This is a labor of love, and we try our best. Respond to emails and messages so you don't fall through the cracks!
- Once accepted, you will be invited to the *secret* Discord.

CONTENT WARNING

Attending Malleus LARP means that you consent to witness graphic depictions of violence, bigotry, abuse, injury, nudity, and disrespect of fantasy religions that may bear similarities to real-world counterparts. It also contains the frequent use of loud noises, fog machines, firework smoke, flashing lights, and the absence of light. Furthermore, you also consent to harmless pyrotechnics being set off near your feet and legs, intentionally frightening or shocking simulation, being grabbed, pushed, or otherwise physically mistreated with a wide variety of simulated tortures that, while harmless, are nonetheless very unpleasant. Malleus will not ever condone the use of sexual assault in depicted scenes. While no real-world harm will come to you, the experience is purposely intense and not for everyone.

ACCESSIBILITY

Malleus is a grueling experience due to sleep deprivation, running through the woods, and the fact that it has a strong survival element. Its physical intensity is not for everyone. Non-combat status is permissible, please communicate this to your fellow players, avoid combat areas, or go "out of game".

THE DESIGN

This LARP has been designed to explore themes of greed, heroism, and woe by pitting greedy or misguided adventurers against one another in a world where suffering and death wait around every corner. The setting world does not value your characters except for what treasure they can plunder for their off-stage indifferent masters. The world of Malleus as a fantasy world that only loosely resembles real-world 16th-century Bohemia and Germany. It is not subject to the ethnocentric racism and misogyny that was seen in 16th century Earth. This is fantasy and we have sought to break down social barriers and 'isms' many face today.

Most of all, we designed Malleus to have fun. Our task as organizers is to provide you, the player, with every tool you need to be your own best storyteller while competing against one another in a fun and fair way. Your task is to respect others and the stories that you're telling. We do insist that it remains entertaining. We're here to have fun, and if your fun explicitly comes at the expense of someone else, out of game, you will be warned or asked to leave.

CODE OF CONDUCT

We expect every player to be respectful and considerate to each other. Leads and GMs take any of the following behaviors seriously. If a member is found to be exhibiting these behaviors towards their fellow players or Staff, they will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including being disinvented from the game indefinitely.

- *Overt and offensive -isms that are directed towards a player's race, gender, or sexuality.*
- *Threats of violence, abuse, or harassment.*
- *Conduct that includes inappropriate physical contact, unwanted sexual attention, offensive comments, intimidation tactics.*

Conflict outside the previously listed behaviors can happen, and we expect an attempt to be made to amicably resolve personal disputes. Mediation from a Staff member can be requested, but it will be provided at the discretion of the Leads and GMs based on the severity of the conflict.

THE GAME PREMISE & SETTING

ANNO 1518, as it had every three hundred years, the Herald Star appeared in the night sky. Grim was this omen, for that same week would see the Holy Emperor Karlemann die. Three of the Elector Council stood to claim the Imperial Throne: The Archduke of Marklund, the Margraf of Wulflund, and the Contessa of Freiport. For months the Electors bickered and schemed, unable to elect one of their number, the Herald Star grew! Doomsayers and prophets sprung up across the land, preaching Rapture or Apocalypse, as the fearful masses debauched themselves in city-wide revels or huddled in the cloistered Temples praying for salvation. Throughout the Empire, under the sickly light of the Herald Star the lords and princes tore at each other in civil war.

On the 238th Day of 1518, in the month of Summersend, the Herald Star fell from the sky on a tail of green fire. Burning with a fierce light that blinded many who looked upon it the Star fragmented and spread a wake of fiery death and divine judgement across the northern Empire. Where the shards landed, from the shattered ruins of cities and farmland or the scorched tangle of forests, Darkness stirred. Monstrosities, long thought destroyed or banished from the world, emerged from the ash and smoke to maim, to kill, to gather the poisonous fragments of the fallen Herald Star. The militant arm of the Temple, the witch-hunters of the Temple Malleus, raised a call to arms to drive back the cults, beastmen, demons, and the restless dead that now plagued the northlands.

The Arcane College, long a vestigial cabal of charlatans, alchemists, and soothsayers, studied the few shards brought to them. It was they who discovered that in the presence of such fragments their long faded power and useless spells flourished once more! Naming the substance Witchstone, they set out to collect all they could. Throughout the Empire others, too, discovered the Witchstone's power and properties: the healing of the sick, the raising of the dead, the boon of great strength or skill. So miraculous were the benefits that few heeded the rumors of the Witchstone's other malefic effects: madness, mutation, and death. It was the college wizards of the Aureate Order, the Alchemists, that first used the stone to transmute base metal into pure gold. The war weary Electors suddenly took an interest, for here was a material that could refill their coffers, heal their soldiers, turn the tide of the war, place them on the Throne, make them immortal...

Bands of brave mercenaries and cutthroats, thieves, and desperate souls, have signed on to venture into the forbidden lands struck and twisted by the Herald-Star. Finding a death-shrouded land of blasted ruins and haunted wilds they have carved out small fortified camps, neutral sanctuaries against the Darkness that comes each night. Each new day they brave the ruins, the Wilds, to find the precious and ruinous shards or die trying.

PRESENTLY...

For six years Witchstone was plundered from the broken forests and ruined cities of Drakenwald, shipped south by the Guilder Caravans with Road Wardens riding escort. Resettlement efforts have begun in our northern province, watched with hungry eyes by the forest. A growing shadow gnaws at the boundaries of the world of men while the Electors and foreign Princes continue to wage petty, interline wars.

The common people cry out for stability, they cry out for... an Emperor.

CORE RULES OF PLAY

There are some basic rules to live by when playing this game, in many ways they supersede all the others.

BE IN CHARACTER

You are the characters starring in the play. Your job is to stay in character and avoid modern conventions and overt meme'ing whenever possible. Step aside to quietly discuss necessities. Bathrooms and Parking Lots are always out of character.

WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET

(WYSIWYG) Represent stuff with actual props, show your characters actions and routines, hide out of game materials and containers. If you see something in a game space, whether inside a building or out in the Wilds, *you can interact with it.*

ALWAYS REACT

Always react to roleplay and abilities, *Do not* ignore them or get caught up in a rules discussion, and reward good roleplay by giving an equal performance in response.

