

SAVAGE ROME

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The first thing I need to mention is that I have never claimed to be an historian. Most days, I'm lucky if I can keep the US presidents for the last couple of decades straight in my head, let alone the details of Julius Caesar's campaigns or all the members of his extended family. So, I'm going to say right now that I have most definitely and purposefully deviated from history and many details will be different from our own "official" records of the way things were. The fact that there will be minotaurs and satyrs running around Ancient Rome should be an obvious clue, but there will be subtler differences – I am simplifying the geography and the languages, for one thing. For another, certain events or inventions may have been shifted forwards or backwards in time a bit. The best thing to remember is that this is NOT supposed to be historical Earth, but rather an alternate reality in which a number of things that happened in our history also happened – and in which a number of things that we have no records of also came to pass. The long and the short of it is that I've taken a lot of concepts and inspirations from the first century CE (or AD if you swing that way) and fashioned a Mythic Rome campaign setting out of them. Like virtually all the games I run, it is a grand experiment – one I hope we all enjoy. So, let's grab our test tubes and alchemy kits and get to it!



THE WORLD

It is the year 790 AUC (*ab urbe condita*, after the founding of the city). The last century has seen dramatic change and the former Roman Republic has become an empire. This began with the rise of Julius Caesar to the position of Dictator, which was granted to him by the senate. However, there were many who saw this position, which he had been granted for life, as too close to that of the kings of old and feared it would mean the end of the Republic. He was assassinated by a group of people whom he had counted among his greatest friends and associates.

For a time, the administration of Rome was taken over by a triumvirate consisting of Marc Antony, Marcus Lepidus and Gaius Julius Octavius. These three ended up fighting amongst themselves until Octavius was the last remaining alive. He became the first true emperor of Rome and was renamed Caesar Augustus.

Augustus greatly reorganized the laws of the empire and its administration. He formed the Praetorian Guard to protect not only the emperor's person but also the sanctity of the position, giving them the power to name a new emperor if the need

should arise. He also expanded the borders of the empire, securing areas in Africa and Asia Minor as well as territory at the edge of Germania.

When Augustus passed on in 767 AUC, he was succeeded by his stepson Tiberius. The new emperor Tiberius Julius Caesar Augustus, as he was renamed, was very different from Augustus. In contrast to Augustus' proactive approach, Tiberius took a much more passive line, and for the most part simply worked on building internal resources and maintaining the structure Augustus had put in place. He also made a number of publicly questionable comments which indicated that he did not wish to be emperor and had the position thrust upon him unfairly. His relative inaction along with this attitude caused him to become very unpopular.

As the years passed, Tiberius seemed more and more withdrawn. In 779, he retired from the city of Rome altogether, still emperor in name but leaving Lucius Sejanus, the former prefect of the Praetorian Guard, in charge. This proved to be a mistake, as soon Sejanus began a series of trials to purge anyone who might be able to compromise his position. Fearing that Sejanus would soon move against him, Tiberius had him executed and then began a series of purges of his own to root out anyone who might have plotted against him. Members of the Julian family were hit particularly hard during this time and Tiberius made many enemies in the senate.

And so things have remained to this day. The trials and purges continue, and no prominent family can be sure they will be safe from Tiberius' paranoia. The only hope that some see on the horizon is the fact that, now being in his seventies and in ill health, he will pass on and either there will be a return to the Republic or a new and better emperor will rise and lift the burdens Tiberius has placed upon the citizenry. Either way, it is known that the Delphic oracle has fallen silent save for the same words repeated over and over whenever asked for a reading: "It is growing darker."

Perhaps time will tell.

AVAILABLE RACES

There are quite a few playable races out there. If you're planning on playing a race from outside the Empire you'll need to come up with a good explanation of what you're doing INSIDE it – by which I mean something that makes sense and is detailed enough that it's more than just an excuse to play something different – run it by me and I'll let you know. Generally, the closer to the Empire you are the easier this will likely be, so for example a character from Germania will probably take much less explanation to incorporate than someone from, say, the Han Empire.

INSIDE THE EMPIRE

The following races can be commonly found within the boundaries of the Empire and in Rome, itself. Some can also be found outside the empire as well, and are noted as such.

Birdfolk

Believed to be related to harpies, birdfolk are tall, winged humanoids with delicate features. Their wings are feathered and sprout forth from their shoulderblades. Feathers tend to cover those areas where humans have hair, though this varies from tribe to tribe and the face is typically the most human-looking part. The coloring of the feathers varies depending upon lineage. Birdfolk can be found anywhere sizable populations of birds exist. They typically live in mountain ayries, where they built societies that tend to mimic those of the local human populace. The warmer the climate, the less likely they are to migrate and the more pronounced this similarity becomes. Around the Mediterranean, for example, there are quite a few permanent structures they've built in high-up locations that somewhat resemble Greek and Roman houses and temples.

- **Agile:** Birdfolk are graceful creatures. They start with a d6 Agility instead of a d4.
- **Claustrophobic:** Birdfolk do not like closed spaces. They suffer a -1 to all Trait rolls while indoors if the sky is not visible.
- **Flight:** Birdfolk have the ability to fly at their basic pace with a Climb rate of half that number. They may also "run" while flying, giving them extra movement equal to the result of a running die roll.
- **Hollow Bones:** Birdfolk are lighter than humans, only weighing about 2/3 as much. While this makes flight possible, they are slightly more fragile than other races. They receive a -1 penalty to Toughness.
- **Talons:** Str+d6. Birdfolk have razor sharp talons on their feet, allowing them to grasp prey while airborne.

Boarfolk

As implied, boarfolk are humanoids who possess the features of boars. They are typically shorter than humans, stoutly built and have small tusks, snoutlike noses and pointed ears. They share many characteristics with orcs, but are generally smaller and hairier, with more pronounced boarlike features. Similar to the other animal-aspected races, they can be found anywhere that sizable populations of wild boars are located. This includes the majority of Northern and Central Europe, the Mediterranean region including northern parts of Africa and much of Asia. In Rome, many are slaves, and a few of their number have done well in the arena.

- **Berserk:** Boarfolk receive the Berserk Edge for free.
- **Slow Learner:** While some Boarfolk are considered wise, it's a rare to find one that's very smart. During character creation raising Smarts requires two points per step.
- **Tough:** Boarfolk start with a d6 in Vigor instead of a d4.

Centaur

Half-human, half-horse, centaurs have been looked upon as a savage race, largely due to a reputation garnered by one of their earliest tribes. In reality they can be very hot-tempered but not nearly as destructive as some of their forebears. Many still have a military bent, but some have become well-known bards and sages. Centaurs are believed to have been descended from the Greek king Ixion and Nephele (a simulacrum created by Jupiter to resemble his wife Juno) and are found most often in and around Greece. In Rome, many have become gladiators and a few have managed to rise in the ranks of the Legion, though few have as of yet risen above the Plebian social caste.

- **Big:** Size+2; +2 Toughness and 4x Load Limit, but 4x Food/Water requirements.
- **Fast:** Pace 8 and d8 Running Die (can increase to Pace 10 and d12 with Fleet Footed).
- **Hooves:** Does not count as Unarmed Defender if hooves are free.
- **Horizontal:** Centaurs fill a 1"x2" space which allows for more foes to attack them. Since (unlike horses) their eyes are primarily facing forward, foes may benefit from improved Gang Up bonuses against them. Each additional attacker grants a +2 bonus up to a maximum of +6 (for three additional foes).
- **Quadruped:** Suffers a -2 penalty to rolls where four legs would be inconvenient (like squeezing through a dwarf-sized tunnel or sneaking through a forest of dried leaves) and a -4 penalty where it would be a major handicap (climbing a sheer wall or tree).
- **Regional Enemy:** Because of their reputation, centaurs are treated with extreme caution and derision by Greeks. They suffer a -4 penalty to Charisma whenever dealing with non-centaur characters from Greece.
- **Strong:** +2 die types to Strength and can raise to d12+2 (d12+4)

Gnoll

These bestial humanoids can be found anywhere dogs, wolves or similar creatures populate, which means they can be seen just about anywhere. They have a reputation for being impatient or shortsighted, but this is usually only the case for those found in Europe. There are as many different kinds of gnolls as there are breeds of canines. The ones native to Italia usually resemble the wolves of the area. Gnolls from Gaul and Germania are considerably much more savage – one large tribe in particular that ranges from northern Germania to the northern tip of Scandinavia, calling itself the Get of Fenris, is more aggressive than most. Gnolls from Egypt, on the other hand, are considered much more civilized and cultured – they resemble jackals and often refer to themselves as the children of the Egyptian god Anubis.

