

1215 & ALL THAT!



1215 and all that!: A freeform LARP by Christian Jensen Romer dealing with real medieval history with all the respect you'd expect from the author. Designed to provide an excellent background for Ars Magica players playing in the Stonehenge Tribunal of 1220, and first run at Grand Tribunal to mark the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta.

Dedicated to my mother, June Audrey Romer, who taught me all about King John, and to all the people who have attended Grand Tribunal over the last 17 years and made it the success it has been.

CJ, August 2015

1215 & All That

A 15 player LARP set in 1215 A.D

By Christian Jensen Romer

How the Game Works

A Three-Act Historical Farce

1215 and All That unfolds across **three Acts**, each taking place at one of the key locations in the crisis of 1215. The game is designed as a fast-moving, lightly chaotic, highly theatrical freeform in which players negotiate, argue, seduce, betray, flatter, bless, curse and occasionally gallop heroically on imaginary horses.

Although the characters are drawn from real thirteenth-century politics, the style of play is deliberately melodramatic. Think *1066 and All That* with actual geopolitics, *Blackadder* with a foot in Roger of Wendover, and Robin Hood ballads sung slightly off-key.

The players move together between Acts, allowing the story to progress cleanly from one historical crisis point to the next. Each Act ends with the cast mounting their invisible steeds for a spirited procession around the room accompanied by the theme from *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (the one that begins "Robin Hood, Robin Hood, riding through the glen..."). Consider this your palate cleanser between episodes of diplomatic disaster.

Act I — Nottingham Castle

Schemes, Hostages, Sheriffs and Outlaws

The game begins in the uneasy halls of **Nottingham Castle**, where royal power, baronial rebellion, Scottish ambition and outlaw legend all tangle together like a badly knotted longbow string. Here players set their initial agendas: alliances are forged, insults exchanged, marriages proposed, accusations levelled, and the odd witch may be discovered where no witch intended to be.

This Act establishes the tone: energetic, argumentative, and driven entirely by character motivations. Players are encouraged to introduce themselves loudly, declare grievances proudly, and cause minor diplomatic incidents wherever possible. The fate of the kingdom is being decided by people who absolutely should not be left in charge of anything.

At the end of the Act, the herald blows an imaginary trumpet, the music begins, and everyone mounts their invisible horses for the ceremonial gallop away from Nottingham and on toward destiny.

Act II — Runnymede

Magna Carta, or Something Very Like It

The second Act takes place on the meadow of **Runnymede**, where the rebel barons attempt to force King John to sign a charter limiting his power. Here

the political manoeuvring intensifies: the Church applies theological pressure, William Marshal attempts to prevent national collapse, the barons squabble, the King sulks, spies slip between factions, and foreign players (Scots and French alike) try to tilt the outcome.

Whether Magna Carta emerges in recognisable form is entirely up to the players. John may sign, refuse, negotiate, or be dragged bodily to the table. The document may become a noble defence of liberty or the worst piece of legislation ever written. Either way, Runnymede provides the dramatic centre of the game.

Once the negotiations collapse (or succeed in an entirely unexpected fashion), the music plays again. The cast leaps once more onto their imaginary horses and sets off toward the final confrontation.

Act III — Canterbury Cathedral

Revelation, Redemption, Catastrophe (Choose Any Three)

The final Act brings everyone to **Canterbury**, the symbolic heart of spiritual authority in England. Here grievances sharpen, oaths are broken or upheld, secrets revealed, curses lifted, justice demanded, and—at last—characters are permitted to die dramatically if they wish.

The Church may try to impose peace; the barons may seek vengeance; the Scots may overreach; the Queen may unveil plots; outlaws may redeem themselves or ruin everything; and King John may find triumph, humiliation, inspiration... or a very sticky end.

The final moments of the game resolve the great question:

How will England emerge from the crisis of 1215?

Triumphant? Reformed? Invaded? Bewitched? Or simply even more confused?

When the last decision is made, the final strains of *Robin Hood, Robin Hood, riding through the glen* strike up for one final gallop. Characters depart the stage in glory, disgrace, or bewilderment, and the game ends.

Overall Style of Play

- **Big choices, big acting:** Players should be bold, theatrical, and enjoy the absurdity of history.
- **Argument is a feature, not a bug:** Debate, persuade, cajole, and plot your way forward.

- **History is your scaffold:** The situation is historically correct; what you *do* with it is entirely up to you.
- **No one dies early:** Fatalities are reserved for Act III unless the GM has a very good reason
- **Disguises always work:** Except for King John, whose face is on the money.
- **Have fun:** This is a celebration of history, not a reenactment.

King Alexander II of Scotland

You are King Alexander II of Scotland, and you have invaded England and marched your army south to the Midlands, but have there stalled. The road to London is blocked by the loyalist castles of Nottingham and Lincoln, and so far there is no sign of the rebellious barons who have invited you to come and take the English throne from that horrible old man, King John. He really is a ghastly oik!

You yourself are little more than a schoolboy (and should be played as such, in short trousers perhaps and with a high pitched voice?) and your critics say too immature to be King. You'll show 'em! You will soon unite the crowns of England and Scotland in a Union and move the seat of government to Stirling. It is true that your oft times allies against the English, the French are also planning to invade, but they have been told by the Pope that is simply not on and the Pope sent his legate Pandulf for tell King Phillippe Augustus to stay home, so the French are not really in this.

The jolly old Barons have had enough of King John pushing them around, and have drawn up a document called Magna Carta. They reckon is they can get John to sign it he will behave, but that's just daft. Your tutor was always setting you lines and it never made any difference to you, and you still can't read or write properly (if you try get it all hilariously and painfully wrong!) Your friend Eustace de Vesci showed up - he is married to your half sister Margaret, one of your fathers illegitimate offspring, don't you know? - and told you the barons need you right now to come down and replace King John.

When you marched south with your army, well you rather expected the English King to just flee in to exile. Eustace, leader of the Rebels who call themselves the Army of God has assured you John is a total coward and the throne is basically just yours for the taking, but so far you have not seen much evidence of John fleeing, and apart from some fighting in East Anglia where Hugh Bigod has interrupted his witch burning activities to lay siege to a bunch of Royal castles, the Rebel Barons just seem to be chasing John around trying to get him to sign this bit of paper, Magna Carta.

Finally though you have some good news. It seems King John has travelled to Nottingham Castle, and the Barons have him there. So you have ridden down, knocked on the bally old door and have now every intention of asking Bad King John to relinquish his throne to you. If he won't well you will go back and march south! He has lots London to the Rebels (though the tower of London is holding out), but once Nicolaa de lay Haye surrenders Lincoln castle to you, well that's it, you will soon be King of Scotland and England, or Great Scotland as it will be named.

Recently in an act typical of his caddish oafish self King John disennobled the Earl of Huntingdon, Robin of Locksley, better known as the former outlaw Robin Hood. John

sent a letter conferring the Earldom of Huntingdon upon your brother, and his heirs. The plan was by giving the title to a foreign noble, Robin's heirs would never get it back. The only problem is your father only had one son, you, and you have no brother. He probably intended it to go to David your uncle, who styled himself 8th Earl of Huntingdon, but whose family had lost the title during the reign of Richard when Richard conferred it on Robin's father - your father died while the message was travelling north, and so you were the King when it arrived, not your dad, William the Lion.

You intensely dislike Uncle David, who made a play for the throne and was forced to renounce all claim after the Scottish nobles upheld you, so you have no intention of appointing him to the post. Still you have a charter that confers the title of Earl of Huntingdon on your mythical brother, so you had best find one. Your sister Margaret is married to **Hubert de Burgh**, one of King John's loyal minions and the troubadour who wrote that god awful "Dames des Rouges" song for her. Your sister Isabel is married to Roger Bigod, son of **Hugh Bigod**, a good honest rebel if a little over enthusiastic about witchburning. Your sister Marjorie is married to Gilbert the Marshal, 3rd son of **William the Marshal, Earl of Pembroke**, and the Greatest Knight In The World. Your bastard sister Margaret is married to the rebel leader and General of the Army of God, **Eustace de Vesci**, who will certainly expect to be given the Earldom of Huntingdon once he learns of the grant. Any of the above could legally be argued to be the brother of the Scottish King, and hence could have the Earldom conferred upon them. Alternatively of course you could just burn the grant, and restore Huntingdon to this outlaw chap Robin Hood, who sounds dashed exciting!

Now you find yourself near Sherwood Forest. Your tutor Old Douglas told you it was a cursed place, home to a coven of thirteen Satanic witches, and a terrible demon they served, perhaps Old Nick himself, who manifests in the form of a "Great Red Bear with Glowing Red Eyes!" (he always spoke in capitals when he was excited!) Now you are quite excited. Perhaps you should suggest a hunt in the forest; that will prove the mettle of your kinsmen, and maybe you can catch this bear??? Also you can find Robin Hood, the former Earl of Huntingdon, and see if he will join your army with his unit of archers?

SPECIAL RULE: IF YOU EVER HOLD LINCOLN CASTLE YOU WILL EVENTUALLY BECOME KING OF ENGLAND, AND WIN!

What You Know About...

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, and is the only woman in England or Wales to command a castle. And what a castle! Lincoln is the key castle in England, because it controls the road to the North. Your invasion has been forced to halt because you do not wish to try and storm Lincoln Castle, and if the French invade they will need to take it too. Only the Welsh rebels, cowed by King John hanging seventy young Welsh children brought up in England as hostages, have no interest in Lincoln Castle.

So Nicolaa is the Kingmaker – if she surrenders the castle to you, you will go on to capture London and then the rest of the country. If the Dauphin Louis invades, and Nicolaa chooses to surrender Lincoln to him, then England will become a possession of the French King. And if Nicolaa chooses to stay loyal to John, then ultimately John will be King of England. In the bizarre circumstance of another Royal claimant arising, then Nicolaa can choose to give them legitimacy and ultimately the throne by surrendering Lincoln Castle to them. The fate of the nation depends upon her decision!

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, but she is a woman so doesn't count. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like King John!

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Philip

Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French. You are enchanted by her at the very first glance, and desperately want to take her off and make her your Queen!

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had Hubert de Burgh killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, King Richard, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a Bad King. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the Good Knight **William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it!

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priest's mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

You need to make sure Pandulf does not claim that because King John has technically taken the crusader's oath you should not be invading and must withdraw. You know it is the case, but no one has technically reminded you, and you really don't want to hear it until you are securely on the English throne.

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of Robin Hood. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When Robin was pardoned along with all the outlaws by King Richard, Will chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however – Old Douglas told you he was the wickedest man alive, but all the peasant tales about him depict him as a hero, and the greatest woodsman living. He would make an excellent guide for your hunt!

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious noblewoman who you have never seen before. Her manners mark her as from the highest echelons of the aristocracy, and her accent is English not French, but you don't recall seeing this youthful beauty before. You

immediately decide that while she is maybe ten years older than you you must have her and she will make a jolly nice Queen!

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. **King John** married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy. You would like to – no, she is the French King's wife.

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating **King John's** armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take **King John's** side.

Robert FitzWalter is a nouveau riche upstart Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is second in command of the 25 Barons, taking the title Vice Marshal of the Army of God. Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of **King John**. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when the King was excommunicated he plotted with de Vesci and others to assassinate the King, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and **King John**. **King John** wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful – instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the “Army of God”, and at Bury St Edmunds abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force **King John** to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to **King John**, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

Eustace de Vesci is **FitzWalter's** superior, the Marshal of the Army of God. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until **King John** tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, your half sister, and insult you intend to avenge! He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph's** settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of *Magna Carta* but has recently fallen out somehow with FitzWalter, but he is vital to the success of the

plan as he brought you and your army to invade England.

Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack King Henry II, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. Hugh is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man, and definitely not **King John** who he has described as an effeminate weakling. Hugh has some kind of weird family curse, and is obsessed with witches, hunting them whenever he can. He is the father of Roger, who is married to one of your sisters.

Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at Kirklees, and **Robin Hood**'s friend and cousin. Many times she has helped the Outlaws hide from the **Sheriff of Nottingham**, and she knows the secret ways of Sherwood Forest better than anyone but **Will Scarlet** and Robin himself. Alice's convent is supported by donations from **Nicolaa de la Haye**, and the two women are old friends. Alice has an almost supernatural capacity to heal, once saving **Hugh Bigod**'s life when he was mauled by a bear.

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provencal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition "La Dame en Rouge". Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**. A few years ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care - in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. While Hubert denies he did it, everyone knows he did, and is a foul child murderer and loyal crony of John. Still Hubert commands a lot of knights, so best not say that too loudly. He is married to Margaret, the oldest of your legitimate sisters, who insists he did not kill the child - the gaoler **Baldric FitzGilbert** and Hubert refused their orders, and king John arrived at the castle, dragged the little boy outside and drowned him in the moat.

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. He has a friendship with **Hugh Bigod**, and **Nicolaa de la Haye**. His eldest son, also called William, is a bit of a doofus. In fact he is really quite slow, and a bitter disappointment to his dad, but luckily William has two younger sons, one of whom, Gilbert, is married to one of your legitimate sisters.

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is a stunner! King John eloped with her after meeting her at the preparations for her wedding to his only strong ally on the continent, Hugh

de Lusignan? De Lusignan of course switched sides, and King John lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress, but Ding! Dong! Sadly John went one stage further, divorcing his wife who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and alienating them to, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against him. Then he married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all his days in bed with her (and who wouldn't?), not even answering the door to Hugh de Burgh or William Marshal, till William Marshal kicked it in and dragged the king protesting to his throne.. King John invented a new robe, which he calls the dressing gown, which he wears to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when he is not reading he likes to be in bed with Isabella. She is a witch I tell you!

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

Alice de Scriven, Prioress of Kirklees

Alice de Scriven never wanted to be a nun, but after the mysterious fires got too much to handle, and the way the shadows played around her cot just a little too eerie, her father was a frightened man. He had wanted a male heir, and after he had met the Black Man in the woods and signed his thumbprint in blood in that old book he had indeed sired a son, William, a healthy and happy boy. However tragedy struck immediately – his wife died in childbirth, and the William was a twin, with young Alice tearing herself out of the womb even as her mother breathed her last.

Whereas Will was wild, sometimes bestial, Alice was kind, gentle, and thoroughly unnerving. There is just something strange about her, and how she looks at people, but few dare defy her will. As she got older her brother protected her from village gossip, by beating senseless all who bad mouthed her, but it was hardly necessary. Those who upset Alice just sickened and died wasting away, or their hens stopped laying, or their thatch caught fire, or their sheep wandered away, or on one memorable occasion a cliff suddenly collapsed on their cottage beneath burying the entire family.

Still Alice always had remarkable gifts of healing, and when someone grew sick (as they did all the time in the village) for a chicken, a coin or a few eggs she could usually cure them. Few ever suspected it was her power to Hex making them ill in the first place, and her removing the Evil Eye that made them well again.

Her father died (a look of terrible horror on his face when his corpse was found close to the village Church) when she was seven years old. Roderic her father's steward took over until Will came of age. When Sister Ursula, the curious nun came to the village and asked for the girl to enter a convent, the Priory of St. Uncumber at Kirklees, well Roderic was only too pleased to hand her over. The small Priory had but 13 nuns, who kept themselves to themselves, but it was less enclosed than many orders – Alice often wandered home to visit her father and Will, until the day Will argued with her dad's Roderic and ripped the man's throat out with his teeth, before fleeing in to neighbouring Sherwood Forest.

Alice did well for herself, and today is Prioress of the Black Order, a seemingly respectable order of nuns who are of course diabolists devoted to the Devil. The secret is well hidden: Alice has befriended Nicolaa de la Haye who has bestowed lands and wealth on the Priory, and even Will does not know his sister is a black magician, though he would little care as he is a Werebear! Will ran off to join your cousin, the outlaw Robin Hood, who is really the Earl of Huntingdon. You often visited them in Sherwood Forest, and when King Richard returned from Crusade and restored Robin to his title you were mortified when he paid court to that hussy Maid Marion, and not you, his first love. For some reason your magic does not work on Robin (or Marion, or she would be dead too) but one day you will take revenge on him. You hate him

secretly, but for now pretend to be his affectionate kinswoman. Robin will never be able to marry Marion anyway, because her father Baron Robert FitzWalter will never allow it – you are not sure why? Perhaps you should find out.

Since Robin left you and Will have Sherwood forest to yourself, and Will has returned to an increasingly bestial existence. You both know the secret ways through Sherwood Forest.

When the game begins you have been invited to a Feats at Nottingham Castle...

SKILLS

HEX: You may lay a HEX on any character. They weaken, sicken, and will eventually died unless cured. You may of course cure them by lifting the HEX. The Hex will take effect over the course of an ACT (the game has three acts), and all you have to do is stare at them and then tell a GM. Only problem is it doesn't work on everybody. Once you have hexed them it is a mundane sickness, or sometimes it manifests as terrible bad luck. You can tell by asking a GM if someone has been hexed.

LIFT CURSE: You can remove any curse, your own or someone elses.

HEALING: You are a leech-wife and skilled herbalist. Bring bandages, and when someone is **WOUNDED** you may heal them.

SHERWOOD PATHS You may ignore all cards in Sherwood Forest, and freely move around the paths leading others past them if you choose. You have two **IMPASSABLE** cards, that you can use to close the way if you abandon someone in there. Note that Robin Hood, Will Scarlet and the Sheriff of Nottingham all have Sherwood related powers too though.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, who often intercedes on your behalf, allowing you to indirectly outwit the Sheriff. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death. You find his evil amusing, and secretly have a crush on him. One day you might marry him and you can both watch Robin Hood hang – but first you will have to persuade your brother Will Scarlet to betray Robin and join you in Evil!

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return Richard made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette and will be hanged you expect, except he will escape he always does!

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like King John!

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French. In short she is a nasty little bitch, and while she only speaks French so you can't insult her to her face easily, you find it hard to hide how much you despise her!

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he

bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had Hubert de Burgh killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, King Richard, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a Bad King. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the Good Knight **William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it!

You secretly rather admire John.

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is

looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

Despicable man. Your magic won't work on him, and he is actually devout. Corrupting his soul is your duty and your joy so seduce him in to sinful ways!

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priests mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

Another despicable man. Your magic won't work on him, and he is actually devout. Corrupting his soul is your duty and your joy so turn him to evil by leading him in to temptation!

Will Scarlet is your brother. See main description.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious noblewoman who you have never seen before. Her manners mark her as from the highest echelons of the aristocracy, and her accent is English not French, but you don't recall seeing this youthful beauty before.

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy.

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating King John's armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take King John's side.

Robert FitzWalter is a nouveau riche upstart Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God. Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of **King John**. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when the King was excommunicated he plotted with de vesci and others to assassinate the King, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and **King John**. **King John** wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful - instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the "Army of God", and at Bury St Edmunds abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force **King John** to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to **King John**, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

He won't let his daughter marry **Robin Hood**, and you like a rebel. Do all you can to further his career and turn him against **Robin**. If he should be killed **Robin** will marry that hussy **Marion** and you will lose him forever.

Eustace de Vesci is **FitzWalter's** second in command. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until **King John** tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, half-sister of **King Alexander II of Scotland**. He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph's** settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of *Magna Carta* but has recently fallen out somehow with FitzWalter, but he is vital to the success of the plan as he brought the Scots to invade England.

Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack **King Henry II**, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. **Hugh** is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man, and definitely not **King John** who he has described as an effeminate weakling. **Hugh** has some kind of weird family curse, and is obsessed with witches, hunting them whenever he can...

You could probably lift his curse, which you can see on him, but you would like to find out who put it on him and why. He doesn't seem very devout, but he does seem intent on killing witches, and driving them from the Kingdom. You need to be careful of this man, lest he add you to one of his bonfires! Stopping him will further the cause of darkness, so you must but if you curse him the previous curse will lift so it won't be that simple. And of course he almost certainly has some kind of witchfinding magic that will

expose you, so be very careful going near him!

Then again, Hugh owes you a favour. Many years ago he was hunting in Sherwood Forest when he decided to chase the wrong bear – Will, your brother. Will mortally wounded Hugh, but you stumbled upon the dying man and rather than have loads of nobles turn up and hunt the “rogue bear” you healed him and sent him on his way. He only stayed at the Priory two nights and luckily he seemed oblivious to the Matins orgy and the satanic chanting. In fact he tipped you ten marks and spoke loudly at Copurt of your piety and medical skills!

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, but clearly her key strategic castle will fall if the Rebel Barons move against it – she is after all only a woman. **King John** treats her with great respect, so she obviously has some dirt on him! Nicolaa supports your priory generously as a apatron, and you are relaint on her cash and good will, as well as her political intervention whenever one of your nun's swains is arrested for poaching – as co-Sheriff of Nottingham she can countermand one of Philip Marc's orders and free prisoners.

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provençal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition “La Dame en Rouge”. Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**. A few years ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care – in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. While Hubert denies he did it, everyone knows he did, and is a child murderer and loyal crony of John. Still Hubert commands a lot of knights, so best not say that too loudly. You rather admire the fellow and will flirt with him till he writes a song about you – get him to compose and perform one! Oh, and make sure his crime goes unpunished, obviously!

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. He has a friendship with **Hugh Bigod**, and **Nicolaa de la Haye**. What a bore! Still as Nicolaa's friend you have to listen to his endless boasting and smile.

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is a witch. Everyone knows that, because why else would King John have eloped with her after meeting her at the preparations for her wedding to his only strong ally on the continent, Hugh de Lusignan? De Lusignan of course

switched sides, and King John lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress. Then John went one stage further, divorcing his wife who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and alienating them to, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against him. Then he married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all his days in bed with her, not even answering the door to Hugh de Burgh or William Marshal, till William Marshal kicked it in and dragged the king protesting to his throne.. King John invented a new robe, which he calls the dressing gown, which he wears to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when he is not reading he likes to be in bed with Isabella.

So clearly she is your ally - the problem is how do you let her know you are also a diabolist, and make friends with the Queen of England???

Alexander II of Scotland. This squeaky voiced schoolboy only recently became King of Scotland. He has been convinced to invade England by the Rebels, in the person of **Eustace de Vesci**, but has so far been hesitant to do much. Since King John exiled Robin he has bestowed the title of Earl of Huntingdon on Alexander's younger brother, so Robin will never be able to reclaim it now! Make sure he and Robin stay enemies and don't manage to patch things up.

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

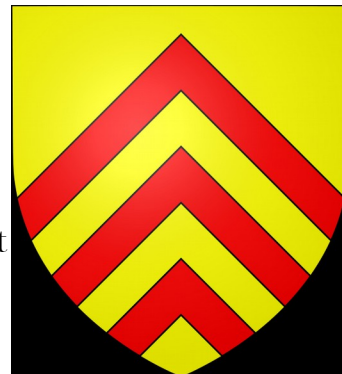
Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

Baldric FitzGilbert II

You are Baldric, a humble peasant who is employed as a servant to **Phillip Marc**, a Frenchie who is Sheriff of Nottingham. You weren't always a Peasant – when you were young your dad was a proper gentleman, and you are named after him – Baldric FitzGilbert – but you don't know who your mother was. She must have died when you were a baby, but that must be where you inherited your love of turnips and the strawberry birthmark on your left buttock from.



You often wonder what she was like, but you can't ask dad because he is dead, and even if he was alive he would have hit you round the head with a herring and called you a “daft lummock” like he always did! Happy days. Dad got disgraced, because he surrendered a castle to the King of France, but he had to because **Hugh de Burgh** has told him to, but that was no excuse apparently and so he lost his position, which was Whore to the Royal Seals, or maybe Walruses, you have never quite worked it out.

When you were young you used to play at knights and you dreamt that one day you would hold a castle like your dad did, or **King John** – you are about the same age. Of course your dad's declining years were spent drunkenly throwing boots at you in the hovel you lived in now, a muddy hovel by the mere in the heart of Sherwood Forest.