PLAY TO LIFT

React to your fellow cast member's actions in ways that make them appear more impressive or ceding the spotlight to another character. In this game culture, the real accolades go to the players who consistently tell compelling stories and involve others in the game world. Bring others from outside your normal group into your scenes and stories.

PLAY TO STRUGGLE

Malleus is set in a Grim & Perilous world, there are few heroes and fewer happy endings. Success is best when the path is long, hard, or costly. Showcase your characters failures, efforts, griefs, and injuries to make your possible future triumph shine all the brighter. Some stories end in tragedy or calamity, others end quietly in a ditch.

BUILD STORY MOMENTUM

Build momentum towards your envisioned goal. Study, strive, fail, succeed, conspire. Each scene that builds towards something as simple as learning a new trade is worthy. Do not leap to succeed or achieve great or terrible things immediately.

IN GAME THEFT & RELOCATION OF PROPS

Theft, removal, or damaging props, gear, and decor is not permitted without explicit consent. Articles that are removed from their location, including found items, should be taken to the Warden Post and placed in the Lost & Found.

However, some items can be taken without asking- Witchstone, Crafting Resources, Coins, and items marked with a Red Ribbon.

SCENE LENGTH & IG TIMEKEEPING

Very Short Scene - about fifteen (15) seconds

Short Scene - 100 count / about two minutes

Scene- about five minutes

Long Scene- about ten (10) minutes

Very Long Scene- more than twenty (20+) minutes

Dawn/Dusk- the rise or setting of the actual sun.

TIME-OUT

Calling "Time-Out" pauses the game in a small local area. Use this to avoid dangers, relocate a fight, clean up glass, or check on a person seemingly injured. A "Time In" call returns the game to active. If you see a Time-Out, do not exploit the pause to your advantage.

Real Life Injuries: If someone is hurt badly, then pause the game with a Time Out call and call for an EMT. Members with First Aide training will respond.

SAFETY & OOG SIGNALS

Crossed Arms in Front - Ignore Me, I'm Out of Game

Crossed Fingers - Discrete OOG speech/clarification

Look Down - Eyes shielded, depart a scene of discomfort

Eye-Contact plus Okay Hand Sign - Non-verbal "are you okay?" check -in, reply with Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down.

"Oh Mother" - call to redirect roleplay, slow down, chill

GAMEPLAY SIGNALS

Bangs & Pyrotechnics - Flashes should dazzle and push your character, bangs and shrieks Wound them. If no other effect is understood or implied, take a Wound and stagger or fall. This includes misfiring Bandguns! Never set anything off near a person's head or body or indoors.

Red Light or Smoke - marks fearful monsters and dreadful areas. Hesitation, terror, and panic are appropriate responses. Make poor decisions, give ground, abandon your friends. Add to the atmosphere of **FEAR**. Only those with the Brave Talent can stand tall before such things.

Green Light or Smoke - marks foul poisons and terrible diseases. Being bathed in Green Light or Smoke (or touching fake rats or Witchstone) causes your character to suffer from **SICKNESS**.

COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

Game Masters oversee event organization, game logistics, as well as create game rules and the setting. They approve new Villains and handle any of the plot originating from the wider Malleus world.

Faction Leads oversee a single player Faction. For this group they develop and approve character concepts, coordinate camping, and serve as the rules referee and primary point of contact for their group. They portray influential characters IG and collaborate with other Leads and GMs as storytellers.

Faction Seconds assist the Lead in coordinating and guiding a single character Faction. They also serve as referees and in the case of an absence will fill the role of the Lead.

Members are players and participants in good standing at Malleus LARP. Their recommendation is the biggest factor in the acceptance of new members' applications.

Probationary Members are members of malleus that are being welcomed and coached into our game. After two full events new members graduate from probationary status.

Inactive Members are those that have not participated in events or the discord in Malleus in most of a year. Their status on the Discord is restricted and they do not count against the Faction population until they communicate to their Lead the desire to return to active status.



EVENT STRUCTURE

Friday night (around 9 P.M.) is Opening Ceremonies; you're expected to be in costume and to attend. Directly Following are Faction Workshops where we introduce our characters and talk as small teams.

Game On occurs Friday (10-11pm) and we remain In Character unless there is an emergency until Sunday at 12 Noon the Guild arrives and In Character closing ceremonies take place followed by **Game Off** and Out of Character announcements. We all then pack and clean the site and leave by 2-4pm Sunday.

VILLAINS & MINIONS: PLAYING A BAD GUY

Members are allowed to create adversarial characters such as cultists, mutants, and monsters who operate with a different set of character rules. **Villains** are main character bad guys, with elaborate costumes, schemes, and a group of players to support them. Some Villains are fallen Adventurer characters, who's tragic tale led them into darkness. Villains use full character rules, including resurrection. **Minions** are supporting bad guy characters, who fill the role of the faceless brutes that carry out a Villain's orders and die in droves to the Adventurers. Minions who are killed return to play in the lair or wilds as a "different" but decidedly similar henchman. Minions use very simplified rules, but if they distinguish themselves they can rise to become villains in their own right one day.

Portraying a bad guy will earn your character treasure and rewards when they return from "patrol"!

IF YOU WANT TO PLAY A VILLAIN TALK TO A GM OR YOUR LEAD
RULES FOR VILLAINS ARE IN THE CODEX ETCETERA

VILLAIN CALLS

Villains are nemesis characters played to represent the most dangerous servants of Ruin. They have a few calls to help them communicate their intentions without breaking character.

YOU THINK YOU ARE A HERO?

By saying this, the Villain is asking you to explain why you are a match for them. Do you have a magic sword? Are you magically protected? Declare such in an In Game manner!

YOU FOOL(S)!

When a villain calls this out, they are signifying that the current attempts to affect them will not work. Perhaps they are too strong, magically resistant, etc. Retreat, try something else or be defeated!

YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF ME!

This means the Villain is disengaging from the scene and that the player portraying them has accomplished all they want. The Villain will "vanish into the wilds" to return another time to continue their story. Let them go.

FIGHTING & COMBAT

1. Engage your opponent, exchanging dramatic attacks with larp safe weapons.
2. You can only take one Wound from any clash or flurry.
3. Give space for your opponent to roleplay injury.

THESE THINGS ARE FORBIDDEN IN COMBAT

Drum-Rolling & Wrapping: quick, cheesy, rapid strikes made by flicking the wrist or by reaching past an opponent to strike their far side with a flick are always discounted as glancing.