- **Acute Senses:** Gnolls are known for their sharp hearing and sense of smell. They receive a +2 bonus to their Notice checks when using either of these two senses.
- **Bite:** Str+d6. Gnolls have very sharp teeth and strong jaws.
- **Rivalry:** Gnolls of different breeds often have different goals and ideals and do not always get along. Select a region not your own – you receive a -4 penalty to your Charisma when dealing with gnolls from that region and have had bad experiences with them in the past.

Human

The human race is the most predominate and populous in the world and can be found nearly everywhere. The oldest known human civilization within the empire is that of the Greeks, and there is evidence to suggest that the humans who first populated Europe may have come from the island of Crete, which is now ruled by the minotaurs. It is said that the human founder of Roman civilization was a Trojan named Aeneas, a descendant of the goddess Venus and survivor of the Trojan War. According to legend, the city of Rome itself was founded by his descendants Romulus and Remus. Julius Caesar is also believed to be descended from Aeneas, so the members of the Julian family are highly regarded as relatives of Venus.

- **Free Edge:** Humans begin play with a free Edge of their choice. They must meet the requirements of the Edge as normal.

Minotaur

Rulers of the island of Crete, minotaurs are proud warriors and sea merchants with a long and bloody history. The first minotaur, Asterion, was the stepson of king Minos, and is said to be the progenitor of the minotaur race. After Asterion was killed by Theseus, his children were kept bound in the labyrinth until Minos died while searching for the artificer Daedalus. After Minos' death, the minotaurs rose up and, over several generations of warfare and bloodshed, seized control of the whole of Crete. Rome eventually conquered the island, which was allowed to remain its own province with the understanding that the minotaurs who ruled the land would continue to provide Rome with slaves and other resources. These days minotaurs can be often be found as elite warriors or slave traders, and they usually are paid very well for their services.

- **Fleet-Footed:** Minotaurs have a pace of 8 and roll d10s instead of d6s when running.
- **Gore:** Minotaurs use this maneuver to gore their opponents with their horns. If they can charge at least 6" before attacking, they add +4 to their damage total.
- **Horns:** Str+d4. Obviously, minotaurs cannot wear helmets.
- **Hot-headed:** Minotaurs are known for their tempers and may fly into a rage when provoked. They receive a -2 in Tests of Wills in which an opponent is using the Taunt skill. They also receive the effects of the Vengeful (Minor) Hindrance.

- **Infamy:** Minotaurs are reviled as monstrous beasts and slavers and are not often welcome among any but their own kind. They receive -4 to rolls involving Charisma when dealing with most non-minotaurs.
- **Large:** Minotaurs stand over 7' tall and receive +2 to their Toughness.

Orc

Native to Italia and Hispania, orcs are perhaps the second most populous humanoid race in the Roman Empire. They are bred for battle and their villages follow a tribal structure. They are said to have been displaced by human settlers when they first arrived from Crete and were often in conflict with the human race until they were recognized as their own local authorities by Alexander the Great. From that point on, while there have been many conflicts from time to time there has not been the open warfare of years past. Still, many fear and oppose the orcs because of their supposed ancestry: they are direct descendants of the god Orcus (who, along with Dis, is an aspect of Pluto). A number of orcish communities are ruled by death cults who venerate Orcus, Dis or Pluto, though just as many are led by followers of Mars or Minerva. The Roman Empire considers them subjects like any other, though in practice they are viewed as second-class citizens at best – those orcs who have garnered the most support among the human population are gladiators and they are often favorites in the arena.

- **Infravision:** Orcs can see in the infrared spectrum, halving attack penalties (round down) for bad lighting.
- **Outsider:** Orcs aren't trusted by most other civilized races, and so subtract 2 from their Charisma amongst non-orcs.
- **Large:** Orcs are a little bigger than humans and add +1 to their toughness to represent this.

Satyr

Resembling hairy, horned humans from the waist up and goats from the waist down, satyrs are more common in Italia and Greece than anywhere else, but a good number of them can be found in other places throughout the empire. Believed to be related both to the Roman god Faunus and the Greek god Pan, satyrs have a tendency to be hedonistic, but some have been known to fight these tendencies when the moment requires it. In Rome, satyrs tend to be actors, musicians or poets but some with more martial inclinations have turned up in the arena from time to time.

- **Agile:** Satyrs are naturally agile and start with a d6 in Agility.
- **Debauchery:** Satyrs have a great deal of difficulty resisting temptation. Any time they're faced with alcohol, food, prostitutes or anything else they're particularly addicted to, they must make a Spirit roll to avoid indulging.
- **Hooves:** Str+d6.

Shapechanger

There are many stories of beings either blessed (or in some cases cursed) by the gods with the ability to change their shape. Likewise, Germanic tales often speak of doppelgangers, creatures who assume the forms of those around them to survive, many killing and replacing members of society. As such, shapechangers lead a very solitary existence and are usually persecuted when they are found. Those who are known to exist in Rome usually assume human form for most of the time so that they will not be discovered. Their natural form is rarely seen, but is believed to be grey, humanoid and largely featureless. Many are hired out by Rome's crime families as thieves and assassins, though it is not unheard of for them to use their skills to try to manipulate the proceedings of the senate from time to time.

- **Chameleon:** Shapechangers have extremely malleable features, and can change their appearance at will. They must remain approximately the same size, but can easily alter their faces, hair and skin color. Mimicking a specific individual does not grant that person's abilities. Furthermore, anyone familiar with the person mimicked may make a Notice roll at -2 to see through the disguise, though the shapechanger can increase this penalty to -4 with a successful Persuasion roll.
- **Downtrodden:** Shapechangers are used to doing whatever is necessary to survive. As a result they automatically start with a d6 in one of the following Skills: Notice, Persuasion, Streetwise or Survival (player's choice).
- **Outsider:** Any shapechanger who is discovered to be one receives a -2 to Charisma among non-shapeshifters who are aware of the character's true nature.

OUTSIDE THE EMPIRE

Catfolk

Resembling humanoid cats, catfolk can be found anywhere members of the larger species of cats live. Therefore, they're most often seen in parts of Africa and Asia. They tend to lead a nomadic existence, and their tribe is typically denoted by their coloration (which is usually related to what kind of large cat they resemble – lion, tiger or leopard). In Egypt they are often revered as the children of the goddess Bast and many are known to have become priests. Those few ever seen in Rome are usually there to sell goods, but some have been known to work in the temples.

- **Agile:** Catfolk have the feline grace of their ancestors. They start with a d6 Agility attribute instead of a d4.
- **Bloodthirsty:** Catfolk can be cruel to their foes, often toying with them for simple amusement. They rarely take prisoners and feel little compunction about punishing captured foes. This causes a -4 Charisma penalty among more pragmatic types (who usually prefer to take prisoners unharmed to sell into slavery like the rest of the "civilized" world).
- **Claws:** Catfolk have retractable claws that do Str+d6 damage.
- **Low Light Vision:** The eyes of a catfolk amplify light. They can see in the dark and ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

Djinn

The term “djinn” can refer to a number of different creatures and spirits found in Persia and Arabia, but the most common type of djinn seen venturing anywhere near the Empire is of the kind that is closest to humanity. Powerful *efreet*, *marids* and other spiritual beings have been mating with humans for some time. While those more powerful beings do indeed still exist, their descendants are far more numerous. The djinn seen most often resemble humans but with a skin tone that can be blue, red, green or any number of other colors depending on the djinn’s lineage and leanings towards any one particular natural element. That said, there are many djinn who have the same skin tones as their human ancestors. They generally have pointed ears and their eyes usually are one solid color. It is often the fashion among them to shave their heads or have numerous tattoos, though there are plenty of exceptions to this as well. Those few ever seen in Rome are regarded with some suspicion but are also sought for their wisdom and abilities.

