

.oOo.

Darkness flows from the great peaks and engulfs the paths below. A small campfire burns brightly through the dusk as the night settles in the mountain pass. Several travelers settle themselves in for the evening. Sitting apart from the rest three speak amongst themselves of topics beyond the interests of their companions. Using the language of the scholars derived from that of the great Roman Empire itself. None would guess by their appearance they were so educated. The one standing is, most obviously, a seasoned warrior of noble stature; the second, a man of the wilds but little more than a beast himself, sits upon a large tree stump; and the third is a finely adorned noblewoman resting easily against a curiously worn boulder. Very few would guess by their apparent age all three had spent decades studying archaic trivia, or that they had seen generations of servants come and go, or could imagine the supernatural powers they command with a word or a gesture.

Bathanare, her golden hair curling in the before unknown breeze, her delicate voice terrifying to her few enemies softly speaks. "I would have thought," the light from the campfire reflecting brightly in her eyes, "the ambition burning inside you would draw you upward in the hierarchy of our house, climbing the ladder of success like so many of your peers." She appraises the finely armed and armored young man standing before her and continues. "Why are you still here? You have many reasons to leave that hole in the side of the mountain, allowing you to highlight your abilities and potential to the other leaders of our house. You could be one of the great ones, if given half a chance, and you won't get that chance bearing the weight of the frozen chains of that covenant you have now. There is no doubt that place is holding you back."

Razach adjusts himself on his perch, an old weathered stump. He speaks through a greasy mouthful of mutton, "Yeah, good point, why are you still there?"

"What type of leader would I be if I walked out on these people?" the man known as Vilarious replies. "They may be in trouble, but they are members of our house. In a hostile land and without help they will surely perish. What type of Tremere would I be then? How would I be known if at their time of need I back away, or worse yet, hide myself from the responsibilities that are mine? I would not be worthy of having others follow me so easily."

"Humph, yes...we must stand united against adversity," mumbles Razach, wiping the pieces of his meal into the crevasses of his overgrown beard.

Bathanare glances toward Razach with wonder, and then continues speaking to Vilarious. "Well, if you stifle your abilities and waste your time," she chides, "how much help are you really to your house? You have the potential to lead covenants and build great things, but spending your time here is futile. Your covenant's archon is loony, but still damn powerful. I can't imagine you are waiting to take over this hole after she goes into final twilight." She sits forward, looking in to the eyes of her colleague, trying to determine something, but not finding it. "There are far too many problems for it to be worth half of the dues you are paying."

"Sometimes you have to take the bull by the horns..." Razach bellows, grabbing imagined horns with his large hands and shaking them violently back and forth.

Vilarious hesitates for a moment in his reply, musing over Razach who, after having finished his mug, has returned to eating his dinner, he then proceeds, "I am not doing this to take over. The covenant has a history for greatness. For us, as a house, to give up here would be a tragedy." He continues. "Yes, it has its problems, and you are right, I don't stay for the chance to lead here. I stay because this is where I am needed. The people rely on me to take care of them and to make sure things will be right once again. From here I learned many things. If I let this place fall, I remove the chance for others to learn the same lessons, to hone the same skills, to climb the same mountain I have. And still, I learn many things here; such as how to be a strong member of our house, how we must lead as well as follow, and trust is required to lead. How could I expect others to follow me and trust me if I have turned my back on those who have trusted me before, relied on me to do what is right for them and then left them abandoned?"

“Praesto et Persto...I stand in front and I stand firm. Yep, that’s it...” Razach says gruffly nodding, and repeats the old saying again, but mostly for himself as he reaches around for his empty mug.

The other two look to each other in simple understanding, then slowly turn to face Razach, who having failed in his quest for more drink, is leaning backwards on his seat, eyes closed, stretching contently. Suddenly, he hangs amid a cloud of wood dust for a brief moment; a look of utter surprise crosses his face, then he lands hard on his back in the darkness out of the sight of the campfire, a rain of stump-eating bugs and dust join him. The unforgiving ground knocks the wind out of him, his head rings from the impact. Razach groans, catching his breath, as Bathanare and Vilarious go back to their conversation.