Seizing your Opponent's Weapon: it's their toy to play with, don't grab it away from them or risk damaging it.

Face, Head, Finger, or Groin Strikes: give your opponent as long as they need to recover. Apologize immediately. These strikes never count in combat.

Unwelcome Grappling: You can grab or touch anyone from the shoulder down to the hands, and for unarmed striking; think dramatic play fights; don't connect. Be respectful and kind.

Mobbing a Single Combatant: Take turns engaging a person that is outnumbered, never more than two versus one at a time.

Shooting Unaware Targets at Close Range: If you want to shoot someone within ten feet, call their attention to you first.

Combat Style Summary at Malleus

Combatants make a few attempts to strike at each other, blocking and parrying. Attacks can be quick, but should have very little real impact force. To convey "force" to the attack, make a wind up and grunt or cry as you strike. When a blow strikes you or your opponent you should make no more than one counter attack or strike in a flurry before backing off for a moment to Assess and roleplay. Once an exchange is over take a short moment, a few breaths at least to allow you and your opponent to roleplay injury, reactions, get better footing, ready themselves. It is during this brief moment that you should think about if an attack hit you in an unarmored location or may have penetrated your armor. This also gives you or your opponent a moment to decide to flee or start moving to a better fight location.

Basically: Don't pulverize each other without ceasing until a fight is over. That is how injuries occur.

ARMS & ARMOR

Attacks that strike the actual armor have a chance to be resisted. Firearms, Fire, and Gunpowder based attacks always ignore armor unless specifically stated.

Helmets (metal helmets) make the wearer immune to Cold Cock knockout attacks and other head related injuries.

Light Armor (made from cloth, hides or leather) can resist a single attack from a Light/Thrown Weapon striking the piece, but this piece of Light Armor must be repaired by an Outfitter to regain this protection.

Heavy Armor (metal scale, mail, brigandine, coats of plate, etc) resists quick attacks made by one handed light weapons. Heavy Weapons, Firelocks, Arrows, & Bolts or big dramatic, two handed attacks with a Light Weapon penetrate Heavy Armor.

Plate Armor is made of large solid metal plates, it can resist Arrows from a bow, but not crossbow Bolts.

Shields protect against any melee or arrow/bolt attack hitting them. If struck by a Firearm the bearer must choose to worsen their Condition or discard the shield as broken; Superior Shields must be dropped for the fight.

Light Weapons are generally one handed weapons such as daggers, swords, hand axes, staves, and light thrusting spears.

Heavy Weapons are two handed weapons like Polearms, great swords, battle axes, and the like whose killing weight should be roleplayed in bigger swings and roleplayed fatigue.

Bows & Crossbows fire arrows/bolts that are blocked by Shields. Used Arrows/bolts should be occasionally resupplied by an Outfitter.

Throwing Weapons are Light Weapons and may be used in melee. Once thrown may be picked up and used again.

Firelocks fire thick rubber bands and make a bang, causing a Wound. Armor offers no protection, unless specifically stated. Shields are broken or pierced (holder elects to be Wounded instead) Firelock shotte (IG ammo) is limited and shots must be accounted for.

Daggers should be roughly 20" inches or shorter. A small cudgel is also acceptable.



HEALTH: WOUNDS & CONDITIONS

All mortal, human characters have two Wounds they can sustain before falling. If unwounded, they are considered **Healthy**, once they have taken a wound they are **Wounded** and should roleplay the pain and fatigue of the injuries they sustained. Upon taking another wound they become **Mortally Wounded**, they must fall to the ground and struggle to move or remain conscious. When a character has been Mortally Wounded for longer than ten minutes without healing roleplay, their wounds they are at **Death's Door**. While at Death's Door they cannot see, can barely speak, and are generally unconscious. Only Magic, dire surgery or the Shrine can save them now.

Wounds to the limbs generally render that limb less useful or unusable, but are less lethal. Inflicting a final Wound to your opponent's torso is a good way to finish them off.

Temporarily Healed Wounds: you regain a suffered Wound but are still injured and must seek medical attention within 10 minutes or it reopens.



Sickness - You are disoriented, weakened, and ill until tended to by a healer or some other cure. You feel awful.

Mechanically: *you cannot be Healthy (ie two wounds) while Sickened.*

Mangled Limbs & Mutilation - caused by monstrous blows or dreadful practices these injuries should be roleplayed until Magic or Surgery restores them.

Cold Cock: If you are not wearing a helmet, being struck between the shoulders by surprise knocks you down and senseless for a Short Scene.

Brawling & Non-Lethal Weapons: Use your best judgement, fists and improvised weapons may wound you but will not send you to Death's Door unless someone really puts the boot in.

DEATH'S DOOR & DYING

When you are at Death's Door you can choose to stay put as a carcass, relocate your carcass closer to the active play area to be found, or walk as a ghost ("opera cape") to stare at the living and silently lead them to your body. Do what feels the most fun OOC, but keep it dark and dramatic IC.

There are three ways to come back from Death's Door:

I . Witchstone Resurrection (Scholar) - Long Scene

A mystical or medical ritual that consumes a Witchstone to resurrect a Character. Works too perfectly.

II . Reviving at the Shrine (Devout Talent) - Long Scene

A ritualistic, religious, taxing, and imperfect method. All memories since the last Dawn/Dusk are lost, and until the next Dawn/Dusk one Wound refuses to fully heal.

III . Call Upon the Ruinous Powers (Tell a GM)

Call out to a Dark God by name, you gain one permanent Corruption of their type and return to life in whatever state you deem most fitting. Your character is doomed to an ill end.

OR

Embrace Death (Dead)

You decide that your character was killed.

Pass on to Karmanor's Garden or whatever hell awaits you.

Talk to your Lead about your next character.

**MOST WILL END UP IN A SHALLOW GRAVE HERE,
COVERED BY THE POISONED EARTH, AWAITING
MERCIFUL . . .
OBLIVION.**

CORRUPTION & DAMNATION

Represents the dark shadow of poisonous evil that chokes out hope, joy, and life in the Drakenwald. It is a spiritual and physical malady, sometimes visible and other times subtle. In basic terms, it is supernatural radiation sickness. These are the basic rules for Corruption, for more advanced and specific roleplay options see the Codex Ex Cetera.