You dreamt of being an Outlaw, and did plan to join the Merry Men, but you got captured by the wicked Sheriff of Nottingham's men and he said you were to be strung up by the goolies and disembowelled, but then that nice lady **Nicolaa de la Haye** came along and saved you by changing the verdict and setting you free. It turns out she is a friend of the **Prioress Alice** who holds those secret orgies with the other nuns dad said you must never tell anyone about when he used to go the hole he had drilled in the chapel roof and watch them on a Friday night. You never liked it though, all that chanting and goat fondling and calling on Satan to do this and that. You have never really been one for religion, but you keep your gob shut in case you get burned as a witch. That **Hugh Bigod** is a Witchfinder you know?

Anyway your life is pretty simple, you do what you are told and try not to get in to trouble. Oh and stay away from Hugh de Burgh when he sings his bloody awful ballads. Keep a low profile, do what you are told, and if you can get on in the world, and try to do better than your dad thought you would – he said you could aspire to being drowned in a cesspit by your nearest and dearest, but you'd like to be drowned in a moat instead like poor Count Arthur the little boy was by King John when your dad and Hubert refused to do it.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. Your boss. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, but she is a woman so doesn't count. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Phillip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Phillip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Phillip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Phillip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French.

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister

of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had **Hubert de Burgh** killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, King Richard, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a **Bad King**. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the Good Knight **William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it!

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

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priests mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for **King John**!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of **Robin Hood**. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When **Robin** was pardoned along with all the outlaws by **King Richard**, Will chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious noblewoman who you have never seen before. Her manners mark her as from the highest echelons of the aristocracy, and her accent is English not French, but you don't recall seeing this youthful beauty before.

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. **King John** married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy.

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating **King John's** armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take **King John's** side.

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they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force King John to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to King John, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

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Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack King Henry II, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. Hugh is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man, and definitely not **King John** who he has described as an effeminate weakling. Hugh has some kind of weird family curse, and is obsessed with witches, hunting them whenever he can...

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but let's him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, but clearly her key strategic castle will fall if the Rebel Barons move against it – she is after all only a woman. **King John** treats her with great respect, so she obviously has some dirt on him!

Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at Kirklees, and **Robin Hood's** friend and cousin. Many times she has helped the Outlaws hide from the **Sheriff of Nottingham**, and she knows the secret ways of Sherwood Forest better than anyone but **Will Scarlet** and Robin himself. Alice's convent is supported by donations from **Nicolaa de la Haye**, and the two women are old friends. Alice has an almost supernatural capacity to heal, once saving **Hugh Bigod's** life when he was mauled by a bear.

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provencal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition “La Dame en Rouge”. Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**. A few years ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care – in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. While Hubert denies he did it, everyone knows he did, and is a foul child murderer and loyal crony of John. Still Hubert commands a lot of knights, so best not say that too loudly.

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. He has a friendship with **Hugh Bigod**, and **Nicolaa de la Haye**

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is a witch. Everyone knows that, because why else would King John have eloped with her after meeting her at the preparations for her wedding to his only strong ally on the continent, Hugh de Lusignan? De Lusignan of course switched sides, and King John lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress. Then John went one stage further, divorcing his wife who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and alienating them to, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against him. Then he married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all his days in bed with her, not even answering the door to Hugh de Burgh or William Marshal, till William Marshal kicked it in and dragged the king protesting to his throne.. King John invented a new robe, which he calls the dressing gown, which he wears to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when he is not reading he likes to be in bed with Isabella. She is a witch I tell you!

King Alexander II is a teenager, and still a high pitched youth, a callow schoolboy at heart. His father recently died and now he has marched south, hoping to make a name for himself by meddling in English politics. It won't end well. Despite his youth he is said to have a real eye for the ladies.

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

Baron Eustace du Vesci of Alnwick

Eustace de Vesci was once one of **King John's** most loyal ministers, working tirelessly to reform the administration and taxation systems left in chaos by King Richard's absentee sovereignty. He served the King as an ambassador to the Scottish Court and there met and was betrothed to Margaret, an illegitimate daughter of the Scots King William the Lion. William died last year, and Margaret's half brother Alexander, a rather immature lad of sixteen inherited the throne, becoming **Alexander II of Scotland**. (in fact through your wife you are related to many other great barons -

William had three legitimate daughters, all half-sisters to your wife - the eldest, confusingly also called Margaret is married

to **Hubert de Burgh**; the second, Isabel is married to **Hugh Bigod's** son Roger; and the third and youngest Marjorie is married to **William Marshal's** third son Gilbert).



Anyway Eustace used to be the most loyal of subjects. He had served ably in a different way the previous monarch, having been with King Richard on Crusade and having fought at Acre in 1191 and travelled throughout the Holy Land, returning home with a priceless relic, a piece of the cloak of St. Stephen, the first martyr of the Church. Eustace is not particularly pious, and indeed has been known to drink, swear and blaspheme, but he always carried that Holy Relic.

About three years ago Eustace married Margaret of Scotland, and they were very happy until the chief guest at their wedding, King John, tried to abduct the blushing bride on her wedding night. She had to flee and hide in a pigpen to avoid his advances, and judging by how John made off with his ally Hugh de Lusignan's fiancée Isabella du Angouleme, it was lucky she did. Eventually his royal highness became so drunk he fell asleep, and Eustace and Margaret were able to flee, and then steadfastly ignored all attempts by that monstrous pervert King John to summon them back to court. So angry was Eustace that he swore to slay the King with his own hand, a terrible oath he swore before the burghers of Berwick-Upon-Tweed.

Eustace did not slay John however, because he was at this point approached by **Robert FitzWalter**, whose daughter **Maid Marion** King John had attempted to ravish. FitzWalter had placed his daughter with **Sheriff Philip Marc** at Nottingham Castle, where now she was safe, but he had sworn to avenge himself on the King. He suggested that at a tournament at Windsor the two barons should leap upon John and hack him to death, then flee to France if it looked like the other Barons regarded this as treachery not justice. The plan never came to fruition - learning from his spies of FitzWalter's plan, John demanded every Baron send one of his children or his wife to John as a hostage to ensure good behaviour. While most meekly agreed, and John

surrounded himself with mercenaries who guarded the royal person day and night, FitzWalter and Eustace fled in to exile, FitzWalter to the court of France, and Eustace across the border to the Court of Scotland.

This was during the long period when all the churches in England were closed by order of the Pope; the interdict. The Pope, Innocent III had done this and excommunicated John (making it lawful for any vassal to rebel against or even kill him) because he had refused to allow Archbishop **Stephen Langton** to remain in the kingdom, and had forced him in to exile in France. Eventually the Papal Legate **Pandulf** negotiated a settlement, hastened by John making the Church look silly by imprisoning thousand of priest's mistresses and charging them a ransom to release them! As part of the settlement you and FitzWalter were allowed to return home.

While in Scotland you befriended David, 8th Earl of Huntingdon. He is Alexander's uncle, and the brother of the former King William the Lion. On William's death last year it was widely assumed he would become Regent, but the 15 year old Alexander sensed his throne was in danger to his uncle and so banished him from court and made him publicly take an oath of loyalty and swearing that he and his descendants would never accept the throne of Scotland. That would of course change if anything happened to Alexander and he dies without issue – David is a good knight, a fine statesman and a strong leader, and a good friend to you and your wife Margaret, who favoured her uncles claim to the throne over her brothers he had already lost his estates in England, when Richard the Lionheart had granted them to a man called Robin of Locksley, and until recently this man, the former outlaw Robin Hood held them. David had been corresponding with King John hoping to win them back since John has banished the former outlaw, but now all seems to have gone quiet. Obviously you can't intercede on behalf of David with John, but you would like to see Earl of Huntingdon again, and then King of Scotland if anything happens to Alexander.

Whatever happens, don't let a vile Frenchman end up on the throne. FitzWalter is far too keen on the French, and you don't trust them at all. Louis is no friend of the Army of God, and FitzWalter is a fool to believe he is. If he invades and becomes king you fully expect he will have every one of you executed, on the grounds you can't trust a traitor not to rebel. So while you are totally with FitzWalter on the Magna Carta plan, you really don't agree with inviting the French over. It's one treachery too far for you, and so against FitzWalter's counsel you have instead brought the Scots south.

However your primary goal is simple – seek revenge on King John. While killing him would be satisfying, chaining him to Magna Carta is a far better plan, and will bring justice to generations to come, by proving royal power is limited, and even Kings must act justly.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, but she is a woman so doesn't count. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like old King Henry!

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert FitzWalter, she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French. Protect her, and try to persuade her to join your household so your wife can look after her.

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost

all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, **Hugh de Lusignan**, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had **Hubert de Burgh** killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, **King Richard**, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a **Bad King**. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the **Good Knight William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. You and Robert however will do for him, as you would have done for him back in 1212 if someone had not ratted, if he won't sign Magna Carta!

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King

to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priest's mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of Robin Hood. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When Robin was pardoned along with all the outlaws by King Richard, Will chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. You notice that this wild and hairy man has something ursine about him, and are reminded of all the old legends of werebears, men who can turn in to a beast on nights of the full moon. There is something uncanny about this man, and you would not like to be alone with him in Sherwood Forest, lest he ate you.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious noblewoman who bears an uncanny resemblance to someone you knew in your youth – Rosamund Clifford, the most beautiful woman in the world and King Henry II's mistress. She was murdered by Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine about the time that Eleanor was pregnant with John however, and after that King Henry has Eleanor locked away for the rest of her life and imprisoned by the gaoler Baldric FitzGilbert. As Rosamund has been dead for nearly 30 years it can't be her, though the name, from *rosa mundi* (rose of this world) is quite a coincidence. She must be related to King John somehow – they have exactly the same eyes.

Blanche of Castille is the niece of King John, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy.

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad, and you are not keen on him at all. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating King John's armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take King John's side.

Robert FitzWalter is an Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is

leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God, though you have represented yourself as this to Alexander to get him to invade, claiming FitzWalter si your minion. Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of **King John**. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when the **King** was excommunicated he plotted with you and others to assassinate the **King**, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and **King John**. **King John** wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful - instead he gathered you, Bigod and an alliance of 22 other barons, the "Army of God", and at Bury St Edmunds abbey you drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force **King John** to behave. Robert and the barons with your army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to **King John**, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack **King Henry II**, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. Hugh is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man, and definitely not **King John** who he has described as an effeminate weakling. Hugh has some kind of weird family curse, and is obsessed with witches, hunting them whenever he can.

His son **Roger** is married to your wife Margaret's half-sister, and hence you have heard the story behind this sudden passion for burning old crones and slaughtering peasant women. It dates back to his being attacked by the bear, or werebear if your suspicions about Will Scarlet are correct. While he lay wounded in Sherwood Forest his old friend Nicolaa de le Haye carried him to a secret place, where coven of 13 fowls witches chanted all night, and their leader did terrible things to him. Somehow he found the strength to survive, possibly through praying, but ever since that day he has been cursed. He has never returned to see Nicolaa, who he believes to be Queen of the Witches. At least you think that is the story - you also heard from Margaret's half sister ludicrous stories about Stephen Langton drinking, whoring and gambling in Paris when young, so clearly the woman is a bit mad.

Alice de Scriven is a Prioress from somewhere round here, and possibly one of Philip Marc's mistresses?

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provencal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition "La Dame en Rouge". Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**. A few years

ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care – in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. While Hubert denies he did it, everyone knows he did, and is a foul child murderer and loyal crony of John. Still Hubert commands a lot of knights, so best not say that too loudly, especially as he is married to one of your wife's half-sisters.

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Queen Isabella of Angouleme is a witch. Everyone knows that, because why else would King John have eloped with her after meeting her at the preparations for her wedding to his only strong ally on the continent, Hugh de Lusignan? De Lusignan of course switched sides, and King John lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress. Then John went one stage further, divorcing his wife who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and alienating them to, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against him. Then he married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all his days in bed with her, not even answering the door to Hugh de Burgh or William Marshal, till William Marshal kicked it in and dragged the king protesting to his throne.. King John invented a new robe, which he calls the dressing gown, which he wears to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when he is not reading he likes to be in bed with Isabella. She is a witch I tell you! You are surprised old Hugh Bigod and not tried to burn her yet.