- **Binding:** Like their ancestors, djinn are magical creatures and can be bound by the appropriate rituals. Furthermore, anyone who learns a djinn’s true name can invoke it to bind them to a physical object (usually a bottle, ring, necklace or other trinket). In such a case, the djinn is bound to the object and can be trapped inside it at the will of the item’s possessor until a contract of some kind (usually verbal) is made that arranges the djinn’s release. Most djinn go by pseudonyms for this reason.

- **Magical Heritage:** Being descended from more powerful beings, all djinn start with the Arcane Background (Demigod) for free. Unlike most regular demigods, djinn start with 30 power points instead of the usual 20.

Drow

Drow, or *trau*, as they are known in the Germanic tongue, are found most often in Germania and Scandinavia and are usually at war with dwarven and elven civilizations. In Germanic legends they are also known as Dark Elves, and are often mistrusted. The Roman Empire will occasionally do business with them because they will usually be willing to do things that their surface brethren will not. They are known to have a very pragmatic cultural outlook, which has drawn praise from more than one senator in the past. For this reason they are sometimes employed by the empire as spies.

- **Agile:** Like their surface brethren, drow are very agile. They start with a d6 in Agility instead of a d4.

- **Eyes of the Dark Elf:** Drow can see in the dark and are not penalized for Dark or Dim Lighting conditions. However, bright light can cause them discomfort. They are at -2 to shoot or Notice anything more than 5” distant when in direct sunlight or in the presence of particularly bright light sources.

Dwarf

Dwarves hail from Germania and Scandinavia and are found most often in subterranean cities in mountainous regions close enough to trade with the tribes on

the surface. There are families of Dwarves who live in Rome mostly for purposes of trade or employment, though these are more often the exception than the rule. A number of them are part of Rome's legions and it is said more than one dwarf clan has connections to Rome's crime families. They can be found as bodyguards, smiths and merchants.

- **Low Light Vision:** Dwarven eyes are accustomed to the dark of the underworld. They ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.
- **Slow:** Dwarves have a Pace of 5".
- **Tough:** Dwarves are stout and tough. They start with a d6 Vigor instead of a d4.

Elf

Most elves (or *aelves*) come from the forests of Germania (and Gaul to a lesser extent), where they struggle daily to protect their lands from invaders from all cardinal directions (mostly Germanic and Celtic tribes) and from below (usually Drow). In Germanic legends they are known as the Light Elves, and are highly revered by those who put stock in such tales. Those who interact with Rome typically do so for protection in exchange for their aid in quelling uprisings in the outer reaches of the empire. They can be found acting as guides or advisors to Rome's legions.

- **Agile:** Elves are graceful and agile. They start with a d6 in Agility instead of a d4.
- **All Thumbs:** Elves have an inbred dislike of mechanical objects, and thus have the All Thumbs Hindrance. They shun most mechanical items and designs.
- **Low Light Vision:** The character's eyes amplify light like a cat's, allowing him to see in the dark. He ignores attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting.

Firbolg

The firbolg are large, savage, hairy beings with antler-like horns on their heads. These creatures are rarely seen in the empire, as most keep to their homelands of Britannia and Hibernia where it is said they lead a tribal lifestyle. It is also said that they have been long oppressed by the sidhe, but it is rumored that some serve the sidhe's designs. Many have formed their own factions to wage war against all who oppose them. Those very few who are found in Rome are most often slaves or bodyguards, and can be seen as gladiators from time to time.

- **Born Warriors:** Having been bred for combat for centuries, firbolg understand it on a very basic level and adapt to new weapons quickly. They start with a d6 in one of the following Skills (player's choice): Fighting, Shooting or Throwing.
- **Large:** Firbolg are around 7' tall and receive +1 to their Toughness.
- **Monstrous:** Firbolg have a frightening, savage appearance and manner about them, giving them a -2 penalty to their Charisma, but gives a +1 bonus to uses of Intimidation.

Gnome

Originating from the mountains of Scandinavia, gnomes are not often seen in Rome but are sought after by the rich and powerful for their crafting skills and insights on magic. Gnomes do not often venture out of their mountain homes, but some who do travel south to empire are venerated as seers, entertainers and keepers of lore.

- **Clever:** Gnomes are renowned for their intellect and start with a d6 in Smarts instead of a d4.
- **Expertise:** Most gnomes value knowledge and are experts on one subject or another. They start with a d6 in a Smarts-based skill of the player's choice.
- **Infravision:** Gnomes can see in the infrared spectrum, halving attack penalties (round down) for bad lighting.
- **Short:** Gnomes are around 4' in height. Their small size subtracts 1 from their Toughness. They have a Size of -1, and cannot take the Small Hindrance.

Goblin

Goblins lead a tribal, nomadic existence and can be found in Gaul, Britannia and Hibernia. They are known to have a decidedly mercenary disposition and have been said to play both sides in many conflicts – particularly conflicts between the sidhe and those who would oppose them. While decidedly primitive, goblins possess a cunning ingenuity that must never be discounted, and those few that are seen in Rome are just as often mystics and architects as they are hired warriors and slaves. Those goblins who become siege engineers can be particularly dangerous.

- **Alert:** Goblins are very attentive and receive a +2 to Notice checks.
- **Goblin Enthusiasm:** Goblins have a tendency to take too keen an interest in their surroundings. A goblin will quickly develop a fixation on anything that seems new and interesting and will not stop obsessing over it until the next new and interesting thing comes along. This can cause a -1 to their Charisma when they are at the height of their enthusiasm.
- **Infravision:** Goblins halve penalties for dark lighting against living targets (round down).
- **Short:** Goblins stand 3-4' tall and receive a -1 to their Toughness.

Hobgoblin

A militaristic, mercenary folk not unlike the Spartans in their demeanor, hobgoblin settlements are most often found in Gaul and Britannia. Thought to at one time have been the lieutenants in the sidhe's many wars, it is said that they were the first to break away and fight back against them, looking to seize Hibernia for themselves. To this date, they have been unsuccessful, but many goblins and other creatures flock to their banner day by day, so it may one day be possible. Rome's longstanding truce with the Hibernia obligates the Empire to make sure that those hobgoblin settlements within its borders are kept in check. Those Romans who employ hobgoblins or keep them as slaves must usually keep them on a very short leash.

- **Ambitious:** Hobgoblins are plagued (or gifted, as they see it) with an unquenchable desire for conquest. This gives them the effect of the Arrogant Hindrance (which they cannot take as it would be redundant) – seeking complete domination and humiliation of their opponents and

always seeking out the leader in combat.

- **Infra-vision:** Hobgoblins halve penalties for dark lighting against living targets (round down).
- **Intimidating:** Over centuries hobgoblins have become skilled at making their opponents back down or flee in terror. They start with a free d6 in Intimidation.
- **Tough:** Hobgoblins start with a d6 in Vigor instead of a d4.

Lizardfolk

Generally lizardfolk can be found in warmer climates, mostly parts of Africa and southern Asia. They are humanoid with reptilian features and scales that vary in color from a deep green to a light yellow. Some lizardfolk civilizations are rumored to stem back to a time before the existence of humans. Some scholars seek to tie their origins to those of the world's few dragons, but the facts are sketchy at best – though, granted, certain clutches of lizardfolk have been known to venture forth and form cults dedicated to legendary dragons in different regions, such as the dragon defeated by Cadmus, the founder of Thebes, the Germanic dragon Fafnir or the ancient Arab dragon-god Tiamat. It is said they once had cities that rivaled Rome itself, but any evidence of such places has been lost in antiquity – or at least has been kept carefully from the eyes of other races. These days lizardfolk settlements tend to be no larger than villages. A few lizardfolk can be found in Rome as traders or gladiators.