SOURCES OF CORRUPTION

- Carrying two or more Witchstone at a time
- Lengthy exposure to Witchstone
- Interacting peacefully with a Demon
- Using dark artifacts and spellbooks
- Magic Teleportation & Portals
- Certain encounters in mini-games.

Each instance of these sources generally inflicts one point of Corruption.

CORRUPTION SCALE

1 Corruption: You feel awful: suffer from various maladies, sores and nightmares.

2 Corruption: You are always Sickened, only removing the Corruption will cure you.

3 Corruption: You die horribly and rot away supernaturally fast or turn into a mindless slaving ghoul.

Other specific types of Corruption exist, they are all cumulative and are gained and cured individually. Example: Vampiric Corruption.

CURING CORRUPTION & CAUSING DISASTER

An adventurer can be cured of a single level of Corruption by desperate measures always involving an engaging, dramatic Long Scene (10+ minutes) and a ⅓ chance of Disaster. If trying to cure while also Corrupted, you must draw/roll twice for Disaster.

- Perilous exorcism ritual by a Devout at Shrine
- Risky surgery by a Medicus at Atheneum
- Calling Upon the Power by a Mage
- Hexen Rituals

If Disaster is the result, confer with your fellows or Lead before or during the ritual and interpret a nasty scenario, then act it out! Disaster should have long lasting or dramatic consequences.

Disaster suggestions: Temporary or permanent Demonic possession, mutilation, death of the subject or practitioner, Corruption gained by all in attendance, summoning a demon, bouts of murderous lunacy of all participants. Effects can happen immediately or over the next few hours!



WITCHSTONE

Witchstone radiates powerful, dark magic causing madness, decay, mutation, and strange phenomena around it. One should always play up being greedy and a bit mad when touched by its green glow.

- Each Faction has a large Strongbox that can be used to somewhat safely store Witchstone. It always requires a key or lockpicking to open.
- Carrying or touching any amount of Witchstone causes Sickness from its evil aura that cannot be cured until the Witchstone is gone.
- Carrying two Witchstone inflicts a level of Corruption immediately.
- Carrying Three or more Witchstone is lethal, you fall to Death's Door in agony.

The effects of Witchstone exposure are cumulative.

WITCHSTONE IS REPRESENTED BY A GLOWING GREEN ROCK.

Picking up Witchstone is always a Very Short Scene (15s)

Witchstone has several key uses in Malleus.

- Turn in for Favor
- Trade for resources, tasks, and profit
- Resurrect a very dead Character
- Empower a wizard's Arcane Altar
- Empower Villain Lairs and abilities

CHARACTER CREATION

Malleus characters are made up of the following elements:

- Faction
- Homeland
- Organization (if any)
- One Archetype
- Three Trainings + Extras
- One Talent
- Trappings

Auslander origin, Gentry archetype, and Supernatural Talents require Story approval.

CHARACTER GROWTH

Malleus characters gain new abilities after participating in several expedition events.

3rd Event: New Training

5th Event: Second Talent

7th Event: New Training

Changing Trainings: can be done between events Story with Lead approval or during an event with roleplayed lessons.

Changing Talents: can be done with Lead approval after a big life/story event or by spending Favor.

Changing Archetype: requires Lead approval. Rare, costs Favor, easier to go down in society than up.

PLAYING AN ALTERNATE CHARACTER

Members are allowed to portray secondary characters besides their main character with GM Approval. These characters must be approved in concept and kit by the Lead of the faction they are in, if neutral or no faction then GM approval is required. Secondary characters should be supporting or story roles and are discouraged from participating in the Player vs Player elements of Malleus. The appropriate time for a character change is Dawn or Dusk.

JOINING OR CHANGING FACTIONS

Members can request to change factions with an existing character or a new character but must discuss the transfer with their current Lead.

FACTION

Who do you fight for? These are the Factions with active expeditions in our part of the Drakenwald.

Marklund: Imperial, favoring military discipline and devotion to the state religion of Temple Solkanism. Marklund is the most favored by the Road Wardens.

Freiport: Imperial, but with overseas expatriate mercenaries. Freiport is a capitalist free city and so is more tolerant to a degree of criminal activity.

Wulfund: is an Imperial faction but with many “barbarian” auxilia drawn in from the neighboring lands of Varnava and Zavarosk. Wulfund favors the Old Gods over Solkanism.

Lyonesse: the only purely auslander faction, Lyonesse is organized feudally, with knights and nobles having households of men at arms and serfs. They also maintain their own religion, worshipping “The Lady”.

Dogs of War: Mercenaries, experts, and mages-for-hire. The Dogs of War fill out the numbers of whichever Faction needs it during an expeditionary event.



ORGANIZATION

Organizations have access to their own list of Favor rewards but restrict a character’s behavior. Joining an Organization requires Lead Approval. Here is some of the most prevalent:

The Temple Malleus: The state religion of the Empire places Solkan, God of Light and Retribution, at the head of the pantheon of Old Gods. The Temple is composed of priests, zealots, and witch hunters. They oppose corruption and seek to suppress the use of magic.

The Colleges Arcane: The magisters, their servants, and guards belong to the Colleges. They see a Magocratic future for the Realms of Men and strive to place their agents in positions of power as well as maintain a monopoly on the use of magic.

The Cult of the Lady: The strange goddess of the Lyonesans demands adherence to the virtues of chivalry. The arbiters and pilgrims of this faith seek out relics, divine visions and strive to keep Lyonesse from modernization. They oppose the worship of other gods and restrict the use of magic outside of their control.

HOMELAND

IMPERIAL

You hail from the provinces of the Empire or its surrounding border kingdoms. The Empire is the mightiest nation in the Old World and a bastion of martial discipline, learning, and faith. **MARKLUND**, **HOCHLUND**, and **SOLLUND** are the core of the realm with spired cities, great academies, and mighty fortresses. To the north and east lie the savage frontier of **WULFLUND** and **OSTELUND** with their famous fur wrapped warriors and pagan strongholds. In the west is **FREILUND**, wherein lies Freiport: an independent merchant city-state that commands the wealth, art, and trade of the Empire. The *Collegia Arcanum* has its five Colleges and their headquarters scattered across the cities and countryside, serving any with coin and ambition. Watching over the teeming cities and far flung villages is the *Temple*- the state religion.

The Archduchy of Marklund - mightiest province of the Empire, famed for its knights and military.