[The Arrival]

“My Lord, they come. And this bodes no good tidings.”  
—the covenant watch

At some convenient point, a visitor at the characters’ covenant arrives bearing a request. The visitor is a prospective grog seeking employment. His name is Falco and he seems somewhat antsy though eager to please. He describes his history as that of a grog for a wandering wizard who no longer needs his services. He says he is now looking for more stable work.

Shortly after concluding this arrangement lookouts spot an entourage approaching. The covenant watch should make Perception + Alertness rolls of 6+ or a Covenant Awareness roll of 3+ to notice the arrival of a small party in time to alert the magi. Otherwise the party arrives with no warning. Perception + Hermes Lore rolls (3+) spot a quaesitor, and (6+) spot three Tremere, two of which are hoplites (12+). Another Perception + Hermes Lore roll will garner names and reputations

Name	House	Reputation
Bathanare	Tremere	Hoplite 4, with the Order, Arch Magus 3, with the Order, Subtle 2, with the Order
Clavius	Quaesitor	Quaesitor 3, with the Order, Cries Wolf 2, with Quaesitores
Razach	Tremere	Hoplite 4, with the Order, Ruthless 4, with the Order
Vilarious	Tremere	Bathanare’s Apprentice 3, with House Tremere, Reliable 3, Transylvanian Tribunal

They have a turb of eight grogs with them. Most are armed and armored haphazardly with untanned, spotted cowhide, and other dirty, mismatched garb. They don’t look happy about it. Three of these grogs are armed with the equivalent of Quilted Hauberk (a mish-mash of draperies and a rug) and two with the equivalent of Heavy Leather Hauberk (those in cowhides). They have a rag-tag assortment of weapons, all inexpensive, chair legs, rugs, et cetera, seemingly whatever they could pilfer. The other two, however, stay close to the youngest of the Tremere, and are finely equipped, scales from their armor gleam in the light.

Falco suddenly appears ill and tries to look busy doing anything other than standing there when the group arrives. This grog doesn’t like his paternus, the quaesitor, and is looking for a better deal, any deal, to get away from him. The quaesitor will not be happy that the covenant has “stolen” his custos. He will be kept in check only by the surly hoplites. The Tremere will be cordial to all except Clavius. It should be obvious from this interaction that the hoplites do not “belong” to the quaesitor.

The quaesitor is a lazy guy, and takes out any setbacks on those around him. His grogs don’t like this treatment and are looking for a better future. The other grogs will also try to jump ship like fleas on a dead rat, especially if Falco got a job with the covenant. It won’t help that Falco will brag and talk up his “easy job” to his friends. However, to his new employers, he talks well about his friends, trying to get them jobs as well. See sidebar on page 3.

Once Clavius realizes that at least one of his grogs has defected, he will be angry with the covenant for “stealing” his grogs. He won’t be too angry, however. For a small fee, or favorable reference, he will

begrudgingly release the rest of his guards, whom he sees as next to useless. Use this as a tense interlude before the meeting of the council.

[[Begin Insert: What's really going on—Clavius' Groggs]]

These guys are from Northern Italy. They currently work for the quaesitor due to the ruling of a special tribunal there. Needless to say, no one is happy about the verdict. They have been with him for a little over a year: it took them two seasons to get to Cavernius, and another two for the special tribunal before that where they got assigned.

They don't like their new arrangement. They are trying to get away from Clavius for numerous reasons. In the past they were always told to not deal with quaesitores by their former covenant and this lays the foundation for all their interactions with him. Being quaesitor's grogs gets them treated badly by other grogs. They got some royally bad treatment before they left their old covenant and they also saw how those at Cavernius covenant didn't much care for them either. Two of their buddies got killed at Cavernius due to Clavius' lack of attention. Overall, they truly hate him.