- **Dehydration:** Lizardmen need moisture to survive. They must immerse themselves in water at least one hour out of every 24 or their scales begin to crack and blister. They receive a level of Fatigue each day afterward until they become Incapacitated. The day after that, they perish. Incapacitation in this fashion can be prevented by drinking liquids, but the Fatigue levels cannot be removed until there is total immersion.
- **Natural Weapons:** The tails, claws, and teeth of lizardfolk allow them to tail slap, claw, or bite in combat for Str+d4 damage.
- **Natural Swimmers:** Saurian tails make powerful swimmers, giving them +2 on their Swimming rolls and increasing their swimming Pace to their Swimming skill.
- **Saurian Senses:** Lizardfolks' tongues can "taste" the air, giving them +2 to Notice rolls. They are always considered active guards for Stealth checks.
- **Warm Natured:** Lizardfolk are not comfortable in cold environments. They suffer a -4 penalty to resist cold environmental effects.

Nibelung

Dark dwarves, or nibelungen, like their dwarf cousins, can be found most often in Germania and Scandinavia. Unlike regular dwarves, however, nibelungen live far beneath the surface and do not usually venture up into the mountains above. They are slightly smaller than dwarves and are generally darker skinned. Their subterranean cities are said to be both wondrous and terrifying in scope. They have a long-standing history of violent warfare with the dwarves and the drow, most of which have been over space and resources. Nibelungen are hardly ever seen on the surface, let alone in Rome. Those few who make the trip are most often merchants whose wares clearly demonstrate that the nibelungen have greater access to rare metals and precious gems than anyone else.

- **Eyes of the Nibelung:** Nibelung can see in the dark and ignore attack penalties for Dim and Dark lighting. But bright light causes them extreme difficulty. They are almost completely blind in direct sunlight or near very bright light sources, suffering a -6 to all physical tasks that require vision and -2 to all such social tasks. If the light is not directly in a nibelung's eyes, wearing a heavy, hooded garment eliminates the social penalty and reduces the physical penalty to -3 for any such tasks requiring sight within 5". Beyond that distance, however, the blindness remains in full effect.
- **Slow:** Nibelungen have a Pace of 5".
- **Tough:** Like dwarves, Nibelungen are stout and tough. They start with a d6 Vigor instead of a d4.
- **Wealth of the Nibelung:** Nibelungen have much greater access to mineral wealth than any other race. They receive the Rich Background Edge for free.

Pygmy

Pygmies are a small folk believed to come from India. They are a nomadic people, rarely settling in one place for any extended period of time. Many make their living traveling in bands of entertainers or as traders bringing goods from Egypt, Persia, India and Arabia and from as far east as the Han Empire. Many are also despised and shunned as little more than pickpockets and thieves who care nothing for those outside their own society. This is not necessarily always or even often the case but most do not stay around long enough for such insults to matter. Pygmies are not very fond of large birds, cranes in particular, and have been known to engage in conflict with them.

- **Fortunate:** Pygmies draw one additional benny per game session. This may be combined with the Luck and Great Luck Edges.
- **Short:** Pygmies average only about 3' tall. Their small size subtracts 1 from their Toughness. Pygmies have a Size of -1, and cannot take the Small Hindrance.
- **Spirited:** Pygmies are generally optimistic beings. They start with a d6 Spirit instead of a d4.

Ratfolk

The much maligned rat people can sometimes be found in areas that there are large populations of rats, but despite this they are relatively rare inside the Empire. In Rome they're usually looked down upon, an attitude that tends to be shared in most parts of Europe. In Asia, they tend to be shown greater respect, and as a result of this the greatest concentration of Ratfolk are located in the Han Empire. Ratfolk are short, furry humanoids with ratlike features. Those few that can be found in Rome will generally take any job available and several have ties to the criminal underworld. A few others have been known to pursue scholarly interests.

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Direction Sense:** Rat men often must live in sewers or slums. Maneuvering around these mazes has given them a good sense of direction. Rat men never get lost, even in nonnative locales.
- **Immunity:** Rat men are immune to poison and disease.
- **Outsider:** Ratfolk aren't trusted by many outside of Asia, and so subtract 2 from their Charisma amongst non-ratfolk encountered anywhere else.

- **Poor:** Ratfolk have a very difficult time generating income and receive the effects of the Poverty Hindrance.
- **Survivor:** One thing Ratfolk have learned very well as a people is how to survive. They start with a free d6 in the player's choice of either the Stealth or Survival Skill.

Sidhe

Sidhe are elf-like in appearance, but are much more deeply connected in ancestry to both the Celtic gods and the faerie folk. The primary domain of the sidhe is the island of Hibernia (just west of Britannia), where it is said some are worshipped as demigods by those who admire their terrible beauty. Their legions of fey creatures, goblins and humans who follow them have turned back all attempts to conquer them throughout history, so an uneasy peace with Rome remains. Those who come to Rome are usually travelers or seekers of knowledge.

- **Fey Allure:** Sidhe all have an eldritch attraction to them that many cannot resist. They receive a +2 to their Charisma.
- **Iron Aversion:** Sidhe, like other fey creatures, are vulnerable to cold iron. When touched by cold iron, sidhe suffer a -4 penalty to all Trait rolls and their Pace is halved. This effect continues for 2d6 rounds afterward.
- **Strong Will:** Sidhe can be truly mesmerizing and are not easily fazed themselves. They receive a +2 bonus on Intimidation and Taunt rolls and rolls to resist Tests of Will.

SKILLS

We'll be using the regular skills from Savage Worlds with the exception of Guts (for which we'll just use Spirit rolls if it comes up instead) and Piloting – sorry, I have no plans for Roman flying machines right now.

When you're choosing Skills at character creation, remember that if you're planning to take an Arcane Background, you'll need to leave room for any Skills you'll need for it (see the Arcane Backgrounds section for details).

Among the Knowledge Skills available are Knowledge (Astrology) and Knowledge (Linguistics).

EDGES & HINDRANCES

New Hindrance:

Slave (Major)

Perhaps you were born a slave or maybe you were tried for a crime or owed a debt you couldn't pay and ended up being sold into slavery. Whatever it was that happened, you are now at the lowest possible rung in Roman society and are viewed as property. This means that a good deal of your time will be taken up doing tasks for your master

and anything else you choose to do can only be done in your free time, which will be at his or her behest. Your character's owner will be an NPC whose nature will be determined at character creation. For practical purposes, you'll still be able to participate in the game as much as the other players, but your status will always be an inconvenience to you (and by extension to the rest of the PCs). You may not take the Noble, Rich or Filthy Rich Background Edges.

Adjusted Edge:

Noble

This Edge functions just as it did before, but with an important addition: it helps to determine your social class (see the Society section for details).



Disallowed Edges & Hindrances:

The Hindrance Doubting Thomas (Minor) is not allowed in this setting.

The following Edges may not be taken – Rock and Roll!, Gadgeteer, Mentalist and Mr. Fix It.

GEAR

There are quite a few different types of coins, but I'll be bringing it down to five types just to keep things simple. At this time, the basic unit of currency is the sesterce (which I'll be mangling to pronounce *suh-STAH-shee*), a partially silver coin which is roughly equivalent to \$1. Above that is the dinar (purer silver), and at the top is the aureus (gold). Below the sesterce are the dupondius (copper) and the semis (bronze). Unless you take Edges or Hindrances that change this, you'll start the game with 500 sesterce in any denomination you prefer. The table below shows the conversion rate for different coins.

| COIN | Image | Aurei | Dinari | Sesterce | Dupondi | Semi |
|--------|---|-------|--------|----------|---------|------|
| Aureus |  | 1 | 25 | 100 | 200 | 800 |
| Dinar |  | 1/25 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 32 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|-------|------|-----|-----|---|
| Sesterce |  | 1/100 | 1/4 | 1 | 2 | 8 |
| Dupondius |  | 1/200 | 1/8 | 1/2 | 1 | 4 |
| Semis |  | 1/800 | 1/32 | 1/8 | 1/4 | 1 |

ARMOR

| Type | Latin Name | Armor | Weight | Cost | Notes |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------|--------|------|---|
| Personal | | | | | |
| Boiled Leather | Lorica Scortea | +1 | 15 | 100 | Covers torso |
| Ringed Leather | Lorica Scortea | +1 | 24 | 400 | Covers torso |
| Chainmail | Lorica Hamata | +2 | 30 | 1000 | Covers torso |
| Scalemail | Lorica Squamata | +2 | 35 | 1500 | Covers torso |
| Banded Steel | Lorica Segmentata | +3 | 42 | 2000 | Legionary Armor; covers torso |
| Platemail | Lorica Metallum | +3 | 65 | 5000 | Covers torso |
| Pot Helm | Galea Scaphium | +3 | 4 | 75 | 50% vs head shot |
| Steel Helmet | Galea Chalybs | +3 | 6 | 100 | 75% vs head shot |
| Enclosed Helmet | Galea Coerceo | +3 | 8 | 200 | Covers head; -2 to Notice checks |
| Masked Helmet | Galea Os | +3 | 7 | 300 | Covers head; ornate design; -1 to Notice Checks |
| Shields* | | | | | |
| Small | Parma | -- | 3 | 40 | +1 Parry |
| Medium | Metallum Scutulum | -- | 5 | 60 | +1 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit |
| Large | Metallum Clipeus | -- | 10 | 80 | +2 Parry, +2 Armor to ranged shots that hit |

*Shields protect only against attacks from the front and left (assuming a right-handed character).