Inspirations: Holy Roman Empire, 15-16th century Germany

The Grand County of Freilund - the center of trade and art, its coastal regions are a haven of corsairs and merchantmen.

Inspirations: Spanish Netherlands, Mercenaries

The Margraviate of Wulflund - bastion of the Old Faith, a vast realm of many peoples welded together by strength of arms and determination.

Inspirations: Poland, Lithuania, Cossacks

The Principality of Hochlund - secluded in the mountains, seat of the Solkan Temple and many academies.

Inspirations: Austro-Hungarian Empire

The Kingdom of Sollund - bread basket of the empire, wealthy towns and cities. Suffering under rival claimants.

Inspirations: Bavaria, Austria

The Principality of Ostelund - A vast border province of dark forests known for insular, rugged people.

Inspirations: Kingdom of Bohemia, Hussites

AUSLÄNDER

You hail from the many and varied lands inhabited by humans scattered across the Old World and Near East. Your homeland was in the shadow of the Empire and its oppressive Temple, but now things have changed. The falling star has ravaged the Old World, the Emperor is dead, and the Electors wage war on another to seize the throne. This is a time of opportunity. You have traveled to the Empire as a mercenary, spy, or a treasure hunter seeking Witchstone.

Lyonesse - a green land of knights and chivalry, outdated but defiant and proud. Devoted to a patron goddess, The Lady.

Inspirations: Arthurian Hundred-Years War France

Ravea - a cultured land of rival city states, renowned for trade, art, and deadly conspiracies.

Inspirations: Borgia Italy, Venice

Navarr - a sun-drenched land famous for maritime trade and exploration. Their soldiers are known for never surrendering and rarely giving quarter.

Inspirations: Golden Age Spain

Zavarosk - a land of wide open steppes and the fearless tribes of shave headed horse warriors.

Inspirations: Cossacks and Tatars, Ungols

Urosk - a harsh northern land devoted to the old gods but under constant assault by monsters.

Inspirations: Medieval Russia

Seljikiram - a mighty empire of sprawling cities, arid hills, and hushed palaces. Ruled by a sultan who is worshipped as a god.

Inspirations: Ottoman Empire

Ostea - a windswept borderland of rival petty rulers, scattered villages, and divided territories.

Inspirations: Balkans, Scotland

Varnava - A haunted, mountainous land with a sinister reputation for nocturnal, bloodthirsty monsters

Inspirations: Dark Fantasy Transylvan

CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

COMMONER

Labor - Commoners form the backbone of any expedition, taking up arms and scouring the cursed forest. Choose one additional Training to represent their upbringing. Once each dawn/dusk you may scrounge one random resource at the Warden Post.

Trappings: Dagger/club, Four Upkeep for Trappings

WARRIOR

Resilient - Soldiers and fighters that are drawn to the Drakenwald by the lure of riches are tough and desperate fighters. Warriors get an extra point of Upkeep to use only on Armor. Additionally, Once per event when you fall in battle you may declare "Not Today" and crawl back to your feet badly injured, temporarily healing a Wound. Seek a healer quickly!

Trappings: Dagger/club, Four Upkeep for Trappings and one bonus Upkeep dedicated to Armor

SCHOLAR

Educated - Scholars are trained to read and write as well as instructed in basic mathematics, history, natural philosophy, and literature. Only Scholars may learn the Chirurgeon and Lore Trainings. You also have the Books & Inks trapping for free.

Trappings: Dagger/club, Books & Inks, Four Upkeep for Trappings

KNAVE

Scoundrel - Knaves have lived a life of opportunism, theft, and shame. Knaves start with one bonus Knave Training and can learn others. Your past dealings or in-between event depredations earn you an income of two Silver Marks.

Trappings: Dagger/club, Four Upkeep for Trappings

GENTRY

High Standing - Gentry are from the growing merchant class and the bottom rungs of lower nobility. However any Gentry who are in the Drakenwald must truly be desperate or disgraced. You start with an extra point of upkeep for your fine clothing and equipment, as well as a tidy income of five Silver Marks representing your allowance or diminished fortunes. Gentry characters should have extra adornments, changes of clothes, fine gear, and other characters to form their **Household** and are held to a higher standard socially than the lower classes.

Trappings: Dagger/club, Five Upkeep for Trappings



Note on Noble Titles at Malleus

Nobles who hold titles have jobs and responsibilities largely incompatible to the adventurer's life, as well as relatives who would prefer to have the title for their own family.

Malleus is zoomed in on a tiny part of the Drakenwald frontier. Character titles should, in general, be Knight and below, playing a noble character who is related to someone with a Title is far more reasonable to our settings scale. In all cases, no noble or gentry in good standing ends up in the Drakenwald, there should be a misfortunate reason. Here are some examples of social ranks in descending order: Lord/Lady, Knight/Dame, Esquire/Gentleperson, Yeoman/Burger.

TRAININGS

CRAFTING & GATHERING

Alchemist: You know recipes and methods to mix dangerous and effective compounds to craft black powder, drugs, and potions.

Outfitter: You know how to work leather, sinew, and wood, producing and repairing armor, shields, bows, and arrows.

Builder: You know how to work stone, wood, and iron to fashion furniture, structures, and mechanisms.

Apothecary: You know which herbs to pick and the properties of each when mixed to create potions and poisons.

Smith: You know how to work iron and other metals, sharpening blades and mending metal armor.

Forager: You are wise to the ways of hedge, stream, and field you can gather Herbs & Wood resources.

Forester: You are skilled in trapping, hunting, and harvesting timber, you may gather Hides & Wood resources.

Prospector: You know where to dig and the value of hard labour, you may gather Metal & Minerals

*See the *Codex Etcetera* for crafting recipes.

KNOWLEDGE

Career: You may choose a real-life medieval career based training which earns you +1 Income and allows for roleplayed expertise. Requires Lead approval. Examples: Herald, Diplomat, Butcher, Brewer, Vintner, Jeweler, Courtier, etc.

Chirurgeon: (Scholar) You have studied anatomy and surgery. You may perform surgery scenes to heal injuries and remove mutations with an herb and painful surgery roleplay. The treated person needs rest.

Explorer: You are trained in navigation and are far traveled. You are able to lead mini-games and may gain additional opportunities in the Wilds.

Gossip: You have made many connections to gain insight and information. You may reference one chosen Rumor sheet in the Tavern.