The visit to the characters' covenant is the first chance for these guys to get away from Clavius. They tried to join up at Cavernius but they ran into some problems: The grogs there are weird and they not only afraid of them but also of becoming like them; There is a crazy magus up there; Two of their friends died up there; And most importantly a quaesitor is checking things out at that covenant, and they know better to jump out of the frying pan and into the fire.

They were trained to live as an old Roman contubernium of eight men. There are now six of them and they currently don't have a dedicated leader. They will hire on cheap wages if they can, accepting approximately 70% of normal. As part of a covenant's new grogs they definitely don't want to go back to Cavernius, but will tell anyone whatever they want to know. If forced to go, they will do so, but will be full of tall tales only loosely based on the truth in an attempt to get everyone to go home.

[[End Insert]]

[[Begin Insert: The Special Tribunal]]

In the Roman Tribunal, one year ago, some of Bathanare's covenant grogs stole Clavius' unguarded lab. The covenant was looking for supplies and these grogs heard about it. Clavius had no grogs at the time (they ran off—he's a jerk) and was setting up shop in town. So the grogs liberated the stuff they found. Clavius found out about it and had to find a way to get his things back. Desperate to get on with his researches into the Greater Alps, he could not wait until the next tribunal to lay a claim against the covenant for his items. Also, he felt he could not challenge anyone at the covenant to certámen because Razach and Bathanare live there, so he called in many favors and convened a special tribunal. Needless to say, his peers among the quaesitores weren't very friendly to him once they found out the true scope of the issue during the tribunal. After all was said and done, the special tribunal mandated, in addition to the return of his lab, the covenant pay eight grogs to Clavius so he would have someone to guard his stuff. The covenant gave him the self same eight grogs that started the whole mess. At first he didn't know that it was these grogs who caused the trouble. The grogs think he might know this now, which the grogs attribute to why he is hates them. Now that they have met up with friendly faces again, the grogs think they can go back home. Regretfully, Bathanare has let them know they simply can't do so—they are being punished for getting the covenant in trouble and it would look bad if she ever took them back from Clavius—damn these guys hate him now. They reason (for themselves, they tell no one this ) they cannot directly leave the quaesitor's service and go back home. If they did, it would look like their masters didn't pay him his rightful due. If over time, however, they come back home through happenstance, then so be it. But they figure they must wait at least seven years time to make things look right. Whether this reasoning is right or not is up to the storyguide.

[[End Insert]]

[[Begin Insert: Why are these magi here?]]

Clavius is from Transylvania, of no particular covenant. He was born in the Greater Alps and desperately wants to get back there. He is currently looking for ways to impress someone, anyone, from the Alps so he can get his foot in the door. He's looking for a way to make Alps-favorable decisions to make those that

live there happy with him. When he first came to Cavernius Covenant, he wasn't interested in investigating their problems—he was trying to find a way to show the Alps how great he is. He was going to do use the place for all he could—then he lost his apprentice. He investigated some more but didn't find anything new. He was sneaking out, hoping no one would remember him, then he met the hoplites. Then knew he was in trouble. At that point he had to act like he cared about their problems. Rather than look like he was running away from Cavernius, he told them he was going to investigate Hesperus.

Vilarious, seeing that the help requested of Coeris was not coming, set off to get his parents' help. Returning home, they planned on examining the effect upon Vinitania. Hopefully, she could be cured and, together, they could affect a wrathful vengeance upon their enemies at Hesperus.

Systematic and subtle, Bathanare is Vilarious' parents. She is relatively personable considering her status. She looks out for her filius and is worried about his staying at Cavernius since he could be so much better off at some other covenant. Thus when he asked her for help, she was more than willing to help him.

Razach simply loves to be in the middle of trouble, and Bathanare has a way of finding a lot of it. While not a simpleton, he derives great pleasure from showing his might and basking in the resultant respect and fear others must naturally feel for him. Besides, it's not often once gets to see a crazy magus of such stature as Vinitania.