HAND WEAPONS

| <i>Type</i> | <i>Latin Name</i> | <i>Damage</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|---|
| Blades | | | | | |
| Knife | Culter | Str+d4 | 1/2 | 10 | |
| Dagger | Sica | Str+d4+1 | 1/2 | 15 | |
| Scimitar | Scimitar | Str+d8+1 | 4 | 250 | |
| Short Sword | Gladius | Str+d6 | 3 | 175 | |
| Long Sword | Spatha | Str+d8 | 6 | 200 | |
| Broadsword | Spatha Magna | Str+d10 | 8 | 500 | Parry -1, 2 Hands |
| Flail | Flagellum | Str+d6 | 4 | 90 | Ignores Shield Parry and Cover bonus |
| Axes & Bludgeoning | | | | | |
| Axe | Securis | Str+d6 | 7 | 80 | |
| Great Axe | Bipennis Magna | Str+d10 | 15 | 100 | AP 1, Parry -1, 2 hands |
| Brass Knuckles | Cestus | Str+d4 | 2 | 50 | A PC wearing a Cestus is considered an Unarmed Attacker. |
| Club | Fustis | Str+d4 | 4 | -- | |
| Hammer | Malleus | Str+d6 | 10 | 10 | AP 1 vs. rigid armor (plate mail) |
| Great Hammer | Malleus Magnus | Str+d8 | 16 | 60 | AP 2 vs. rigid armor, Parry -1, 2 hands |
| Long Hammer | Malleus Procerus | Str+d6 | 14 | 30 | Reach 1; AP 1 vs. rigid armor, 2 hands |
| Pole Arms | | | | | |
| Javelin | Pilum | Str+d4 | 1/4 | 45 | see notes |
| Spear | Hasta | Str+d6 | 2 | 50 | Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands |
| Staff | Clava | Str+d4 | 5 | -- | Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands |
| Spiked Staff | Clava Cupis | Str+d4+1 | 5 1/2 | 15 | Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands |
| Shod Staff | Metallum Clava | Str+d6 | 6 | 35 | Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands |
| Trident | Tridens | Str+d6 | 3 | 75 | Parry +1, Reach 1, 2 hands, -1 to opponent's Disarm check |
| Other | | | | | |
| Whip | Flagrum | Str+d4 | 3 | 20 | Parry -1; Reach +2; see notes |
| Lasso | -- | -- | 3 | 10 | Parry -1; Reach +2; see notes |

RANGED WEAPONS

| <i>Type</i> | <i>Latin Name</i> | <i>Range</i> | <i>Damage</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Min Str.</i> | <i>Notes</i> |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Axe, Throwing | Securis | 3/6/12 | Str+d6 | 7 | 80 | -- | |
| Short Bow | Arcus | 12/24/48 | 2d6 | 1 | 30 | d6 | |
| Great Bow | Arcus Magna | 15/30/60 | 2d6 | 2 | 60 | d8 | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|--------|--------|-----|----|----|-----------|
| Javelin | Pilum | 4/8/16 | Str+d4 | 1/4 | 45 | d4 | see notes |
| Sling | Funda | 4/8/16 | Str+d4 | 1/2 | 5 | -- | |
| Knife | Culter | 3/6/12 | Str+d4 | 1/2 | 10 | -- | |
| Spear | Hasta | 3/6/12 | Str+d6 | 2 | 50 | d6 | |
| Net | Retarii | 3/6/12 | -- | 2 | 60 | -- | see notes |
| Bolas | -- | 4/8/16 | Str+1 | 1/2 | 15 | -- | see notes |

AMMUNITION

| <i>Ammo</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Price</i> |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Arrows* | 20 | 1/5 | 2 |
| Sling Stones** | 20 | 1/10 | 1 |

*Outdoors, arrows are recovered on a d6 roll of 4-6 (50% chance). Underground or indoors, the chance is reduced to a roll of 5-6 on 1d6 to reflect the increased chance of breakage.

**Stones can also be found for free with a Notice roll and 1d10 minutes searching, depending on terrain.

NOTES

Bolas / Lasso - These weapons can be used to perform an Agility Trick using the wielder's Fighting (for lassos) or Throwing (for bolas) skill. Success means the opponent suffers -2 Parry until their next action. With a raise the opponent falls prone, suffers -2 Parry, and is Shaken.

Flagrum (Whip) - If the wielder scores a raise on the attack roll, the attack does not inflict an additional d6 damage. Instead, the victim suffers a -2 to Parry until their next action.

Pilum (Javelin) - The pilum is a throwing spear with a broad point and long, thin metal neck. It's designed to lodge in an enemy's shield and bend at the neck, forcing your opponent to either have to compensate for the extra weight or cast the shield aside. When using one, a hit on a called shot to an enemy's shield (-2) causes the enemy to make a disarm check (Str vs damage - the enemy receives none of the damage, but the roll is still made to determine the enemy's target number) to avoid dropping the shield. If the check succeeds, the enemy must make a standard Strength check each round at the start of his/her turn to continue to hold onto it.

Retarii (Net) - The net can be used to entangle opponents. When thrown, the net uses a Small Burst Template. With a successful hit, any targets in that area must make an Agility roll versus the attacker's Throwing result. If successful, the target gets out of the way; otherwise they become entangled in the net, and are at -2 to Pace and skills linked to Strength and Agility until freed. Multiple targets that are entangled cannot move unless they do so at the same time. The victim must make a Strength or

Agility roll at -2 to get free. A raise allows the opponent to break free and act this turn.

COMMON ITEMS

Clothes

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Item</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> |
|---|---------------|-------------|---|---------------|-------------|
| Belt | 1/5 | 20 | Shirt | 1/3 | 15 |
| Boots, leather | 4/5 | 35 | Stola | 1/2 | 200 |
| Caliga (thick sandals), Legionary | 1 | 40 | Toga | 1 | 15 |
| Coat, heavy | 2 | 250 | Togati (short, strapped boot), Senatorial, Black & Silver | 2/3 | 100 |
| Cucullus (woolen hooded cloak) | 1 | 5 | Togati, Equestrian, Red | 2/3 | 75 |
| Dress, gown | 2 ½ | 300 | Trousers | 2/5 | 10 |
| Dress, work | 2 | 35 | Tunic, Equestrian | 1 | 150 |
| Gallium (Overcloak) | ½ | 35 | Tunic, Lower Classes | 1/2 | 20 |
| Hat, brimmed | 1/3 | 30 | Tunic, Senatorial | 1 | 300 |
| Palla (Shawl) | 1/5 | 10 | Vest | 0 | 10 |
| Paludamenturn (red gallium worn over armor) | 4/5 | 60 | Wooden Clogs (usually for slaves) | 1 | 1 |
| Sandals | 1/10 | 30 | | | |