Healer: You are trained in basic medicine and dressing wounds. You may perform at least a short scene (100 count) of medical roleplay on a character to allow them to recover a Wound with a long scene (10+ minutes) of rest in a place of safety.

Literate: You know how to read and write as well as very basic maths which has broadened your imperfect understanding of the world.

Lore: (Scholar) You have studied extensively in a particular subject, you may ask a GM for in-world insight into your specific field of knowledge. Human knowledge is often

imperfect. Choose a field of study such as The Empire, Politics, a Religion, a Foreign Land, Halflings, Beasts, Plagues, etc. The study of Magic, Cults, Undeath, and Demons is hazardous for the soul.

Rat-catcher: You know how, out of desperate necessity, to handle rats and other vermin without getting Sickened.

SKILL AT ARMS

Arbalester: May use a LARP-safe Crossbow.

Archer: May use a LARP-safe Bow.

Arquebusier: May use a LARP-safe firearm.

Soldaten: May use Great Weapons: two handed swords, axes, hammers, and polearms.

Engineer: May use special black powder weapons such as grenades, bombs, and artillery.

KNAVE - *Restricted to Knave Archetype*

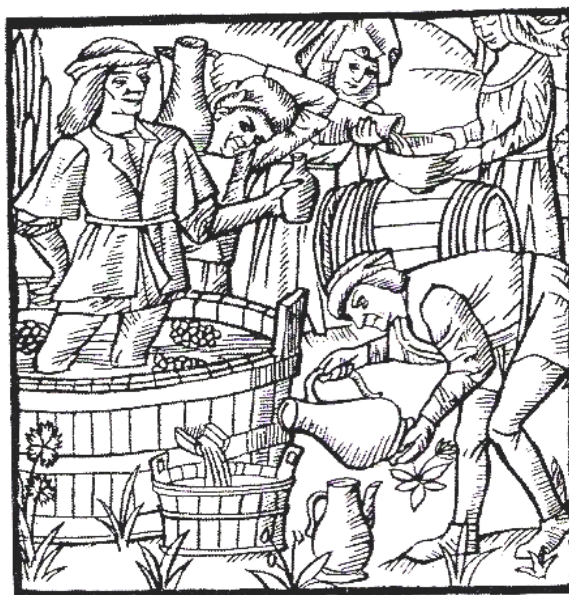
Spy: You may ask a Lead for information or rumors about a person or place once per expedition, this information is never perfect. In mini-games you may gain information advantages.

Thief: You may open a lock (on a chest or a door) with a Short Scene (100 count) of lockpicking roleplay and appropriate thieves tools.

Smuggler: You have unseemly connections, and start each event with a single dose of a drug and may purchase items from the Smuggling list in the *Codex Etcetera*.

Criminal: You generate money from an unlawful activity, +2 Income. While this takes place between expeditions you should represent that inclination in your roleplay.

Examples: pickpocket, burglar, grave robber, fence, assassin, etc.



TALENTS

TALENTS ARE A SINGULAR MOMENT, A SHORT SCENE OF EXCELLENCE OR ADVANTAGE.

Use of a Talent is refreshed at each dawn & dusk as long as the Tavern stands, as well as by other means such as drugs, elixirs, Inspiring, magic and special effects.

Some Talents can be taken more than once to gain a second use.

Agile: Quick and nimble your mind turns to flight when danger nears. You may resist a single melee strike by acting out a dodging spin (perhaps crying Haha!) if you are not wearing armor or carrying a shield.

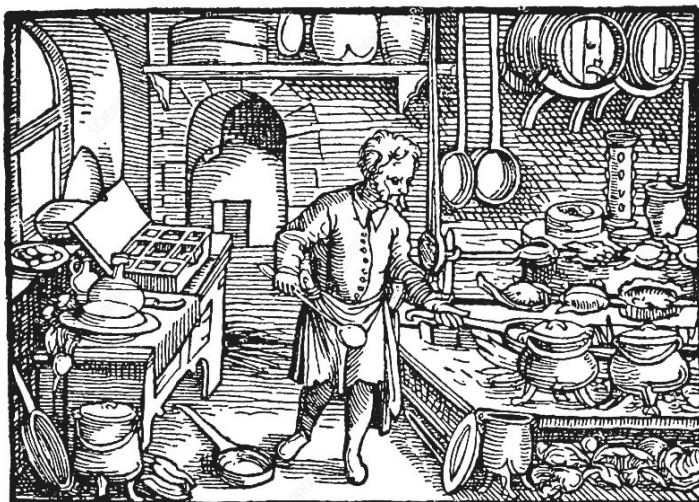
Bloodthirsty: You see violence as an expedient solution and are unbothered by cruelty. You may torment a Fallen or helpless person to temporarily heal a Wound for a scene.

Brave: You are prone to taking foolish risks. Fear (Monsters and Red Light) may cause you to become reckless instead of panicked.

Diehard: You often refuse to give up, even when it would be wise. While Fallen, you can still fight while down, until Wounded again.

Iron Will: You are famously stubborn and judgemental of ways foreign to you. You may struggle and resist a source of magical mental control or mundane torture.

Leadership: You take charge in any situation but facing danger alone is unnerving. You may give a rousing oratory to a small group sworn to follow you, bestowing on each a single use of the Brave Talent.



Lucky: You believe that you are Fates pawn and you practice strange superstitions to change your luck. You may redo one roll, draw, or spin when gambling; additionally when something bad occurs in a mini-game (or a GM call) it may circumstantially spare you.

Inspiring: You believe that you are inspiring to others and your words alone can change their hearts and minds. You may perform at least a short scene of oratory to allow a person to recover their Talents and temporarily heal a Wound if they are injured.

Mastercrafter: (Commoner or Scholar) You have been taught a specific style of crafting fine works which you are overly proud of. You may create a Master variant of a crafting recipe in your chosen trade. See the *Codex Etcetera* for crafting rules.

Medicus: (Healer or Chirurgeon) You do not care what it takes, or how much it hurts, you can save them! You may temporarily heal a fallen character who is Mortally Wounded or at Death's Door using extreme medical methods. They are very injured and will expire if they do not receive further healing and rest within ten minutes.

Poisoner: You have gone to paranoid extremes to build up a tolerance to deadly poisons. You may resist Poison with a short scene of sweaty sickness and may use and handle Master level poisons without risk.