Once they met with Clavius, whom the hoplites knew to be worthless from previous dealings, this situation became even more interesting. When Clavius made his appearance on the scene, the opportunity to use his title to legally case Hesperus couldn't be passed up. 'Besides,' she reasons, 'Vinitania will still be crazy a season or two from now.' In order to play with Clavius even more, she decided that Vilarious should not correct Clavius' assumption that Vilarious was merely Bathanare's apprentice. She's allowing Clavius to make whatever assumptions he wants in order to give him enough rope to hang himself. In this expedition, he's in charge, she reasons. To show himself as a compassionate guy in front of the assembled magi, he decides that Cavernius should not be left unattended "in the face of the enemy." To this end they cast about for someone to help them....

[[End Insert]]

[The Initial Meeting]

"We were simply gathering vis."  
—Bathanare

There are many reasons why the party could want to help this visiting group of magi. Most of them are dependent on your saga. Here are a few ideas:

- The characters are in a young covenant that needs friends.
- It's a quaesitor asking.
- The characters may owe a debt that they can negotiate with their visitors in exchange for helping them.
- They'll be helping an old covenant with established resources and there may be lots of opportunities to scout, barter, or steal resources.
- The characters have a Tremere, redcap, quaesitor, or hoplite at their covenant.
- The quaesitor has hoplites! One of which is an arch-magus!

Also, some may wonder why the quaesitor may travel so far out of his way to *their* covenant, which may well be on the other side of the Order. Here are a few ideas:

- The covenant has nothing to do with either of the two covenants in question and is therefore neutral in this case.
- The characters have a redcap, quaesitor, or hoplite at their covenant
- Clavius is trying to impress his fellows with his knowledge of the Order and may well choose an out of the way covenant just to show that.
- Clavius is trying to bore his party so they'll leave him alone so he chooses the most out of the way place he can think of.

The introduction will need some reworking if the covenant or characters there have bad reputations. Discredited lineage won't count as being worse than a bad reputation as Clavius is counting on the fear of his hoplites to keep those he asks in line. If a covenant has a bad reputation, Clavius will try to bully them into doing his bidding with the hoplites he has in tow, but the storyguide will know best how to coerce his players into doing things for the sake of an adventure....

Clavius will call for a meeting of the covenant's council or whatever appropriate decision making body for the covenant. If the characters are not in control of their covenant, they may well be roped into the rest of the adventure against their will. The hoplites will attend but will be relatively quiet while the quaesitor is presenting his scenario. He speaks as if to an apprentice. He assumes his status garners him a great deal of respect and he does not return the favor to his "lesser" brethren.

Briefly, he will explain, the covenant the characters are to "guard", Cavernius covenant, has suffered a strange magical anomaly and it is suspected that their long-time enemy, Hesperus covenant, has caused it. The quaesitor and his party do not want the rival covenant to come and finish off Cavernius covenant while they are traveling to investigate them. So, they need to characters to watch their flank.

Clavius starts: "Thank you so very much for your hospitality. Especially so, since we are seeking your help in an important matter, hmm. Before we get into the details, would at least one of you be willing to give a season or so to help us, hmm? I am investigating a situation and the covenant I just left needs a magical presence for its safety. These august magi are escorting me to another covenant but I am reluctant to leave the former unguarded."

Assuming the covenant agrees, they will be given more detail. He doesn't want to give up the whole situation to someone who isn't committed to helping out. This would look bad if they let someone know that another covenant is undefended and then something happens to that covenant. That's why they are here, after all.

"I'm sure you are aware that for the Order to exist there must be a trust among and between its covenants, a fraternal bond, much as that exists within the covenant. We are investigating an incident that involves a nearby covenant, which also needs your help. Currently, its magi are indisposed and we ask that you help them with their defenses for a short time. No, they are not expecting harassment, yet we would be remiss to have it guarded as it is. You can understand this, yes? This task should not take more than about a season of your time and will be compensated reciprocally, but also with increased bonds between your two covenants, in addition to the gratitude of us all here."