Alexander II of Scotland. This squeaky voiced schoolboy only recently became King of Scotland. He has been convinced to invade England by yourself, but has got as far as the Midlands and stopped, unwilling to attack Lincoln Castle. As you prefer his uncle David you would not be terribly upset if anything happens to him, but for family sake you had best try to keep his alive as your wife might never forgive you if anything happened to her brother. See main text. Try to control the young pup, subtly, and actually use the Scottish army to some effect, rather than leaving it camped in a field.

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth and according to hwta you have heard of Hugh Bigod's story Queen of the Witches!. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, and is the only woman in England or Wales to command a castle. And what a castle! Lincoln is the key castle in

England, because it controls the road to the North. The invading Scots have been forced to halt because they do not wish to try and storm Lincoln Castle, and if the French invade they will need to take it too. Only the Welsh rebels, cowed by King John hanging seventy young Welsh children brought up in England as hostages, have no interest in Lincoln Castle.

So Nicolaa is the Kingmaker – if she surrenders the castle to Alexander of Scotland, he will go on to capture London and then the rest of the country. If the Dauphin Louis invades, and Nicolaa chooses to surrender Lincoln to him, then England will become a possession of the French King. And if Nicolaa chooses to stay loyal to John, then ultimately John will be King of England. In the bizarre circumstance of another Royal claimant arising, then Nicolaa can choose to give them legitimacy and ultimately the throne by surrendering Lincoln Castle to them. The fate of the nation depends upon her decision!

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Baron Hugh Bigod, Witchfinder General!

The Bigods are natural born rebels. If it was possible to be a “redneck” baron, well that would be a good description of this extraordinary family. Since the Norman Conquest they have built castles all over East Anglia, the richest lands in all England, and close enough to threaten London just four days march from their powerbase. True, FitzWalter's lands stand between them and the capital, but no Bigod ever worried about a little trespass, hunting in a Royal Forest, or besieging their lieges castles. The latest Hugh Bigod is just the last in a long series of uppity, pig headed, perhaps a little daft barons who have refused to ever take no for an answer and have never found a King they could not rebel against.



About 40 years ago, well back in 1173 actually your father took rebellion as far as he could, right up to Civil War and aiding an invasion! During the reign of Henry II Henry was persuaded to grant his son (also called Henry) a coronation, making him effectively “junior king”. From this time on he is referred to as “Henry the Young King” to differentiate him from his father. This was deemed necessary to ensure a smooth succession on Henry II’s death – after The Anarchy of the 1150’s when the rival camps of the Empress Matilda and King Stephen fought a bitter civil war in England over the throne, it seemed like a good idea.

Unfortunately Henry the Young King felt his father had given him the title but none of the power, and rebelled against his father. The rebels fought a campaign in Normandy, then part of the Angevin Empire which Henry II ruled over. Henry, Geoffrey and Richard all attacked their fathers castles, and various baron’s including your father Hugh Bigod, Earl of Suffolk and Robert Beaumont Earl of Leicester rose in support of the siblings against their father.

Henry II however fought a brilliant campaign, and the rebels were smashed in Normandy despite the French joining them and the Scottish too entering in to the alliance and invading England in the north. Humphrey III de Bohun (the Constable of England) crushed the Scottish invasion and pursued them back north of the border forcing them to end hostilities, while Richard de Lucy (the Justiciar) took the rebel stronghold the city of Leicester and besieged Leicester castle.

In October 1173 Leicester tried a last gasp invasion of England, landing at Walton on the Naze with a formidable force of Flemish mercenaries. He attempted to take the port of Dunwich but the townsfolk closed the gates against him and bombarded the besiegers with rocks and the contents of chamber pots.

Leicester withdrew, probably to Framlingham, where he met up with another powerful rebel Hugh Bigod. English history often turns on minor events, and in this case it was a squabble between two women. Your mother Gundreda and Petronilla de Grandmesnil, wife of Leicester, fell out soon after meeting. The two women simply could not stand each other – and all plans for a united rebel attack on London faltered. This may well have proven to be the disastrous moment for the rebel alliance. Leicester decided march east and try to reach his power base in the East Midlands, and perhaps relieve Leicester castle.

Your father was to proceed south through Essex. However once Leicester reached Bury St Edmunds where predictably the townsfolk closed the gates against him, and the monks raised a huge force of 1,200 men to repel him, he discovered the forces of Humphrey III de Bohun and Richard de Lucy waiting to prevent him crossing the River Lark.



Leicester was utterly defeated as the men of Bury, mere peasants armed with agricultural equipment surged out to fight. His wife Petronilla was swept away when the water's suddenly rose in a mysterious torrent that swept down the small and placid river

as the **Rebels** were crossing, and although she was gallantly rescued her jewels were never found, lost forever in the **River Lark**. Your father did not even reach **London** before news of **Leicester's** defeat reached him, and your mother swore for a whole day solid. The **Great Rebellion** was over, and although dad kept his head and most of his estates, most of your fine castles were raised by **King Henry**. Although you were born ten years after the events taught you then two valuable things – never trust a foreigner, and never trust the **King** either.

Now you are **Earl Bigod**, and grown old and grey too. You have not yet taken a wife, but you have an understanding that you will marry **Maud Marshal**, by far the most wealth heiress in the country and daughter of **William Marshal, the Greatest Knight In the World**. You would have done so already, but for the injuries you sustained last year. The story however begins a long, long time ago when you were young, and fell head over heel in love with an older woman – **Nicolaa de la Haye, Castellan of Lincoln Castle** as she is now. Now as it happens she married some other johnny, and absolutely devastated you took yourself off to bally old France where you spent a few enjoyable years jousting, eventually getting good enough to earn yourself a place on the **Marshal's** team, whoring, gambling and drinking. In those days Paris was a bit of a hotbed of sin, and you really enjoyed your time there, competing with **Stephen Langton** (now Archbishop of Canterbury in contests of drinking, whoring and puking, not necessarily sequentially! Oh those bright days! And **Louis the Dauphin**, he was as wild a boozier, brawler and habitué of brothels as you. Mainly though you pretended to be troubadours, or trouverts as they are called in France, and took advantage of the fashion for **Courtly Love** to sleep with as many hot young noblewomen as you could. Now the hottest of them all, **Fair Rosamund**, mistress of **Henry II**, she was dead before you were born, murdered by his jealous queen **Eleanor of Aquitaine**, but **Alice of Courtenay**, wife of the Duke of Angouleme, she must have been a close contender! She was absolutely stunning, and her brother **Peter** was just as handsome, he who became **Latin Emperor of Constantinople** but vanished en route there. You and **Louis** and **Stephen Langton** all tried your hand at seducing **Alice**, but it was the Archbishop (as he is now – he was just a university student back then) who bagged her. You remember this stupid song he used to sing to her (to the tune of “Daisy, Daisy”)

Now soon after this a deal was struck between England and France, and the niece of the English King, **Blanche of Castille** was married to poor old **Louis**. And wow what a firebreathing dragon **Blanche** turned out to be! She has **IDEAS**, and she is not afraid of making sure those ideas are firmly wedged in your noggin by bashing you over the head with a rolling pin. Never go to an audience with **Blanche** without putting your armour on first. Except **Stephen** didn't have any armour, so she beat him in to submission, and suddenly he got all repentant and took to seeing things **Blanche's** way and scurried off back to England where he became sincerely devout. (You know, you have tried to get him to dice, drink, whore or blaspheme – try again tonight! - but no luck. He preached a sermon at you, and at the dinner table he keeps telling you off for manners and shushing you when you try to tell a funny story about the **Good Old Days**, like the one about him, the fetters the goat and the lard! (Make up some wildly inappropriate (but true in game) stories of pre-conversion debauchery by **Louis** and **Stephen** up and

recount them to everyone?)

Because Stephen got on the next ship back to England, he never found out he had in fact sired a daughter. Poor old Alice came to you in utter distress, and well you had just had a win on the jousting circuit, so you gave her some cash, but she insisted on having the baby. Luckily she managed to pass it off as her husband's, but if you look past the exotic beauty of the mother you can see Stephen Langton in her. Now that daughter is of course, Isabella du Angouleme, and everyone knows how she seduced King John and abandoned her fiancée his faithful vassal Hugh of Lusignan, and well that cost him Normandy, captured by the French.

And then of course love struck King John divorced his wife Joan of Gloucester, sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and Wales rose against him. The greatest and secret irony though is that he has married the daughter of his greatest enemy, Stephen Langton, a man who hates with a passion bordering upon frenzy. In fact he hates Stephen almost as much as he loves his faithful minion **Hubert de Burgh**. Still, you are probably the only person alive now who knows the secret of Isabella's parenthood, though maybe you should let the Archbishop know? Or the girl it's her dad after all?

Anyway Nicolaas had turned you down, and you did not want to return to England yet but bloody Blanche had cleaned up Paris, and converted the whores and closed the wine shops and even managed to stop tournaments for a while, so you went to Le Mans with the team for what was to be your last international season on the circuit. Of course William was still managing the Angevin Squad, and you were all in awe of him. Then one day, your strap broke in the melee and you only just made it to a safe area without being captured – you imagine 53 knights' ransoms you had won that season without a scratch, and then you could have fallen at the last – and you sent your squire to grab your saddle. Except he got confused, and grabbed William Marshal's spare from his pavilion. No idea how, the boy was an idiot. He was born in Barcelona, and they are all like that there. Manuel his name was, you wonder what became of him?

Anyway you put the saddle on because you were in a hurry, and rode in to the melee. Half a dozen French knights made a bee line for you, and before you could get back to the boys they hit you. Lance, mace, morning star, and sword, blow after blow came for you – and every single one turned away just before impact, as if you had an angel protecting you. And then you realised you had – the saddle had strange runes stitched in to the leather, and while you can't read or write, they did not look like any letters you had seen. And then you realised why William Marshal is the greatest Knight in the World – he cheats using magic!

Now this was the first season his idiot son, also called William, the one who has built all those castles in Ireland, took up jousting. And he was bloody useless, and his father endlessly berated him, but honestly, at least he never cheated like his old man. You told Hubert de Burgh who was hanging around singing like always and you told Baldric FitzGilbert, him who was Keeper of the King's Whores and had a son who looked a bit like John – John was just a boy himself then – and they told you to keep it quiet and

shut up. Anyway **William Marshal** is a bloody cheat, but his daughter may look like a toad and if her brother William the Younger is anything to go by be a complete idiot, but she has vast tracts of land.

So you went home, married some noblewoman – you called her “the girl”, and she bore you your son Roger, and promptly died. Roger went off to Edinburgh to drink and whore, and ended up married to **King Alexander of Scotland's** sister Marjorie, and it's nice the boy bagged a Princess even if it is a haggis eating bagpipe playing woman who lives to gossip and who would come second in a beauty contest to a haddock.

Oh yes, that brings us to Nicolaa, your first love. So she had rejected you, and you made your way to France, but after discovering tournaments were fixed or at least your team was cheating with magic you came back home again, and Nicolaa had married someone else. And you went home, and then you discovered that your dad had seen the Black Dog, the death omen of the Bigods. Called Gardez les Tresor, it is said if you follow him he can lead you to a buried treasure, but this huge black dog the size of a calf is a death omen and whenever it is seen the Earl died. Luckily it's not been seen recently, or you would not be here because you would be dead, but anyway it's made you a bit superstitious.

So the years pass and you mooch around and then William offers you his daughter the heiress and she looks like a toad and has the brains of a newt and you can tell he knows you know that he is a cheat cos he looks at you kind of desperate like and of course everyone thinks he is the greatest knight in the world but you know that he is a cheat. And you are friends with the guy, but you feel kind of sorry for him. And the Nicolaa who has taken a second husband, well he died too, and this is only last year, and you sort of get matrimonial ideas again and wonder if she will just reject you yet again, but you go up to see her, and she has been made Joint-Sheriff of Nottingham with this oily French turd called **Philip Marc**, so you decided to go hunting in Sherwood Forest, and impress her by bringing back a big trophy.