Survivor: You have suffered terribly in the past and bear the scars on your mind and body. You may crawl and stagger while mortally wounded or resist a brief encounter with a source of Sickness.

Strong: You are brawny and prone to bursts of temper when upset. You may perform short feats of strength like overpowering an opponent, forcing a door, carrying a heavy weight. When facing monsters and beasts, you can resist them very briefly before being defeated.

Trade Connections: You have built up many contacts to acquire anything you need at a whim, but the wilderness outside civilization terrifies you. You may purchase resources of choice for 1 silver, as well as imported goods & trappings at the Warden Post.

RESTRICTED TALENTS - GM APPROVAL

Arcane: (Scholar) You have been tested and trained by the Colleges and can wield a single wind of magic to weave potent spells. You also have supernatural senses and sensitivities, sources of Corruption are particularly dangerous to you. See the *Codex Etcetera* for spell casting rules.

Chanter: (Requires Devout) You have been tasked by your chosen deity to perform miracles and enforce their beliefs in this world. Chanters can, as long as the Shrine location is not Ruined, divinely cast a small number of common spells each day. If they fail to follow their deities tenets and motivations they will fall into disfavor. See the *Codex Etcetera* for further divine spell casting rules.

Devout: You are blindly dedicated to a religious belief. You can briefly resist a hostile source of Corruption for a Very Short Scene (10 sec or so). You must have sacred vows forbidding some act and/or strictly adhering to a set of virtues and must attend religious ceremonies daily, if you fail in this you must atone.

The Sight: You are plagued with visions and dreams from beyond. You can sense magic and spectral beings, e.g. ghosts. Your divinations may prove eerily accurate, perhaps revealing clues from objects, people or places and gaining advantages in mini-games and narrative scenes.

Witch: You have dabbled with magical practice learning how to weave simple spells and charms, whether you wield this for good or ill if your gift becomes widely known you know you may face persecution. See the *Codex Etcetera* for spell casting rules.

Mutant: You have been afflicted by a Mutation that has twisted your mind and body. This Talent replaces and blocks your natural Talent until it is cured by dramatic means. You should represent a mutation or discoloration of flesh in your costume.

COMMON MAGIC SPELLS

These spells are shared across all the various disciplines of magic. Other spells exist and can be found in the *Codex Etcetera*.

Daze: Target is knocked dazed and reeling.

Entrance: Target is entranced and focuses on you for a short scene.

Wound: Target within reach takes a Wound.

Protect: Target may Resist the next Corruption, Wound, or Sickness effect. Choose at time of casting.

Limited to one protection per person.

Enchant Weapon: a melee Weapon or single arrow/bolt becomes 'magical' for a Very Long Scene, allowing it to hurt certain supernatural beings. *Convey this to your foe with roleplay.*

Cure: Target is cured of Sickness or mental control.

Heal: Target has a single Wound miraculously healed.
(*Chanters, Ondine, & Witches Only*)

Roleplaying with Magic

Casters should make dramatic show of their spell casting, big gestures, words of power, strange reagents, make stuff into rituals, etc. When you think you are the target of a magical effect, just roll with it! Give at least a very short scene of reaction and ham up how supernatural it is.



TRAPPINGS

LIGHT WEAPONS

Knife or Short Cudgel
Staff / Shortspear
Sword
Axe
Mace / Hammer

**Every character may upkeep one knife or short weapon for free.*

HEAVY WEAPONS

Great Weapon
Polearm

RANGED WEAPONS

Bow
Crossbow
Pistol
Arquebus
Throwing Knives/Axes (set of two)

AMMUNITION

Arrows/Bolts (x5)
Bows & Crossbows come with five arrows each event free.
Firelock Ammunition (5 Shots)
Firelocks come with 1 shot each event free.

ARMOR *(Areas are: Torso, each Arm, Legs)*

Partial Light Armor *(Covers one or two areas.)*
Light Armor *(Cloth/leather: Covers Three+ Areas)*
Partial Heavy Armor *(Covers one or two areas.)*
Heavy Armor *(Chain/Plate: Covers Three+ Areas)*
Shield
Pavise Shield *(Tower Shields)*
Helmet *(Prevents being cold cocked)*

TRAPPINGS

Books and Inks
Lockbox *(must be marked for IG theft)*
Jewels and Finery *(Worth 2 marks if pawned)*
Small but Vicious, Dog *(Rat-catcher required)*
Master Trade Tools *(choose one tradeskill)*
(once each dawn/dusk use one less resource when crafting or repairing)

CONSUMABLES

Basic Apothecary Recipe: 1 Dose
Basic Alchemist Recipe: 1 Dose
Cache: *Start event with 2 Materials*

UPKEEP

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1

UPKEEP

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UPKEEP

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UPKEEP

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UPKEEP

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UPKEEP

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1

REPAIRING TRAPPINGS

Trappings should be repaired by the most relevant Tradeskill when roleplay occurs that would damage them. This roleplay lifts our crafters! Here are some examples:

Armor should be repaired after being Mortally Wounded in combat or after participating in many combats.

Weapons should be repaired after many combats, if they were dropped during a fight or if they were used as a tool.

Shields should be repaired after deflecting shots or struck by heavy blows.

Arrows & Bolts should be replenished by an Outfitter.

Shot must be counted and replenished by an Alchemist.

Other trappings may also need repair, use your best judgement.

In general, repairing a Trapping requires a Very Long Scene at an appropriate workstation, unless one resource is expended to expedite the time to a Scene.



SUPERIOR TRAPPINGS: Cost Normal Upkeep +1

Are often rewards or treasure gained by adventuring in the Drakwald or as an heirloom. Superior items can choose one of the following benefits:

Balanced- once per event this weapon can be used to resist a wounding strike when wielded and dropped.

Reinforced- once per event this armor can resist a wounding strike that would normally bypass it.

Attuned- may hold an Enchant Arms spell until Dawn/Dusk.

Engineered- the item may use special ammunition, have extra barrels or some other mechanical effect. Requires Engineer.

UPKEEP & SILVER

Upkeeping Trappings: You can maintain items equal to your Upkeep between events. Any items beyond that are lost, unless...

Maintaining More Trappings with Silver:

Spend three silver marks per Upkeep required for the item to maintain it for your next attended event. Turn this coin in on Sunday to your Faction Lead.

It is the intentional design of the game to make heavily armed and armored characters require lots of effort and funding.