While the quaesitor wants the players to just go because he says so, the other magi will say if asked that they suspect that Hesperus covenant is killing covenfolk, grogs and apprentices of Cavernius covenant. They do not expect the characters to solve anything, just to sit and watch, just in case. Keep in mind that Cavernius covenant is a winter covenant and some of the magi there are... eccentric. The characters will be under orders from a quaesitor and are allowed to wander about freely, though they should not go where they are asked not to, out of both respect and personal safety.

If the characters refuse, Bathanare will grow disappointed and will speak for the first time "You realize that I cannot countenance inaction on your part especially if your neighboring covenant has admitted to you its weakness. If something were to occur there, I, if not a Tribunal, would hold you accountable. There would be investigations, and reputations would be besmirched. Those without strong ties to the area certainly would not fare well. You understand, I hope?" If the party absolutely refuses, the adventure is off. They lose a potential ally, and potential resources. They may be called to the impromptu tribunal session described at the end of this adventure if they really make someone mad. To further entice characters, the storyguide should use issues that the characters would want to show up for. And remember, if they do go to that tribunal they won't be under anyone's protection.

The quaesitor, acting as a proctor for the other covenant, will offer vis, study time, training, and materiel in exchange for their services. He will make it clear that he is doing this for the good of the Order, not for

anything he wants. He feels that the members of Cavernius covenant “should” want this so he’s doing it for their own good. The hoplites do not speak up unless spoken to, or Clavius starts to give away the whole covenant. If that occurs, they suggest something more equitable, and able to stand up in Tribunal in case of dispute, like time spent in a library. Clavius claims only one or two magi are necessary, though if more go, they will be welcome.

If asked privately, the hoplites will tell abbreviated versions of the truth, though still not the whole truth. They won’t divulge anything about who Vilarious is except that he is Bathanare’s filius. They will say what the problem is from their perspective (see “Later that night”, below) and that they are keeping an eye on this shady quaesitor. They won’t admit to why they were camped out below Cavernius covenant—they were hunting vis they say. If the covenant contains Tremere they will have already received messages to this effect prior to the arrival scene. The note indicates the hoplites want the Tremere character to get the rest of the covenant to “play along” so as not to pique Clavius’ anger. This note would have arrived via Nick, Vilarious’ familiar in the night. This scene is left to the enterprising storyteller to improvise.

Vilarious knows the future of his covenant is at stake if they cannot recruit or otherwise acquire new magi to their home. This can be a metaphor for what lies ahead for the characters’ covenant. The characters need to show loyalty to not only themselves but the Order as well. This whole adventure may be a tableau for describing their fate. How they act here may be a foretelling of their greatness or a harbinger of their doom.

[Later that night]

At some point, when Clavius is not around (perhaps Bathanare takes a tour with him of this “lovely young covenant”) Vilarious will speak with one or more of the volunteers. He informs them of the real nature of their journey. He also doesn’t want Clavius’ offer force his covenant to owe the characters’ covenant more than is necessary. He also feels for them in a sense. After all, he and his parens are deliberately allowing Clavius to put them in harm’s way. “Cavernius covenant has been under attack for some time. Recently, we were able to determine who is perpetrating many, if not all of these attacks. Unfortunately, the quaesitor that responded to the summons is, shall we say, less than honorable in his intent. Now we go to “investigate” this aggressor covenant. We are going along with him to make sure he actually does what he says he will. We need someone to stay at Cavernius for its own good. We don’t intend for you to become embroiled in this inter-covenant dispute. We merely need someone to watch out for anything untoward while it is vulnerable. Cavernius is an elder covenant with many... faults. To that extent, I would hope that you can see this for what it is. Go to Cavernius and watch for attacks. We don’t think you should get involved too much with solving anything, prevention is more important. For that, the covenant will pay you for your time. If you get too mixed up in Clavius’ schemes, I would not want to feel responsible for your predicament.”