Now you have been in plenty of woods in your time, but there was something downright spooky about this one. You went in deeper and deeper, and then suddenly you came across a huge black bear, maybe twelve feet tall. And then the beast was at you, and your horse was fleeing and you were horribly mauled, and dying and...

You came round to find yourself being carried through the woods by servants carrying torches, with Nicolaa leading expertly. She took you to a strange stone building deep in the forest, which looked like a Church but there was not a crucifix to be seen. There thirteen women dressed as nuns gathered around you, and their leader, who you now recognise as the **Prioress Alice de Scriven** did dreadful things to your wounds, but apparently healed you by her sorcery. And all the time she did it you hear the other nuns weird chanting, and just before dawn they went to the Church and you heard them engaging in abominable blasphemous orgies – and with more enthusiasm than even you Stephen and Louis used to manage. In fear for your soul, and realising that

Nicolaa must be a diabolist and had tried to give you to these dark sisters, you fled from the Priory of St. Uncumber and somehow made your way to Derby, where you got a horse and fled vowing never to see your childhood sweetheart again.

The rest everyone knows - **FitzWalter** talked you in to his Magna Carta project, and you can't read or write it but you have gone along for the ride because rebelling against Kings is what you do. Now you **de Vesci** and FitzWalter have managed to catch up with King John at Nottingham Castle, and he will have to sign the bloody thing. In the meantime you have set about hunting Satanists and Witches, and while you have no especial talent, you can if you touch someone and concentrate hard if they have sold their soul, or did not have one to start with. You have burnt scored of the blighters all over your estates, and you feel that Witches are the greatest single threat facing the Kingdom today. Make sure you get any hiding at Nottingham, and persuade the King to have Nicolaa and Alice de Scriven burned!

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, but she is a woman so doesn't count. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like King John! You realise he is the son of Baldric FitzGilbert, who was Master of the Royal Whores and Castellan of the de Burgh castle in Normandy back during the reign of King Henry. You haven't seen him about since he was a small boy.

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French.

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had Hubert de Burgh killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, King Richard, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a Bad King. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the Good Knight **William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it! Still typical of that pansy John, he always was an effeminate little runt. He is a nasty little sodomite that chappy. Not A good king at all, not much sport in rebelling against him!

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priests mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of Robin Hood. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When Robin was pardoned along with all the outlaws by King Richard, Will chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious incredibly beautiful noblewoman who you have never seen before. Her manners mark her as from the highest echelons of the aristocracy, and her accent is English not French, but you don't recall seeing this youthful beauty before. Her unusual name reminds you of the tragedy of Rosamund Clifford, Henry's mistress lain by Eleanor of Aquitaine. Probably a witch, best check her out!

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is a psychopathic husband beater and a walking horror who uses purity as a cudgel to force her devout ways on all around her. You don't think she likes you much!

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Your old drinking buddy! . He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating King John's armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne, which will be grand because then you can rebel against him and mock him for all the times he wet the bed after too much Gascon wine! Mates with you and **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take King John's side.

Robert FitzWalter is a nouveau riche upstart Essex baron with extensive lands in

Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God. Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of **King John**. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when the King was excommunicated he plotted with de Vesci and others to assassinate the King, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and **King John**. **King John** wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful - instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the "Army of God", and at Bury St Edmunds abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force **King John** to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to **King John**, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

Eustace de Vesci is **FitzWalter's** second in command. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until **King John** tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, half-sister of **King Alexander II of Scotland**. He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph's** settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of *Magna Carta* but has recently fallen out somehow with FitzWalter, but he is vital to the success of the plan as he brought the Scots to invade England.

Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at Kirklees saved you after the bear but you have no doubt her priory is a foul nest of Satanic witches. You need to prove it and have her burned!

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provençal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition "La Dame en Rouge". Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**. A few years ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care - in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. Hubert denies he did it, and he didn't, because the man is an utter wimp who could no way kill anyone, the bloody little kitten!

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of

integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. Except of course you know that he is a colossal cheat and utter fraud – but you are still friends, as he is going to let you marry his incredibly rich daughter.

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is a stunner. Unfortunately you know who her father is, and after years of telling no one, you really ought to tell someone! Maybe her, or her father, **Stephen**?

Alexander II of Scotland. This squeaky voiced schoolboy only recently became King of Scotland. He has been convinced to invade England by the Rebels, in the person of **Eustace de Vesci**, but has so far been hesitant to do much. He is your daughter in law's brother so you should take the boy in hand.

Nicola de la Haye is a terrible treacherous diabolist. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, and is the only woman in England or Wales to command a castle. You used to love her, but she tried to kill you.

Robin Hood. An outlaw, and probably in league with those diabolists in Sherwood Forest – or is he?

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

Robin Hood, Outlaw

You are languishing in an oubliette in the dungeon of Nottingham Castle, and it feels just like old times!

You have spent almost half your life as a fugitive and an outlaw avoiding the **Sheriff of Nottingham Philip Marc**'s men and slipping stealthily through this castle to romance his ward the beautiful **Maid Marion** and steal his wealth to give to the poor. Of course when Good King Richard returned from Crusade he placed you in the position your father had held, that of Earl of Huntingdon. This was because when he was off on Crusade he had left his villainous and conniving brother **John** to rule the land as Regent, and John had appointed wicked men and foreigners like Philip Marc. These officials and new nobles and outsiders have ravaged the kingdom, stealing everything they can, oppressing the poor and dispossessing the honest rich, torturing the clergy and ravishing any woman they can catch. When King John openly tried to seize the throne while his brother was away, supported by Gerard de la Haye (**Nicolaa**'s now deceased husband) and **Hubert de Burgh** you maintained a guerilla war against them, eventually saving the Realm for King Richard (and his trusty advisor **Eustace de Vesci**) to return home to.

When you were made an Earl you expected to marry Maid Marion, and hold court with your Merry Men, and live happily ever after. Of course it was not to be, as problems soon arose. Firstly, you were surprised when **Will Scarlet**, always a wild and solitary fellow, refused to leave Sherwood or accept the pardon, preferring to live as an Outlaw, even if technically he was no longer one, and refusing all titles, honours and wealth. He remains within the Forest, to this day, living in a small cave and guarded by a ferocious pet beard he calls Artorius, that is "Arthur". Now Will is an off fellow, and he sometimes gives you the creeps, but you are sad that he could never return to civilisation and say farewell to his outlaw days. Now you have once again been exiled and made your way back to Sherwood you plan to collect the old gang and go back to those happy days together, and finding Will will be your first goal!

Secondly, the Earldom of Huntingdon had for seven generations been in Scottish hands, usually held by the Scottish Royal Family, and the then King's bother (uncle of the now **King Alexander II**) David laid claim to the title, which had been taken from them for treachery many years ago. You cared not a fig for it, but without a title there was no chance that **Robert FitzWalter** would allow you to marry his daughter Maid Marion! Anyway the title was yours, but the Scots endlessly petitioned the King claiming it was seized illegally and should be restored to them.

The greatest blow of all however was when Robert FitzWalter still refused to let you marry his daughter maid Marion, despite your new rank. You don't know why! This above all is the thing you need to resolve - while you can easily elope with her, that

would not be right, and you wish to gain her father's permission to marry if possible. You just don't know how to do it. It is not like King John or the Sheriff of Nottingham has poisoned her against you – they both hate FitzWalter with a passion! So why can you not marry his daughter? What has he got against you?

When Richard died and John ascended to the throne he immediately dispossessed you of your title (currently in abeyance, that is at the King's Gift) and banished you from the realm. Rather than leaving on Crusade or fleeing to Scotland or even enemy France in to exile (like FitzWalter did) you immediately returned to Sherwood Forest to return to your old ways and be reunited with Marion, held in nearby Nottingham Castle. You were not there long before you made contact with your cousin, Alice de Scriven (Will Scarlet's twin sister as it happens!) who is Prioress of Kirklees, and she let Will know you were back. Before you could meet up however you were captured and dragged before the Sheriff, who sentenced you to be hanged on the morrow and incarcerated you in the deepest dungeon.

So now you need to find a way to escape from the Oubliette! It's essentially a dry well with a metal grill over the top and slick unclimbable walls thirty feet that the Sheriff threw you down, planning to take you out and hang you in the morning. There used to be an escape tunnel but it seems that has been bricked up. There is a locked grille which will need a black key to open at the top of the oubliette, and a red key that opens the dungeon door.

SPECIAL RULE: You may safely proceed through Sherwood Forest, ignoring all cards, except for Robin Hood's hideout. If you enter the Hideout you can not be found by anyone by Marion, Will or Alice.

SPECIAL RULE: You may describe trick shots with your bow that bring down chandeliers, etc etc. Of course you need to recover your bow first from the Sheriff.

SPECIAL RULE: Filch – you can steal one item automatically from another player by brushing against them, and they are totally unaware you stole it. You can use this power three times per ACT.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, but she is a woman so doesn't count. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death. He is your mortal enemy, but you can never bring yourself to kill the cur, no matter how much he deserves it!

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated held hostage at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like King John! You need to steal some money and give it to him.

Maid Marion: Your beloved, the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham **speaks only French**.

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost

all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, **Hugh de Lusignan**, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had **Hubert de Burgh** killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, **King Richard**, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a **Bad King**. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the **Good Knight William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, **Eustace de Vesci** and **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it! You are in favour of Magna Carta in theory, but not being able to read and write you will need to get a clergyman to explain exactly what it says to you!

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously

very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priests mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, and your best friend. He is the twin of the Prioress Alice de Scriven but very different in temperament, though to be fair both are a bit odd and prone to terrible rages! As a young man his father died and Alice was sent off to become a nun, and Will killed Roderic his father's overseer and ran off in to the woods. When you were pardoned along with all the outlaws by King Richard, Will chose to stay in the Forest, and his knowledge of Sherwood is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however – everyone finds him a bit strange and scary, and he never, ever wears a shirt. If he comes to Nottingham maybe you can persuade him to dress up? Will has a good relationship with a huge black faerie bear he calls Artorius who lives in the deep wood, and who you have glimpsed a few times.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious noblewoman who several times came to Sherwood with a young fellow dressed like an outlaw except in bright colours, and who held long conversations with Will. Some of the other Merry Men were uncomfortable about this, but you trust Will completely.

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy.

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating King John's armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take King John's side. So if your enemy's enemy is your friend, then Louis is your friend!

Robert FitzWalter is an Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God. He is the father of Maid Marion, and you need his permission to marry her at last. So far he has refused!

Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of King John. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when the King was excommunicated he plotted with de Vesci and others to assassinate the King, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and King John. King John wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful – instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the “Army of God”, and at Bury St Edmunds abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force King John to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to King John, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

Eustace de Vesci is FitzWalter's second in command. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until **King John** tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, half-sister of **King Alexander II of Scotland**. He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph**'s settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of Magna Carta but has recently fallen out somehow with FitzWalter, but he is vital to the success of the plan as he brought the Scots to invade England.

Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack King Henry II, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. Hugh is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man, and definitely not **King John** who he has described as an effeminate weakling. Hugh has some kind of weird family curse, and is obsessed with witches, hunting them whenever he can...

Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at Kirklees, and your friend and cousin – in fact she was your first ever girlfriend, and you still bear scars from when she attacked you in a rage when you ended the relationship as teens! :) Many times she has helped the Outlaws hide from the **Sheriff of Nottingham**, and she knows the secret ways of Sherwood Forest better than anyone but **Will Scarlet** and yourself, and maybe better. Alice's convent is supported by donations from **Nicola de la Haye**, and the two women are old friends. Alice has an almost supernatural capacity to heal, once saving

Hugh Bigod's life when he was mauled by a bear – possibly Will's pet bear, Artorious as bears are uncommon in Sherwood Forest.

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provencal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition “La Dame en Rouge”. Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**. A few years ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care – in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. While Hubert denies he did it, everyone knows he did, and is a foul child murderer and loyal crony of John so deserves what's coming to him!