General Items

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Item</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Backpack | 4 | 30 | Rope, 50 ft | 8 | 1 |
| Blacksmith's Kit | 20 | 350 | Rucksack | 1 | 10 |
| Canvas, 1 bolt | 1 | 20 | Satchel, leather | 1 | 1 |
| Fish Oil, Flask | 1 | 1 | Scroll Case | 1/2 | 10 |
| Flask | 4/5 | 40 | Silk, 1 bolt | 1 | 7000 |
| Hook | ½ | 15 | String (per ft) | - | 1 |
| Lantern (fish oil) | 2 | 5 | Stylus | 1/5 | 1 |
| Latrunculi (Chess) Board, small | ½ | 2 | Tent, large | 6 | 300 |
| Locksmith's Tools | 2 | 150 | Tent, personal | 3 | 130 |
| Medical Kit | 2 | 450 | Tinderbox | 1/3 | 20 |
| Mirror | 1/5 | 25 | Torch | 1 | 2 |
| Papyrus (per sheet) | - | 75 | Vial of Ink (octopus) | 2/5 | 50 |
| Parchment (1 roll/3 sheets) | - | 10 | Waterskin | 3/5 | 6 |
| Pouch, large | 4/5 | 7 | Writing Tablet (wax) | 2 | 45 |

| | | | |
|--------------|------|---|--|
| Pouch, small | 1/5 | 3 | Pets: Bird 1-1000, Cat 5, Dog 5, Monkey 50 |
| Purse/Wallet | 1/10 | 8 | |

Food & Drink

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Item</i> | <i>Weight</i> | <i>Cost</i> |
|------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Ale, pint | 1 | 6 | Meal, rich | 1 | 20 |
| Beer, pint | 1 | 3 | Milk, Cow (pint) | 1 | 4 |
| Brandy, quart | 2 | 40 | Milk, Goat (pint) | 1 | 3 |
| Bread, loaf | 1/2 | 5 | Olive Oil, pint | 1 | 60 |
| Candy, 20 pieces | 1 | 60 | Rations, 1 wk | 3 | 75 |
| Honey Mead, pint | 1 | 3 | Whiskey, pint | 1 | 75 |
| Meal, average | 1/2 | 7 | Wine, pint | 1 | 60 |
| Meal, poor | 1/10 | 3 | Wine, watered-down (pint) | 1 | 20 |

Services

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Item</i> | <i>Cost</i> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Artist (sculptor/painter, per day) | 120 | Entertainer (per day) | 15 |
| Astrological Chart | 30 | Haircut | 2 |
| Augury | 100 | Laborer (per day) | 20 |
| Bath (per person) | 2 | Lawyer (per day) | 125 |
| Blacksmith (per day) | 75 | Shipwright (per day) | 25 |
| Blessing | 50 | Scribe (per 100 lines) | 15 |
| Bodyguard (per day) | 30 | Slave, female | 12,000 |
| Carpenter (per day) | 50 | Slave, male | 20,000 |
| Doctor (per hour) | 20 | Weaver (per day) | 130 |

Transportation

| <i>Item</i> | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Item</i> | <i>Cost</i> |
|---------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Driver (per day) | 20 | Horse, War | 4000 |
| Boat, large (merchant vessel) | 90,000 | Litter | 950 |
| Boat, rowing (4-person) | 450 | Mule | 75 |
| Boat, small (8-person) | 9000 | Racing Chariot | 3500 |
| Cart | 1200 | Radae (4-person carriage) | 500 |
| Cisii (light, 1-person chariot) | 1500 | Reins | 35 |
| Donkey | 50 | Saddle | 300 |
| Horse, Draft | 500 | Saddle Bags | 15 |
| Horse, Racing | 50,000 | Sailor (per day) | 25 |
| Horse, Riding | 2000 | Wagon | 75 |

GEOGRAPHY & LANGUAGE

In this setting, characters can know a number of languages equal to half their Smarts die type, which means your character will be able to fluently write and speak at least two languages (unless you take the Illiterate Hindrance, in which case you can only speak them). The most common tongue in this campaign will be Latin, so I would recommend that you take it as one of your languages. If you'd like to be able to understand languages beyond those allowed by your Smarts die, you can take the Skill Knowledge (Linguistics) which will give you a chance at deciphering any languages your character doesn't speak fluently.

Following are the regions I'm using in the game. True, it's a gross simplification, but does not necessarily mean that certain provinces no longer exist, just that they are considered part of larger areas. Islands are considered part of whichever region they're closest to. When you create your character, select the region that includes the character's place of birth. Each region also has a language associated with it, so if you're from a particular region then you should probably take the corresponding language (unless you have a good reason not to).

INSIDE THE EMPIRE

| Region | Modern Equivalent | Provinces/Inner Areas | Major Cities | Regional Language |
|---------------|--|---|---|--------------------------|
| Italia | Italian Peninsula | 11 "Regiones" I - XI, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily | Rome, Verona | Italian |
| Hispania | Iberian Peninsula (Spain, Portugal) | Baetica, Lusitania, Tarraconensis | Cordova, Tarraco | Hispanic |
| Greece | Southeastern Europe (Balkans) | Crete, Dalmatia, Illyria, Macedonia, Moesia, Pannonia, Thrace | Byzantium, Sardica, Sirmium, Thessaloniki | Greek |
| Mauretania | Northwestern African Coast | Mauretania Caesariensis, Mauretania Tingitana, Numidia | Cyrene, Iol Caeseria, Leptis Magna, Tangier | Phoenician |
| Egypt | Egypt (Northeastern African Coast) | Aegyptus (Emperor's Province) | Alexandria, Ptolemais | Egyptian |
| Gaul | Western Europe (France, Belgium) | Acquitania, Belgica, Narbonensis | Arelate, Burdigala, Massilia | Celtic |
| Asia Minor | Turkey | Asia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, Cilicia, Galacia, Lycia, Pontus | Caesaria, Nicomedia | Phrygian |
| Syria | Syria | Syria | Antioch, Damascus, Palmyra | Hebrew |
| Judea | Israel/Palestine (West Bank Area) | Judea | Jerusalem | Hebrew |

OUTSIDE THE EMPIRE

| Region | Modern Equivalent | Major Areas/Cities/Settlements | Regional Language |
|---------------|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Britannia | England, Scotland, Wales | Anglesey, Carn Brea, Chysauster, Din Lligwy, Llyn Fawr, Traprain Law | Celtic |
| Hibernia | Ireland | Connacht, Leinster, Meath, Munster, Ulster | Celtic |
| Germania | Germany & Northeastern Europe | Argentoratum, Atuatuca Tungrorum, Moguntiacum, Oppidum Ubiorum, Vesontio | Germanic |
| Scandinavia | Scandinavian Peninsula | Agder, Halland, Halogaland, Smaland, Vastra, Viken | Germanic |
| Sarmatia | Central Asia | Scythia (including over 100 different tribes) | Scythian |
| Arabia | Arabian Peninsula | Kingdoms: A'ad, Hadramaut, Himyar, Qataban, Saba | Arabic |
| Persia | Northeastern Iran | Adiabene, Assyria, Babylonia, Elam, Margiana, Media, Mesopotamia, Suren | Parthian |
| India | India | Kingdoms: Chera, Chola, Satavahana | Sanskrit |
| Han Empire | China & Eastern Asia | Chang'an, Luoyang | Chinese |

POLITICS

I am not going to go into huge detail with this, but here are the basics.

The state is run by the Emperor, known by such titles as Caesar or Augustus. Many duties that were the purview of the holders of a number of different titles are now under the Emperor's direct control. There is also a bureaucracy that helps run things. This is headed by two Consuls who are elected at the start of each year (January 1st). Below them is the senate, which is by and large advisory, but whose membership is currently upwards of 500. The senate is made up mostly of Patricians but there are also Equestrians and others to whom an individual Emperor has granted the position. The two main political parties in the senate are the Optimates (the old guard who want to hold onto their wealth) and the Populares (those who claim to be working for the people at large, but still tend to be fairly wealthy themselves).