If asked about the nature of the attacks he has the following information: “The problem is over the last two years the covenant has lost our apprentices and coven folk, and no one knows how. There are screams, blood and other grisly bits of evidence, but there is no real evidence as to what is happening to them. I’ve done some investigation, but we can’t find any proof that shows that they are dead, injured, or otherwise. I can say that Hesperus covenant is the most likely perpetrator of these crimes, given the history between the two covenants.”

If someone knows Vilarious, he relates that the quaesitor doesn’t know he is a member of Cavernius covenant. Clavius knows there is some delinquent magus who is never around (which he learned from the “helpful” villagers), but Vilarious and his parens is hiding that fact from him. She is representing Vilarious as an apprentice “here for more advanced training,” which is technically true since he is being lectured to all the time, and he would appreciate keeping that quiet.

If pressed on the matter or he feels the party will truly try to help solve the situation he will reveal the following: “Beyond the problem of missing apprentices and covenfolk, there has been a running feud with another covenant in an adjoining tribunal lasting centuries. Then there is the loss of a resident Bonisagus, Octavian, through twilight after a laboratory accident several years ago. In addition, a couple of years ago, the covenant Archon, Vinitania, has taken ill and restricts her activity to the covenant itself, allowing

Vilarious to take care of all outside covenant affairs, since Laertes, the other magus at the covenant, is doesn't handle pressure well."

Vilarious will not accompany them to his covenant as he must travel with Clavius and his hoplite compatriots to the Hesperus covenant. He will give the party instructions on how to get there and how to enter the covenant (see "The Gatehouse" on Chapter 4, page 3), including a golden ivory coin with an emblem of a griffon upon its face and key upon the obverse in appreciation of their help. It is used so the covenfolk will serve them (they still won't like it) and so they will have admittance to the covenant proper. It also is a token for their *Aegis of the Hearth*.

Do not allow the questioning of Vilarious to last all night. Right around the time the party wants a lot of details, Clavius and Bathanare arrive from their tour, the covenant can't be that big after all. At that point everyone goes to bed in preparation for their respective journeys.

What the party knows of Cavernius covenant  
Hermes Lore Roll

- 3+ It's an old well established covenant, mostly Tremere.
- 6+ It's located on the side of a mountain in the Alps.
- 9+ They lost a Bonisagus member several years ago. He went into Final Twilight. They have the reputation for a solid library in the Arts specializing in Aurum, Ignem, Mentem and Vim.
- 12+ There have been several instances at tribunal between them and Hesperus covenant
- 15+ Their leader (Archon) is Vinitania. She has not been seen much but is still a formidable power.

What the party knows about Hesperus Covenant  
Hermes Lore Roll

- 3+ They are a bunch of Jerbitons.
- 6+ They made a lot of trouble with Cavernius covenant.
- 9+ The leader has recently disappeared.
- 12+ They are specialists in various areas, with little to no overlap.
- 15+ They don't have an active leader at the moment. They are victims of years of Chalchis' years of rulership. They bicker among themselves. You wouldn't be surprised if one of his covenmates killed him.

[The Journey]

Prior to leaving, Bathanare gives a minor speech, thanking the party for helping them. At this show of gratitude, Clavius looks to the road, bored, waiting to leave.

The storyguide can insert any appropriate road encounters or adventures as necessary as your saga dictates.

[The Torrance farmstead]

"That's my mothers rug."  
— Farmer Torrance's son

Following an old cart path climbing ever further into rolling hills, just at sunset, a taller hilltop allows an impressive view to greet travelers from its vantage. A sea of rolling hills is seen thrusting higher and higher in the sky which eventually become the massive mountain range far beyond, alternately loved and feared by all those who must travel through them. Also there can be seen both a lone farmstead just ahead in one direction, and the flatlands far, far below in the other direction. The farmstead is nestled upon a hillside within lush fields, where shadows, which reach away from the setting sun, highlight farmers laboring hard to finish their chores before the day is done.