Friday Warden Passport Check: Audit your Trappings for the current event, get your Coin from the Warden Post.

Sunday Accounting: All coins and resources must be turned into your Faction Lead and the Guilder before NOON to cover your extra Trappings, any extra may be shared or added to the general story goals of your Faction.

Seasonal Changing Trappings: Choose your Trappings at the character creation or the start of a new Expedition Year. Once in play characters must seek out IG crafters to create trappings or acquire them through a character with Trade Connections Talent if no crafting recipe exists. If no IG option can be found, a Trapping can be gained between events with a Leads agreement.

FAVOR

Favor is given as rewards for participation with your Factions goals. It is a personal character resource that is awarded by, and spent, with your Faction Lead for various boons. Discuss your plans for Special Items or character changes.

GAINING FAVOR

- Chosen as MVP (ic: MIA) by your Faction Lead
- Part of a Faction that scores an Excellent Shipment
- Sidequests offered by Faction Lead

Spending Favor

- Acquire a Trapping or Special Item for three events.
- Acquiring Superior Trappings.
- Change Talent to a new one.
- Change Archetype after dramatic storyline.
- Leniency: avert IC consequences for Crime, failure or betrayal.

PLAYERS SHOULD TRACK THEIR OWN FAVOR WHICH IS AWARDED BY AND SPENT WITH THEIR FACTION LEAD.

COINS, RESOURCES & GAME ELEMENTS

All coins, resources and game elements must be turned in Sunday Morning or by Game Off. Items accidentally kept should be turned in at the start of the next event. All game elements can be found at the Warden Post.

In-Game Coinage

Is received at the Warden Post for your character's income when you check in your Passport as well as generated within mini-games and on missions. All coins must be turned in to your Lead Sunday Morning. There are three coins:

Silver Mark: the baseline currency, good for costly purchases and jobs. Three marks buys you an extra upkeep for your next event, the main use of money at Malleus.

Brass Groat: small coin used for everyday purchases, like a drink or meal, five groats equals one mark.

Gold Crown: a valuable coin worth twelve silver Marks.

Pfennig: a real world penny, used for roleplay and comedy. Two hundred and forty of them equals a single Mark.

Crafting Resources

Resources for crafting are represented by wooden disks with a symbol stamped on them. Use of representative physreps is encouraged and they should be stored and transported in reasonable containers. These can be found in a chest in the Warden Post and players are allowed to take and deposit them on the honor system. These resources can be described in game in whatever way makes the most sense for your intentions.

Red Ingot: Metal

Yellow Diamond: Minerals

Green Leaf: Herbs

Black Line: Wood

Brown Skin: Hides

Witchstone

Represented by a glowing green crystal that lights up. It is dangerous and painful to touch, causing Sickness with brief contact and Corruption with any amount of lengthy exposure or proximity. Picking up Witchstone requires a very short scene of greed, pain, visions, etc. Take a moment to claim it.

All other incidental game elements and pieces can generally be found at the Warden Post. Ask your Lead or a Warden.

The Expedition Sanctuary

Buildings in the sanctuary must be decorated by the community to be functioning.

Locations that are found lacking in props (this is decided by the Staff) may become ruined, so it's best to add as many props as possible.

Burglary, Fire, & Destruction: Villains and monsters can ruin a Village Location with destructive roleplay. Builders can repair them with Very Long Scenes of repair, spending at least 10 resources of any fitting type, the more tools and helpers the better.

The Shrine

A place of worship and prayer to Karmanor. While The Light is predominant in position, there are places for the worship of the Old Gods and the Lady as well in many encampments. All cultures offer iconography to this shrine.

Working: Devout Characters can Revive characters at Death's Door here. Devout characters may attempt to remove Corruption here. (see page 7)

Ruined Shrine: Devout Revive inflicts a level of Malas Corruption. Chanters cannot cast spells.

Props: Altar to Karmanor (Morr), banks of candles, incense. Collection plate. Small Altars to other gods, candlesticks, incense, stained glass, Illumination, ornate altar, faint hymnal singing, grand appointments. Confession hour.

The Armory

Critical to maintaining the arms, armor and equipment of any expeditionary camp the Armory allows creation and maintenance of trappings without risk of wasting resources

Working: Outfitting, Smithing, and Builder recipes can be crafted and repaired here.

Ruined Armory: Outfitter, Smith, and Builder recipes cannot be crafted. Repairing trappings takes twice as long.

Props: Anvil, old tools, fireplace. Creaky work table with old tools. Stools, seating, old tools, fireplace, metal bars, material containers, bellows, awls, forge, measuring tools. Training equipment, targets, etc.

The Tavern

At the heart of any expedition is the Tavern, where food, fellowship and stiff drink warms the heart and steels the spirit against the darkness of the Drakenwald.

Working: Wounds treated by a Healer are recovered in 5 minutes here. Spent Talents are recovered at Dawn & Dusk. Rumors may be read here.

Ruined Tavern: Talents are not recovered at Dawn & Dusk.

Props: Self serve kegs of piss warm ale (watered iced tea). Flickering candles, a few decanters and baskets. Wine (watered grape juice), happy hour music, abundant serving materials, fake food, Notice board. Eternal stew/broth. multiple kegs, a well stocked bar, and merrymaking props.

The Athenaeum

Medicine and herb lore is best practiced in a cleaner and well equipped laboratory. The Athenaeum also serves the expedition as it's hospital for those grievously wounded in the fight against the darkness.

Working: Alchemy and Apothecary recipes can be crafted here, and Chirurgeons practice surgery without risk.

Ruined Atheneum: All Apothecary and Alchemist crafting as suffers from a 1/2 chance of Failure, the materials are wasted. Surgery infects the subject causing Sickness.

Props: Basic Alchemy and Apothecary Tables. Stools, Benches, Books, Alchemy implements. Skulls, Vials, medical charts.

The Watch Post (Game Masters)

The Road Wardens keep the truce and guard the Witchstone Shipments the expedition relies on for funding.

Working: Shipments can be made on Sunday, and Road Wardens are braver and more diligent.

Ruined Watchpost: No Guilder shipments are possible. Trade Connections and Commoner scrounging cannot be used. Road Wardens are wavering and unhelpful.

MALLEUS CORE RULEBOOK
2nd Edition

*Game Created by
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*Rules by
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*With insights and input by
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*Special Thanks to the most impressive Malleus Member Community
for all the love and enthusiasm*