These days, the one who is able to hold the position of Emperor is usually the one with the greatest personal military might. This was likely an inevitable development as this is the kind of society that would often lynch or assassinate any of its members who voiced an unpopular opinion too loudly. The Emperor's word is enforced by the Praetorian Guard, who protects him but also has the power to replace the Emperor if their interests as a whole are not being looked after. The army is made up of Legions of about 4800 each and a roughly equal number of Auxiliaries. Each legion is run by a Legate and six Tribunes. A Legion is made up of 10 cohorts of six centuries apiece. Each century (of about 80 troops divided into groups of 8 called contubernia) is run by a Centurion. In Rome itself there are also urban cohorts who keep the peace, and cohorts of Vigiles who act as a night watch and firefighters.

In this campaign, your PCs can be from any walk of life, but have recently been recruited (or possibly conscripted, depending on your PC's individual circumstances)

into a special unit of Legionaries (known as "Immunes") that reports directly to the Prefect of the Praetorian Guard, Naevius Sutorius Macro. This unit uses their specialized skills to help protect the security of the Empire. Because this is a special unit, a military background will not be required for your PC but to reflect the period of training leading up to attaining the position, each PC will start with a free d4 in the Fighting Skill.

SOCIETY

There is a very clearly defined social order in Rome. One's social class can also change. A Provincial with a run of good luck or who has served long enough in one capacity or another can become a full citizen and move up to Plebeian or Equestrian status, while even a Patrician can have a run of extremely bad luck and end up having his/her possessions seized by the state and being sold into slavery.

Patrician: The Patricians are the human nobility of Rome, by divine providence. Each noble house can trace their lineage back to Rome's earliest days. Patricians are believed to carry the blood of the gods in their veins – each house claims descent from a particular deity. As the upper class, Patricians tend to have the majority of seats in the senate and can trace their family lines back to Rome's earliest days. Only humans can be Patricians.

Equestrian: Representing Rome's middle class, the Equestrians (or Equites) are composed of families who have garnered enough wealth or attention to be considered a palpable force in society. Only Roman citizens can become Equestrians, however, so these are most often humans or orcs, though Equestrians of other races are not unheard of.

Plebeian: The Plebeians make up Rome's lower class. A Plebeian is still a Roman citizen, however, and can vote in the Popular Assembly. Plebeians are the most populous of the social classes.

Provincial, Freedman, Foreigner: A Provincial is anyone from one of Rome's provinces outside Italia. A Foreigner is anyone from outside the empire. A Freedman is a former slave who has been set free or bought his/her freedom. Most often these social classes are made up of the races found commonly in and around the Empire. Their families can conceivably be of any economic standing, but they are not considered Roman citizens. This means that they are exempt from certain taxes or duties but they also cannot run for public office and have limited rights in court.

Slave: Most often these are made up of people from conquered areas. Members of any class, however, can end up as a slave if they are in sufficient debt, commit serious enough crimes or are named enemies of the state.

Your PC's social class is determined by your race, your home region and the Edges & Hindrances you take.

If your PC was born in Italia – You are automatically considered a Roman citizen of the Plebeian class. If you take the Noble Edge, then if your PC is not human, then you are of the Equestrian class. If your Noble PC is human, then you may choose to be either a Patrician or an Equestrian. If you are a Patrician, you're encouraged to select a noble house from the list provided (you can also make one up if you prefer). If you do not have the Noble Edge but instead take the Rich or Filthy Rich Edges, you may choose to be of the Equestrian class.

If your PC was born outside of Italia – Your PC is considered either a Provincial or a Foreigner depending on whether you were born inside or outside the empire. If your PC has either 1) served at least six years in the city of Rome's Cohorts Vigillum or 2) served at least 25 years in an Auxiliary Legion as part of their background, you may choose to be a Plebeian (though your character sheet will need to reflect the PC's experience of having been either a watchman or a soldier). If you meet the character history requirements for citizenship and also take the Noble or Rich/Filthy Rich Edges, you may choose to be an Equestrian. Either way, taking the Noble Edge indicates that your PC is tied to the nobility of their home region.

If your PC has the Slave Hindrance – Your PC is of the Slave social class. If your PC is freed at some point (either through purchasing their freedom or by some other action on the part of the owner), their social class will be upgraded to Freedman.

Following is a list of Noble Houses of Rome. Note that some of the names are highlighted – that simply means there's a Wikipedia page listing for that *gens* (family) if you'd like to read up on it. A few of these will already have associations with particular deities listed on their wiki pages. For those who don't (or who don't have wiki pages to begin with), you may feel free to choose whatever deity you prefer for that House's association if you're playing a member of that House.

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Aebutia | Curtia | Lartia | Pinaria | Siccia |
| Aemilia | Fabia | Lucretia | Pollia | Sulpicia |
| Antonia | Foslia | Manlia | Postumia | Tarpeia |
| Aquillia | Furia | Marcia | Potitia | Tarquinia |
| Atilia | Gegania | Menenia | Quinctia | Tarquitia |
| Cassia | Genucia | Metilia | Quinctilia | Tullia |
| Claudia | Herminia | Minucia | Romilia | Valeria |
| Cloelia | Horatia | Mucia | Sempronia | Verginia |
| Cominia | Hostilia | Nautia | Sergia | Veturia |
| Cornelia | Julia | Numicia | Servilia | Vitellia |
| Curiatia | Junia | Papiria | Sestia | Volumnia |

RELIGION

When we take all the historical minor Roman gods as well as all the ones from outside the empire whose worship is also allowed, there is a metric crapload of available options for different deities to be worshipped. I am not going to list all of them. I will go ahead and go over the major ones whose worship is seen in Rome and a few from other nearby cultures. If you'd like a deity from outside these lists I'll help you find one, or if you've got one in mind let me know which deity it is and we'll make it work.

I've listed Deific Templates for some of the gods – these are the templates from the Savage Worlds Fantasy Companion that I'm using for game mechanics purposes. If two Templates are listed, miracle-workers of that faith use the spell list from the first and the Duties and Sins from the second (which will be from the expanded list provided in the Arcane Backgrounds section).

| ROMAN PANTHEON | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| <i>Deity</i> | <i>Areas of Influence</i> | <i>Deific Template</i> |
| Apollo | Sun, prophecy, the arts | Sun/Fate |
| Diana | Hunters, nature | Nature |
| Dis | Death, domination, retribution | Justice/Death |
| Hercules | Strength, battle | War/Strength |
| Janus | Knowledge, trade, travel | Knowledge |
| Juno | Fertility, protection, retribution | Justice/Fertility |
| Jupiter / Jove | Weather, protection, justice | Justice |
| Mars | War, destruction, conquest | War/War |
| Mercury | Trade, communication, trickery | Thieves/Messengers |
| Minerva | War, learning, trade | War |
| Neptune | Sea, weather | Sea |
| Orcus | Death, turmoil, destruction | War/Death |
| Orpheus | Charms, music, nature | Knowledge/Arts |
| Pluto | Death, fate, underworld | Thieves/Fate |
| Saturn | Death, agriculture, wealth | Knowledge/Agriculture |
| Silvanus | Nature, animals, healing | Nature |
| Venus | Love, fertility, trickery | Healing/Love |
| Vesta | Hearth, family | Healing/Community |
| Vulcan | Fire, creation, artisans | Sun/Crafts |
| OTHER DEITIES WORSHIPPED IN ROME | | |
| <i>Deity</i> | <i>Areas of Influence</i> | <i>Deific Template</i> |
| Cybele | Animals, fertility, passion, sacrifice | Nature/Fertility |
| Isis | Death, magic, knowledge, healing | Knowledge/Enlightenment |
| Mithras | Strength, valor, sacrifice, sun | Sun |

| | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Jehovah | Creation, life, retribution, death | Justice |
| Julius Caesar | Conquest, war | War/Rulership |
| Augustus | Order, battle | Justice |

Below are listed deities of other cultures. If you are interested in worshipping one of those and want more detail, let me know.