As the characters approach the mountains, a small farmstead is visible near nightfall. The farm consists of two longhouses, roughly ten paces by twenty-five paces, and a small granary, five by five paces, raised on stilts. Each house is partitioned into three sections. At one end, the lead house has stalls for cattle. Its opposite stores sheep and goats. The middle of the lead structure is a working area for a wheelwright, the

other structure contains a general work area. At the end of each is a common room with a raised center hearth. Barley and oats are stored in the granary, its floor raised on posts allow for ventilation and protect from vermin. Broken tables and chairs are in the process of being replaced and repaired in the work areas.

There are about 30 people living in the two farmhouses. There are several children, more girls than boys, and a very old man and woman who have been married for many decades. Her spinster sister lives with them. The rest are adult, able-bodied men and women of various ages

These two families are unincorporated free peasants. They owe service to the local baron. They didn't gain independence when the covenant gained its own, though they ally themselves with the coven folk's villagers on trips to the nearby town to trade.

If the players have brought any of Clavius' grogs, they are nervous and fidgety. The party arrives just after sunset and is allowed entrance and shelter for the night in one of the longhouses. The new grogs are recognized as they move things in for the evening. A confrontation ensues.

A small but vocal group of the local men challenges the new grogs, and it becomes evident that this is where Clavius' grogs acquired the preponderance of their unusual equipment. They complain, "Hey that cow attacked us and we defended ourselves. You're lucky we didn't hold you responsible for that unwarranted, ruthless, barbaric, deceitful, vicious assault by that cow." The characters might try to settle everyone down. If it appears that they are unable or unwilling, Luther steps up and takes control of the situation. He chastises both parties. He's not going to let anyone get hurt over such nonsense. The characters will probably have to pay for the damages their grogs have visited upon these farmers while in the Clavius' care. They may take this up with him at a later time.

[[Begin Insert: What actually happened]]

According to the farmers, and though they may exaggerate somewhat they have little reason to lie, they were visited by a group of seven men a few weeks ago. "One was a scholar, and not very nice. The rest were ruffians, who seemed all right at first. That night however, we were roused from their beds by our wives who heard strange noises from the visitors' portion of the long house. At first we thought we had allowed wizards into our homes. No. They were thieves. After a brief struggle, the men were ejected into the night where they killed one of our cows in spite on their way out."

[[End Insert]]

If the party does not include grogs acquired from the quaeitor, it will be obvious to all but the most reclusive magus that someone has torn up the place. Even simple Perception rolls will find that tables and chairs look familiar. This is where Clavius' grogs acquired their equipment. During the night meal, they will be regaled with a story about their last visitors.

[[Begin Insert: Luther, the Priest]]

He travels among four or five other villages and many isolated farmsteads. He knows about Cavernius covenant in general, but does not know of any problems or specifics. He can tell the party who to speak with at the village. As a traveling priest on the frontier he sees a lot of supernatural stuff and has seen many great "works of God." He views magic as a manifestation of God and doesn't see it as evil, but rather as a tool. What's done with it is evil, not the person, per se. He's "stuck" on this route in the mountains, despite his age, because of his unorthodox views. Someone in the church hierarchy must like him though, he could have been stoned or burned.

[[End Insert]]

After dinner, Luther speaks extemporaneously of humility to the gathering. He tries to engage the newcomers in conversation regarding this subject. He feels that "we are all God's children and even wizards are here for a purpose, you know. It's not the power they wield, but what they do with it." He will immediately recognize anyone with the Blatant Gift as a magus, though their use of "secular" Latin is a dead give away. Though he will take pains to conceal this from the farmers, he will not take long to recognize those with the regular Gift as magi as well. If they speak with him, his is personable and he is



pretty open about wizards — after all he serves the community at the base of an obvious covenant and many strange things occur there.

The party will learn of Laertes' situation from the priest and this may lead them to that site first upon their arrival at the village. "He cannot use my help. Perhaps you can do him a better service than I?" Luther has just come from the village and is on his rounds to the next village. He makes his circuit among the local villages about once a season or so.