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. He has a friendship with **Hugh Bigod**, and **Nicolaa de la Haye**

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is a witch. Everyone knows that, because why else would King John have eloped with her after meeting her at the preparations for her wedding to his only strong ally on the continent, Hugh de Lusignan? De Lusignan of course switched sides, and King John lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress. Then John went one stage further, divorcing his wife who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and alienating them to, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against him. Then he married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all his days in bed with her, not even answering the door to Hugh de Burgh or William Marshal, till William Marshal kicked it in and dragged the king protesting to his throne.. King John invented a new robe, which he calls the dressing gown, which he wears to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when he is not rearing he likes to be in bed with Isabella. She is a witch I tell you!

Alexander II of Scotland. This squeaky voiced schoolboy only recently became King of Scotland. He has been convinced to invade England by the Rebels, in the person of **Eustace de Vesci**, but has so far been hesitant to do much. It must be his brother who is claiming the Earldom of Huntingdon...

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. Under Alice's influence she has time and time again countermanded Philip Marc's judgements and had outlaws and their sympathisers released, as she can revoke his judgements, and vice versa.

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

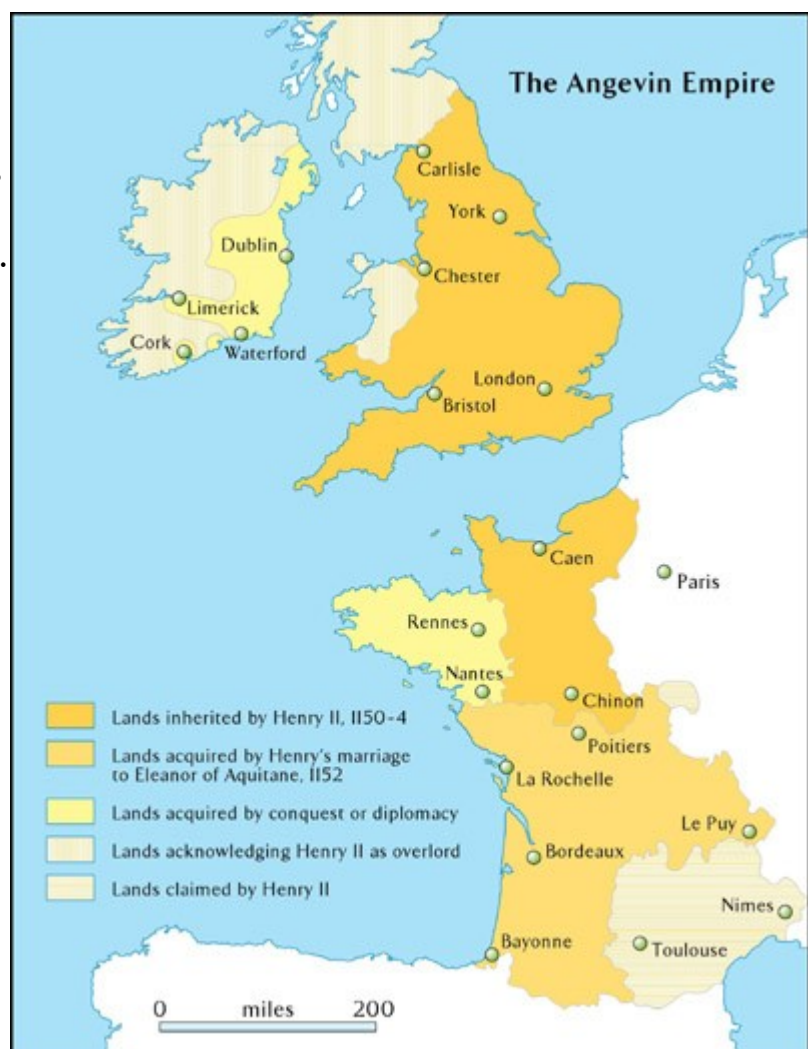
King John

You are John King of England and Ireland by Grace of God. You were the youngest of the sons of Henry II and never expected to become King, only doing so because all of your elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before you. During King Richard's reign you were left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor you tried to take over the country and declare yourself King, but only a handful of nobles supported you -- the French born **Phillip Marc** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) and his co-Sheriff **Nicola de la Haye** (and her deceased husband Gerard). When even your most loyal minion the awful troubadour **Hubert de Burgh** (never ever let him sing "Les Dames aux Rouges"!) refuses to support you you know the game is up, and it was made worse by the relentless guerilla campaign waged by **Robin Hood** and his outlaw band the Merry Men. Luckily when King Richard returned he totally forgave you your attempted coup -- you had all rebelled against dad often enough after all; and on Richard's death you became King. Your reign has been eventful....



Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, you have now lost almost all of them. Here is a map showing what you inherited...

You still hold Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. You upset the one man who might have helped you save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. You divorced your previous wife, Joan -- upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on you, and the Bretons aren't keen on you either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying your hospitality. (Rightfully so; you ordered



Hubert de Burgh and his castellan **Baldric FitzGilbert** to kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron and slitting his throat, but they directly disobeyed you, so in the end you dragged the boy from the castle, tried to throttle him with your bare hands and then when that failed drowned him. Anyway the Bretons rose against you, and you lost Normandy to the French after your two pronged attack with the Emperor Otto was defeated – **Phillipe Augustus** beat Otto at the Battle of **Bouvines**, and your forces were scattered by **Louis the Dauphin** and the indignant (and wifeless) **Hugh of Lusignan** in Normandy.

Still you are a Good King. You have put public administration in order, and after your feckless brother effectively bankrupting not just the throne but the whole kingdom, you have managed to increase tax revenues and built a powerful tax base that happens to cripple the barons and stop their endless private wars. You have extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, to assert Royal Authority, invented new taxes to keep the Exchequer healthy and tried to take an interest in everyone in the kingdom, particularly the women. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees you are a great monarch. Faced with a rebellion by the wicked barons, the Good Knight **William Marshal** stays loyal to you because you are the rightful King, as does **Hubert de Burgh**, because you alone tolerate his awful ballads (proof of your toughness that!).

Your enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic and you hate his guts, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** is a slimy little toad. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against you however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. They are chasing you around the country, and the Scots have invaded to try and make you sign, but you wont!

SPECIAL RULE: You CAN read and write, and in fact are an avid reader of any book you can find.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip and Nicolaa were the only people who backed you when you tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and you rewarded with their current positions. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return Richard made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When you came to the throne, you exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Phillips court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. He really is a vile and low born little fellow, so do make him run errands for you!

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert FitzWalter, she was placed in the care of Phillip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and you exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French. You fancy the living daylights out of her. Try and get the saucy little minx alone!

The utterly despicable **Archbishop Stephen Langton** was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, your deadly enemy. You tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if you would not accept it you were to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict.

You refused, calling the Pope's bluff, so that slimy little shit Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a

church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and you only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury, and stop hanging any priest you should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (You only do this when no one is looking now. It is your main hobby other than reading and wenching). Why would you allow a blatantly pro-French Archbishop? The man is a traitor, and you hate his guts. If you ever find yourself in Canterbury you should do what your father did and shout "who will rid me of this turbulent priest?!!"

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating you and closing all the churches, eventually forcing you to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though.

Still you managed to embarrass Pandulf – you gave up murdering random priests, and instead had every priest's mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine to ransom them. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – both funny and profitable for you though!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of Robin Hood. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When Robin was pardoned along with all the outlaws by King Richard, Will chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious noblewoman who you have never seen before. Her manners mark her as from the highest echelons of the aristocracy, and her accent is English not French, but you don't recall seeing this youthful beauty before. Strangely enough you don't really fancy her – there is something a bit off putting about her, but you can't put your finger on it. And she looks at you funny!

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy. What a hotty! You tried it on once with her when she was a little girl, and she told you to go away in no uncertain terms, but surely she would like a cuddle from her uncle John now? Actually no – that glare says it all. Keep your distance, but try to find out what is wrong and patch things up. It's probably just that you married her to a froggy – well apologise for that, and suggest she could come live in

England?

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to your child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to your niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating your armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to try and take your throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take the English side.

Robert FitzWalter is a nouveau riche upstart Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God. Everyone knows that you tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**

Your attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when you were excommunicated he plotted with de Vesci and others to murder or abduct you and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and yourself. You wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful – instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the “Army of God”, and at Bury St Edmunds abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will make you no more than a slave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to you, and are chasing you around the country, trying to force you to sign.

Eustace de Vesci is **FitzWalter's** second in command. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until you tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, half-sister of **King Alexander II of Scotland**. He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph's** settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of Magna Carta but has recently fallen out somehow with FitzWalter, but he is vital to the success of the plan as he brought the Scots to invade England.

Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack King Henry II, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. Hugh is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man. Hugh has some kind of weird family curse – before the death of a member of his family, usually the Earl, a huge black dog the size of a calf is seen. Some Earls are so put out by this sight they drop dead on the

spot from a heart attack. **Bigod** is obsessed with witches, hunting them and burning them whenever he can with little regard for the fact you alone (and your appointed Sheriffs) possess **High Justice** (the right to pass death sentences).

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but let's him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, but clearly her key strategic castle will fall if the Rebel Barons move against it – she is after all only a woman. You treat her with great respect as one of your most loyal Barons.

Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at Kirklees, and **Robin Hood**'s friend and cousin. Many times she has helped the Outlaws hide from the **Sheriff of Nottingham**, and she knows the secret ways of Sherwood Forest better than anyone but **Will Scarlet** and Robin himself. Alice's convent is supported by donations from **Nicolaa de la Haye**, and the two women are old friends. Alice has an almost supernatural capacity to heal, once saving **Hugh Bigod**'s life when he was mauled by a bear.

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provencal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition “La Dame en Rouge”. Hubert is a romantic fellow, and very loyal. A few years ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care – in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. Of course he wimped out and left you to do the dirty work, so you mock him for his lack of guts.

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to you refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising most things you do. He has a friendship with **Hugh Bigod**, and **Nicolaa de la Haye**. You tolerate him because what choice do you have? Bloody show off. Oh and he has a totally gormless son.

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is your new wife, but cost you most of your Continental Empire. Everyone knows that, you met her the night before her wedding, and eloped with her immediately. Unfortunately she was about to marry your only strong ally on the continent, Hugh de Lusignan? De Lusignan of course switched sides, and you lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress. As a wedding gift she gave you a little box which she says contains her love for you – you must never ever open it.

Then John went one stage further, divorcing your former wife Joan of Gloucester who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince Llewellyn ab Iorwerth, and

alienating them too, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against you. Then you married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all your days in bed with her, not even answering the door to Hugh de Burgh or William Marshal, till William Marshal kicked it in and dragged you protesting to your throne.

You invented a new robe, which you calls a dressing gown, which you wear to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when you are not reading you likes to be in bed with Isabella.

King Alexander II is a teenager, and still a high pitched youth, a callow schoolboy at heart. His father recently died and now he has marched south, hoping to make a name for himself by meddling in English politics. It won't end well. Despite his youth he is said to have a real eye for the ladies.

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

The Dauphin, Louis the Lion of France

You are the eldest son and heir of the French monarch, and have proved yourself a fine military commander defeating [King John](#)'s armies in Normandy, and have raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when you decide to claim the English throne. Your father Phillipe Augustus has managed with your help to greatly expand France, taking territory from John's Angevin Empire, but the conquest of England and Wales will be your greatest achievement.

Of course fighting to capture England will be extraordinarily difficult unless you have the English Barons on your side. Twenty Five of them have rebelled against [King John](#), and you are hoping they will invite you to come over and become King. [Robert FitzWalter](#) apparently planned to assassinate [King John](#), but was caught and fled in to exile in Paris a few years back. You have got to know him well , and don't trust him at all -- he has absurd notions about limiting the power of Kings by some kind of document he calls the Magna Carta. If John signs that document your invasion is finished, unless he goes on to repudiate it again. You need the Barons to go to war with [King John](#), so you need to stop Magna Carta, and get a letter from at least one Baron inviting you to invade. The more Barons it is signed by the better - but [Hubert de Burgh](#), Hugh Bigod, [Eustace de Vesci](#), [Nicolaa de la Haye](#) and [Robin Hood](#) (as Earl of Huntingdon) are all **good** , and the signature of the superstar Greatest Knight in the World [William Marshal](#) is worth much more. Once you have the invite you can order the invasion. Until then you and Blanche are traveling around England incognito, as Louis of Rouen and his wife Blanche. The stupid English knights have not seen through your cunning disguise!