Greek Deities

Zeus, Aphrodite, Apollo, Ares, Artemis, Athena, Demeter, Dionysus, Hades, Hecate, Hephaestus, Hera, Hercules, Hermes, Hestia, Nike, Pan, Poseidon, Tyche

Egyptian Deities

Ra, Anubis, Apep, Bast, Bes, Hathor, Imhotep, Isis, Nephthys, Osiris, Ptah, Set, Sobek, Thoth

Germanic Deities

Wotan (Odin), Aegir, Baldur, Donner (Thor), Forseti, Froh (Frey), Freya, Frigga, Heimdall, Hel, Hermod, Loge (Loki), Njord, Odur, Sif, Skadi, Surtur, Thrym, Tyr, Uller

Celtic Deities

Angus Og, Arawn, Balor, Brigd, Cernunnos (Herne), Dagda, Dana, Epona, Llyr, Lugh, The Morrigan, Oghma

Caananite Deities (western Arabia, northern Africa)

Anat, Asherah, Baal, Baal-Melkart, Chemosh, Dagon, El, Kosharoth, Kotar, Melech, Mot, Reshep, Shapash, Yam-Nahar, Yarikh, Zebub

Babylonian Deities (eastern Arabia, Persia)

Anu, Assur, Bahamut, Ea, Ellil, Ereshkigal, Girru, Ishtar, Marduk, Nabu, Nergal, Ningal, Ninmah, Ninurta, Ramman, Shamash, Tammuz, Tiamat

Indian Deities

Brahman, Agni, Brihaspati, Indra, Kali, Mithras, Puchan, Ratri, Rudra, Savitri, Shiva, Soma, Surya, Tvashtri, Ushas, Varuna, Vayu, Yama

ARCANE BACKGROUNDS

We'll be using the following Arcane Backgrounds in this campaign.

Arcane Background (Alchemy)

This Background operates just as it is presented in the Fantasy Companion.

Arcane Background (Demigod)

Sometimes gods and mortals have offspring that are capable of remarkable feats. In Rome, these demigods are in difficult positions because on the one hand, their divine origin is almost unmistakable if they put on a display of their abilities. But on the other, any demigods left behind in the mortal world have by definition been declared illegitimate by their divine parents. As such, Rome does not officially recognize their divinity despite any glaring supernatural evidence to the contrary. It is within the senate's power to decide what is divine and what is not (which is why its traditions and proceedings are taken so seriously by many of its members), and the default position is that if the gods will not acknowledge an offspring, the senate should not either. Furthermore, because of this such individuals are often considered a danger to the populace and may quickly find themselves ostracized. The only exception to this is in the case of a demigod who belongs to one of the noble houses, all of which already claim divine descent. It is not unheard of for members of those houses to manifest divine powers from time to time, considering their origins, and there are examples of such individuals being deified after their deaths (e.g. Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus).

This Background works exactly like the Arcane Background (Super Powers) in the core Savage Worlds rulebook.

Arcane Background (Magic)

This Background works just like it does in the core rules. In this world, the most respected mages tend to be Greek or Egyptian. Those taking this background have access to all powers presented in the Fantasy Companion except for *Divination* (which is reserved only for Oracles), *Greater Healing*, *Healing and Succor*.

Arcane Background (Priest)

The priesthood in Rome is very highly respected and occupies an important place in society. This Background works just like the core Arcane Background (Miracles). When taking this Background, choose a god to whom your priest is primarily devoted. The deity chosen determines the powers your PC has access to, your PC's duties as a worshipper of that deity and that deity's hierarchy of sins. If you are choosing from the table provided in the Religion section, look at the Deific Template with which the deity is associated.

If there is only one Template listed – You can find all of the specifics for that Template in the Savage Worlds Fantasy Companion.

If there are two Templates listed – The Template listed before the slash corresponds to the one of the same name in the Fantasy Companion. The Template listed after the slash is associated with one of the descriptions in the Expanded Deities List, below. Use the list of available powers from the Template given before the slash and the Duties and Sins from the Template given after it.

Expanded Deities List *(provided by "Flynn" from the Pinnacle message boards)*

God of Agriculture:

Duties: Protect the community's ability to grow its food.

Sins: (Minor) Failing to observe the annual celebrations of the changing seasons, the planting times or the harvest times; (Major) Unknowingly acting in a manner that threatens the community's ability to grow its food, knowingly refusing to take action against threats to the community's ability to grow its food; (Mortal) Acting in a manner that destroys or seriously impedes the community's ability to grow its food.

God of the Arts and Literature:

Duties: Protect and promote the arts and those that exhibit artistic abilities.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to participate in at least one semiannual event that displays works of art or literature in some form or another; (Major) Refusing to punish those that defile or destroy great works of art or literature, failure to act against the censorship of artwork or literature; (Mortal) Defiling or destroying great works of art or literature, participation in the censorship of artwork or literature.

God of the Community:

Duties: Protect all who dwell within or support the community.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to preserve the history of the community or teach it to the youth; (Major) Refusing to punish those that threaten or perform great harm to the community; (Mortal) Threatening or performing great harm to the community.

God of Crafts and Craftsmanship:

Duties: Protect and promote craftsmen and craftsmanship.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to participate in at least one semiannual event that displays works of craftsmanship in some form or another; (Major) Refusing to punish those that defile or destroy great works of craftsmanship, failure to pursue opportunities to re-discover lost crafting techniques; (Mortal) Defiling or destroying great works of craftsmanship, hindering the progress of craftsmanship within the community.

God of Death:

Duties: Protect cemeteries and crypts, help spirits to their final rest, combat undead, and promote a proper death for those that have cheated Death in the past.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to properly observe and celebrate the death of a companion; (Major) Refusing to take action against those that are unnaturally keeping death at bay; (Mortal) Actively using unnatural means to keep death at bay.

God of Enlightenment, Meditation and Wisdom:

Duties: Protect those that pursue a path to enlightenment through meditation, devotion and exercise.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to spend at least an hour each day in meditation, devotions and exercise (this does not have to be all at once, but represents a cumulative total), failure to take responsibility for your actions (such as allowing yourself to become intoxicated or otherwise be in a state where you are not responsible for your actions); (Major) Acting without enlightenment, such as an action or inaction based on pride, anger, greed, gluttony, lust, envy or sloth; (Mortal) Preventing a soul from transcendence or reincarnation (such as condemning a soul to the Inferno or to undeath), including your own.

God of Fate and Destiny:

Duties: Protect those that accept the will of the gods, and defend against those that defy the will of the gods.

Sins: (Minor) Failing to promote divination or other means of determining the will of the gods; (Major) Unknowingly acting against the will of the gods, knowingly refusing to take action against those that defy the will of the gods; (Mortal) Acting in a manner that willingly defies the will of the gods.

God of Fertility:

Duties: Protect those that are fertile or that promote fertility.

Sins: (Minor) Failing to participate in celebrations that honor or promote fertility in all living beings; (Major) Unknowingly acting in a manner that threatens the fertility of living beings in the area, knowingly refusing to take action against threats to the fertility of living beings in the area, refusing to take actions against the priests of the God of Death; (Mortal) Acting in a manner that seriously harms or eliminates the fertility of living beings in the area, causing the death of many living beings.

God of Love:

Duties: Protect those who love in all its forms, and promote love.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to promote the reasonable expression of love; (Major) Refusing to take reasonable action against those act to destroy or hinder love; (Mortal) Acting in a manner that deliberately and intentionally destroys or hinders the progress of love.

God of Messengers:

Duties: Protect those who deliver messages and practice diplomacy.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to make a reasonable effort to deliver a message that one has accepted; (Major) Refusing to act as a messenger or diplomat when requested by one's temple; (Mortal) Actively working to stop or hinder messengers or diplomatic efforts.

God of Rulership and Sovereignty:

Duties: Protect those of noble or royal birth.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to offer advice to nobles when they are endangering themselves

or their social positions; (Major) Refusing to engage in reasonable actions that protect or serve duly recognized and divinely blessed nobility; (Mortal) Taking action against duly recognized and divinely blessed nobility.

God of Strength and Physical Prowess:

Duties: Protect those of greater than average strength and vigor, as well as those involved in physical challenges.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to exercise daily; (Major) Using another means to resolve a challenge when physical strength could reasonably be used to accomplish the task; (Mortal) Becoming weaker than average.

God of War and Battle:

Duties: Protect warriors and soldiers, and always be the last to leave a battle.

Sins: (Minor) Failure to promote reasonably violent resolutions to conflict; (Major) Attempting diplomatic solution when a conflict before using violent means to do so; (Mortal) Promoting or maintaining peace when war is possible.