There is a further complication. Your father, King Phillipe Augustus was going to invade England when [King John](#) suddenly capitulated to the Pope's terms and let Archbishop Stephen back in the country, and took the Cross, vowing to travel to the Holy Land on Crusade. Because no Christian monarch can attack a Crusader, the invasion was called off. You need to persuade [Pandulf the Papal Legate](#) to excommunicate John, because only then can the invasion go ahead. You are fairly devout, though your piety manifest mainly in a homicidal hatred of Jews -- no right thinking noble should tolerate Jews, and once you are King you intend to have them expelled from England by proclamation. This tough stance on the enemies of Christ and the support of [Stephen Langton](#) may be enough to win Pandulf over. Luckily Stephen is an old university friend, and before you married you used to go drinking and whoring with him. You still remember that stupid song he composed to seduce

one noblewoman, the mother in fact of **Isabella de Angouleme** who is now Queen of England, having married King John. Oh the tales you could tell of Stephen Langton's sinful past, before your wife beat you in to obedience and scared Stephen to repentance!

Your wife is the niece of [King John](#), and if anything happened to little Henry John's son you would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. [King John](#) married Blanche to you as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently, though once you met you fell blissfully in love. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is hot tempered, beautiful and bossy. She never ever lets you rest on your laurels, and is actually a much better military strategist than you, having quietly advised you during the Normandy campaign where your armies defeated those of John conquering Normandy for France from the English and earning your father's praise. Blanche is the love of your life, but a formidable woman. She also has an psychopathic loathing of her uncle, and you know she will not be happy until you have ground his kingdom to dust and taken it as part of France. You don't know why she hates John so much...

Blanche is VERY odd, and getting odder. Recently she has taken to talking to herself, and staring fixedly in to space. She is also spending more time at Church, and you wonder what secret sin she is trying to atone for. You suspect she has taken a lover! You are determined to find out who he is, and quietly slay him. You can't imagine what kind of man would risk a relationship with as demanding a woman as Blanche however - you love her, but she is terrifying!

SECRET RULE: You may NEVER disobey Blanche on any matter.

SECRET RULE: Unlike other nobles you can actually read and write.

SECRET RULE: You can declare and Invasion of England as soon as you get a signed invite from an English Baron asking you to invade and become King, **PROVIDING** John is excommunicate at that time.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, but she is a woman so doesn't count. You detest this traitor who betrayed his castle many years ago deserting the French cause for the Angevin one. He is a traitor who must be beheaded for his crime, but unless you can get him to France you can't do that until you are King of England.

His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like King John! However you recognise who he is. His father was Baldric FitzGilbert, master of the Royal Whores and Keeper of the Great Seal for Henry II. His father surrendered a castle to the French, resulting in a humiliating loss for the Angevins, and he was disennobled as a result. His son has clearly become nothing more than a peasant – a long fall for a man whose Father was gaoler to Count Arthur of Brittany for Hubert de Burgh and who once controlled the keys to the Royal Bedchamber in the days of King Henry and Eleanor of Aquitaine! Perhaps he knows something about the murder of Count Arthur of Brittany and can be called as a witness to prove John's guilt?

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French.

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I

and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had Hubert de Burgh killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, King Richard, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a Bad King. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the Good Knight **William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it!

Archbishop Stephen Langton A dear friend, who was treated abominably by [King John](#). He was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, which really angered [King John](#). Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and he taught you to read and write. [King John](#) tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict

John refused to accept Stephen as Archbishop, so [Stephen Langton](#) fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under Interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one

could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let [Stephen Langton](#) back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching).

Of course what you really need is for the Interdict to be renewed. However you must ensure no harm comes to Stephen, while you use [Pandulf the Papal Legate](#) to get John excommunicated again.

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priest's mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of Robin Hood. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When Robin was pardoned along with all the outlaws by King Richard, Will chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious noblewoman who you have never seen before. Her manners mark her as from the highest echelons of the aristocracy, and her accent is English not French, but you don't recall seeing this youthful beauty before.

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy.

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad. He has proved himself a fine military

commander defeating **King John's** armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take King John's side.

Robert FitzWalter is a nouveau riche upstart Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God. Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of King John. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when the King was excommunicated he plotted with de Vesci and others to assassinate the King, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and King John. King John wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful - instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the "Army of God", and at Bury St Edmunds abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force King John to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to King John, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

Eustace de Vesci is **FitzWalter's** second in command. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until **King John** tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, half-sister of **King Alexander II of Scotland**. He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph's** settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of Magna Carta but has recently fallen out somehow with FitzWalter, but he is vital to the success of the plan as he brought the Scots to invade England.

Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack King Henry II, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. Hugh is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man, and definitely not **King John** who he has described as an effeminate weakling. Hugh has some kind of weird family curse, and is obsessed with witches, hunting them whenever he can...

[Alice de Scriven](#) is the Prioress at Kirklees, and [Robin Hood](#)'s friend and cousin. Many times she has helped the Outlaws hide from the **Sheriff of Nottingham**, and she knows the secret ways of Sherwood Forest better than anyone but [Will Scarlet](#) and Robin himself. Alice's convent is supported by donations from [Nicolaa de la Haye](#), and the

two women are old friends. Alice has an almost supernatural capacity to heal, once saving **Hugh Bigod**'s life when he was mauled by a bear.

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provençal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition “La Dame en Rouge”. Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of [King John](#). A few years ago John ordered him to kill the little boy Count Arthur of Brittany who was in Hubert's care - in fact John stated he should kill the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, cutting his throat, and burning his body. While Hubert denies he did it, everyone knows he did, and is a foul child murderer and loyal crony of John. You are determined that de Burgh should face justice for his cowardly murder of the child Count Arthur. Three options present themselves under English Law - if a Jury of eleven nobles and clergy can be found he can be tried by his peers and beheaded, otherwise the King must approve a trial by combat, or he can be tried under Canon Law by ordeal, having to plunge his hands in to a cauldron of boiling water to recover pebbles or carry a red hot ploughshare nine paces. Ordeals can be set up by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a trial by combat by the King of England, but a jury can be convened by any English baron. Make sure de Burgh is executed!

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. He has a friendship with **Hugh Bigod**, and **Nicolaa de la Haye**

Queen Isabella of Angouleme A beautiful young French woman who was due to be married to your enemy Hugh de Lusignan. when [King John](#) seduced her and carried her off, losing his only ally and Normandy as a result. You do wonder if he made the right choice, and try not to look at her in case Blanche notices and gets annoyed. anyway the girl is Queen of England now, and will be destined for a convent once you replace John on the throne. Her mother was seduced by Stephen Langton in his wild hell raising days, in fact she looks a little bit like him. Maybe he is her father. The irony of your mate the Archbishop of Canterbury being potentially King John's father in law is delicious!

Alexander II of Scotland. This squeaky voiced schoolboy only recently became King of Scotland. He has been convinced to invade England by the Rebels, in the person of **Eustace de Vesci**, but has so far been hesitant to do much. You must ensure he stays out of the battle for the English throne, as you don't want him trying to claim it once you get rid of John!

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, and is the only woman in England or Wales to command a castle. And what a castle! Lincoln is the key castle in England, because it controls the road to the North. The invading Scots have been forced to halt because they do not wish to try and storm Lincoln Castle, and if the French invade they will need to take it too. Only the Welsh rebels, cowed by King John hanging seventy young Welsh children brought up in England as hostages, have no interest in Lincoln Castle.

So Nicolaa is the Kingmaker – if she surrenders the castle to Alexander of Scotland, he will go on to capture London and then the rest of the country. If you invade, and Nicolaa chooses to surrender Lincoln to you, then England will become a possession of the French King and you will be King of England! And if Nicolaa chooses to stay loyal to John, then ultimately John will be King of England. In the bizarre circumstance of another Royal claimant arising, then Nicolaa can choose to give them legitimacy and ultimately the throne by surrendering Lincoln Castle to them. The fate of the nation depends upon her decision!

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

Baroness Nicolaa de la Haye, Castellan of Lincoln and Join Sheriff of Nottingham & Lincolnshire.

Nicolaa de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sheriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, and is the only woman in England or Wales to command a castle. And what a castle! Lincoln is the key castle in England, because it controls the road to the North. The invading Scots have been forced to halt because they do not wish to try and storm Lincoln Castle, and if the French invade they will need to take it too. Only the Welsh lords (cowed by King John hanging seventy young Welsh children brought up in England as hostages) have no interest in Lincoln Castle.

So Nicolaa is the Kingmaker – if she surrenders the castle to Alexander of Scotland, he will go on to capture London and then the rest of the country. If the Dauphin Louis invades, and Nicolaa chooses to surrender Lincoln to him, then England will become a possession of the French King. And if Nicolaa chooses to stay loyal to John, then ultimately John will be King of England. In the bizarre circumstance of another Royal claimant arising, then Nicolaa can choose to give them legitimacy and ultimately the throne by surrendering Lincoln Castle to them. The fate of the nation depends upon her decision!

Nicolaa has lived a long and eventful wife, outliving two husbands – she is still in mourning for the second, Gerard, who died in January. Gerard was one of the very few barons who supported King John's attempted coup when King Richard was away on crusade, and Nicolaa and Gerard worked hard to try and support John's take over of the kingdom, and Nicolaa held out alone at Lincoln Castle against the loyalist troops. This was born less out of a liking for John than through a sincere belief King Richard was a terrible king, who was ruining the country through illegal taxation and arbitrary rule by those who bought High Office, while the King himself spent his time in Aquitaine or on Crusade, or as a captive demanding the nation paid the Holy Roman Emperor the vast ransom for his release. John on the other hand is studious, intelligent, and a genuinely brilliant administrator who has put the royal finances back in order.

When Richard returned and John was defeated returned Gerard was dispossessed of his barony, and it is only when John became King that he was reappointed. During John's attempted coup a group of outlaws led by one **Robin Hood** had repeatedly foiled the Sheriff of Nottingham – King John appointed Nicolaa to capture Robin, and his second-in-command **Will Scarlet**.

SPECIAL RULE: You are co-Sheriff of Nottingham and Lincoln with Philip Marc, and may countermand any of his orders, and vice versa. An order can only be countermanded once – so if you release a prisoner, Philip can't just immediately throw them back in gaol. They have to at least leave the castle first!

Robin was actually the Earl of Huntingdon, dispossessed and exiled during John's coup for his support of Richard, and then restored by Richard, he is now once again an outlaw. King John on coming to the throne banished him and gave his lands to the younger brother of the current **King of Scotland**, who is now Earl of Huntingdon.

John chose wisely. You discovered that Robin's cousin was the noted holy lady and healer **Alice de Scriven, Prioress of Kirklees**. You befriended her, and using information you gleaned from your chats you developed a strategy. Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham would arrest an outlaw sympathiser and sentence them to hang; you would countermand the order, as co-sheriff, and release the man, then having gained his trust learn more about the outlaws' operations. Eventually you learned of the secret meeting place where the Sheriff's ward **Maid Marion** was meeting Robin Hood, and Philip's men were able to arrest him. Now he is in the Sheriff's dungeon here at Nottingham Castle, and he will be hanged tomorrow, to the immense joy of all right-thinking folks! You however must pretend to be sympathetic to the cause – it has cost you a small fortune in endowments to Kirklees Priory to gain the trust of the Prioress, and manipulate her into helping you catch Robin. Now you need her to help you with the next part of your task – catching **Will Scarlet**, who never returned to civilisation at all when Richard pardoned the outlaws, but lives alone in Sherwood Forest.

You have an ally in hunting down the Outlaws, your old friend Hugh Bigod. You and Hugh are both single again, and as childhood sweethearts you wonder if you may finally marry. A few years ago he came to visit you, and went hunting in Sherwood Forest. There he was attacked by a great rogue bear, that has curiously slain many great hunters over the years – it must be of huge size and intelligence. Fortunately when he did not return Gerald sent out men who found him mortally wounded, and you were able to get him to Alice de Scriven the Prioress of Kirklees who saved him with her healing arts. Shortly afterwards though poor old Hugh became quite mad, and now he raves about witches, and had burned a score of them in his witchfinding rampages around East Anglia. Perhaps you should get Alice to cure him again, or he will never propose?

Stranger still is **Rosamund of Jerbiton** – she must be the granddaughter of King Henry II's mistress Rosamund of Clifford, Fair Rosamund. She looks just like her – in fact you are almost certain she is the same woman, mysteriously unaffected by aging. As the jealous Queen Eleanor had her forced to commit suicide, you are not surprised. Could she be a ghost? You would be the same age, but something is very wrong. You don't know where Jerbiton is, or how Rosamund escaped death, but you intend to find out! In 1173 **Hugh Bigod**'s father rebelled against King Henry, as did Henry's son. Henry had his wife, Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine imprisoned; but she still managed to have

her rival Rosamund of Clifford, Henry's beloved mistress murdered. The King had Rosamund hidden in a magical maze at Woodstock, Oxfordshire, where Eleanor could not find her. Eleanor, pregnant with John turned up, and somehow bribed the Master of the King's Whores¹ to allow her in to the maze. Finding the beautiful Rosamund, also apparently pregnant with the King's child, Eleanor forced her to commit suicide, offering her the choice of poison or dagger. Rosamund drank poison and died, and that was the end of that. You were friends with Rosamund Clifford, and this woman looks so much like her you almost expect her to be her.

¹ This was the real title, and Baldric FitzGilbert held that role, as well as Keeper of the Great Seal and King's Gaoler. He fell from grace after surrendering Rouen castle to the French in 1210.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with you. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was with you and your second husband Gerard the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like King John!

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French. Be kind to her, and if Robin escapes again she will lead you straight to him.

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might

have helped him save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had Hubert de Burgh killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, King Richard, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is however a Good King. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country to impose law and order and sorted out the broken tax system. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a good king, much better than his awful brother Richard who bankrupted the country and said he would sell London if anyone would buy it. **William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does **Hubert de Burgh** and yourself.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it, quite rightly.

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the **Papal Legate Pandulf** took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict,

excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priest's mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of Robin Hood. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When Robin was pardoned along with all the outlaws by King Richard, Will chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however, but you are secretly sworn to capture him for King John,

Rosamund of Jerbiton is no such thing – she must be the granddaughter of King Henry II's mistress Rosamund of Clifford, Fair Rosamund. She looks just like her – in fact you are almost certain she is the same woman, mysteriously unaffected by aging. As the jealous Queen Eleanor had her forced to commit suicide, you are not surprised. Could she be a ghost? You would be the same age, but something is very wrong. You don't know where Jerbiton is, or how Rosamund escaped death, but you intend to find out!

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is said to be both beautiful and bossy.

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. Louis is regarded by all right thinking Englishmen as a vile unspeakable cad. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating King John's armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne! Known to be friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take King John's side.

Robert FitzWalter is a nouveau riche upstart Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God. Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of King John. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a

few years ago when the **King** was excommunicated he plotted with de Vesci and others to assassinate the **King**, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and **King John**. **King John** wrote off his debts to the Jews, but **FitzWalter** was not grateful – instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the “Army of God”, and at **Bury St Edmunds** abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force **King John** to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to **King John**, and are chasing the poor monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign. He is probably a vile traitor who should be hanged, but perhaps he has some good points.

Eustace de Vesci is **FitzWalter's** second in command. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until **King John** tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, half-sister of **King Alexander II of Scotland**. He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph's** settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of *Magna Carta* but has recently fallen out somehow with **FitzWalter**, but he is vital to the success of the plan as he brought the Scots to invade England.

Hugh Bigod is the third of the rebel barons, and one of the 25 barons who comprise the Army of God. His family rebelled in 1173, allying with the Earl of Leicester to attack **King Henry II**, and Henry had their East Anglian castles destroyed as punishment. Now they have predictably rebelled again. Hugh is a notoriously nuts individual, strong willed and answering to no man, and definitely not **King John** who he has described as an effeminate weakling. Hugh has some kind of weird family curse, and is obsessed with witches, hunting them whenever he can. You have been in love with Hugh for five decades, and are determined to get him to propose. (See main text)

Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at **Kirklees**, and **Robin Hood's** friend and cousin. Many times she has helped the Outlaws hide from the **Sheriff of Nottingham**, and she knows the secret ways of Sherwood Forest better than anyone but **Will Scarlet** and Robin himself. Alice's convent is supported by donations from **Nicolaa de la Haye**, and the two women are old friends. Alice has an almost supernatural capacity to heal, once saving **Hugh Bigod's** life when he was mauled by a bear after you took him to her (see main text).

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provençal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition “La Dame en Rouge”. Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**. A few years ago Count Arthur of Brittany died while in de Burgh's care, and evildoers falsely attribute his murder to de Burgh and **King John**.

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. He is a dashing charming and truly wonderful man, and you are a massive fan of his, and act all excited and flustered around him. You have been friends for many, many years, and he is the only person you really trust.

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is a witch. Everyone knows that, because why else would King John have eloped with her after meeting her at the preparations for her wedding to his only strong ally on the continent, Hugh de Lusignan? De Lusignan of course switched sides, and King John lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress. Then John went one stage further, divorcing his wife who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and alienating them to, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against him. Then he married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all his days in bed with her, not even answering the door to Hugh de Burgh or William Marshal, till William Marshal kicked it in and dragged the king protesting to his throne.. King John invented a new robe, which he calls the dressing gown, which he wears to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when he is not reading he likes to be in bed with Isabella. She is a witch I tell you!

Alexander II of Scotland. This squeaky voiced schoolboy only recently became King of Scotland. He has been convinced to invade England by the Rebels, in the person of **Eustace de Vesci**, but has so far been hesitant to do much. His troops are trapped north of Lincoln as he can not proceed south without taking your castle.

Dramatic Conventions, being the Rules

Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

Please do not touch, kiss, fondle, fold, mutilate or spindle other players without their clear permission. Then go do it round the back of the bike sheds after the game.

The game takes place in three acts – Nottingham Castle, Runnymede Island, and Canterbury Cathedral. You will know when an act ends because the Theme Music will play. Please shout one last line when you hear it mount an imaginary horse and ride round the room until it ends. The next Act will then begin.

The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

Rosamund of Jerbiton

You are Rosamund Clifford, “Rosa Mundi” - “Rose of this World”. Renowned as the most beautiful woman any of your contemporaries had seen, you became the mistress of King Henry II, and he built you a flower bower, maze and gardens at his palace of Woodstock. The one great romantic love of Henry's life, he was forced to break off your affair several times by his wife Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, and as far as the world knows she eventually murdered you. The heavily pregnant Eleanor tracked you down to Woodstock, and bribed one of your grogs to lead her through the regio to your hidden sanctum, where she offered you a choice of death by poison or by the dagger. Thinking quickly you took the cup, and magically transformed the contents to tasty and harmless wine. Pretending to die, Eleanor stormed off, and and you decided it was best to “stay dead” as far as the World was concerned, and stay away from Henry.



Eleanor had not counted on your being a magician! As a young woman you were apprenticed to Isabel of Monmouth, and eventually became a magician of House Jerbiton, like many Jerbiton with a two fold agenda of studying beauty and aesthetics and keeping close links with the mundane nobility, acting as diplomats for the Order, who are not allowed to meddle in mundane affairs if the repercussions could “bring ruin upon my sodales”. The Stonehenge Tribunal where you live is in political anarchy, with no quorate Tribunal meeting having been held for decades, and Iudicium the Quaesitor at Blackthorn Covenant where you apprenticed has not brought a case in thirty years. As such what you do is not really subject to much scrutiny, and even back when you were mistress of the King while some magi where insanely jealous Stonehenge was too disunited, and you too powerful to do much.

You are something of a hermit anyway since your “death”, living in your regio entered through the maze at Woodstock Palace, and occasionally going and putting fresh roses on your empty tomb at Godstow Abbey, watching the procession of lovers, courtiers and romantics who come to put flowers on grave and mourn the loss of the Most Beautiful Woman in the World. It pleases your vanity to see them!

Apart from Will Scarlet (q.v) only one other person knows you are Rosamund Clifford and still alive. You are too vain to disguise your looks, and one day while out walking in

the French countryside you bumped in to **William the Marshal**. You are both the same age, and of course William wooed you decades ago, and knew you before you even became Henry's mistress. Now you still looked 26 – you due to this day, because of your special Longevity Potion – but William at first thought you were a ghost, and then a witch, and was dragging you to a duck pond to duck you and see when you finally admitted you were in fact a magician.

Now this was near Rouen just before the first tournament of the season, the year that Young William, William's son won his spurs and was knighted. The problem is that William Junior is a complete doofus, and utterly worthless as a jousting, and the Angevin team managed by William was being deeply embarrassed by his son's appalling performance in practice. William was about to become the laughing stock of Christendom, as the Greatest Knight in the World turned out to have a son who was the Worst Jousting in History. So he promised to keep your secret, if you would help him. Well what could a girl do?

At first you made a magic item, a saddle that prevented the person sitting on it from being struck by metal objects. The problem was that it was absolutely obvious that magic was being used. Your second plan was to create a bridle with the Aura of Irrelevance – all who saw the young man just paid no attention to him, as his presence was reduced to “oh was he at the tourney?”. In the chaos of the melee knight just chose other targets, and everyone just forgot about William's son in the excitement. Finally you used magic to make William appear youthful, and he pretended to be his son in a few minor tournaments before sending the bumbling idiot off to manage the family estates in Ireland and build castles, the latter being his hobby. So William owes you a favour, and keeps his mouth shut. Maybe you could confide some of your problems in him?

So the world believes you dead, and yet you can easily play your own ghost. (You did it to Henry a few times, when you missed him too much). You are glad that bitch Eleanor was incarcerated by Henry for the rest of her life, and yet your revenge was sweeter than that. It is not Eleanor's child John who sits upon the throne – he is the servant called Baldric, and yes the likeness between him and Henry is remarkable, though he has his father's eyes – but your son! When Eleanor killed you you were heavily pregnant with Henry's child, as she was with John. In revenge for her attempting to slay you, you swapped the babies, so that your son would be recognised as hers and would be brought up as a royal. You entrusted “your son”, the rightful king of England (actually Eleanor's child) to the care of Baldric FitzGilbert, Master of the Royal Whores, Keeper of Mistresses and Keeper of the Great Seal for Henry¹. He raised him as his own, but after he refused

1 The titles are authentic, Baldric FitzGilbert is a historical character.

to kill Young Arthur, Count of Brittany and surrendered Hubert de Burgh's castle to the French FitzGilbert fell from grace and the adopted son and rightful heir to the throne (also called **Baldric**) is now just a servant, a lowly peasant.

The only way anyone can tell the babies apart is that all the Angevin men have the same birthmark, a large red one in the shape of a strawberry – some say a turnip – on the left buttock. Baldric (rightful King) has this, but King John does not.

So why have you come to the Royal Court? To see your son! This *Magna Carta* business is getting out of hand, and while you can't really reveal your treasonous activities – well you can, but you really don't want to – you need to save poor little John (though you called him BooBoo, and he will always be BooBoo to you) from himself. He is a Terrible King, and it is all your fault, because he is not born to be King. And meanwhile Baldric is a mere peasant, eating his turnips and living in a smelly hovel – but really that is just fine, because he is Eleanor's baby!

The problem is that recently you have felt guilty about it all. There is no one you can confide in, but you have to do something to save the Kingdom from the effects of your meddling. And that brings us to **Will Scarlet**....

Will Scarlet is in fact not just an Outlaw, but also secretly a magus of House Bjornaer who has the heartbeast of a bear. He lives in Sherwood Forest, with a hidden Sanctum no one can find as it is so well hidden. Fortunately Simon of Coventry, a Redcap, knows the way, and leads you there occasionally to meet with your friend Will and discuss matters. Will is very wild and ferocious, almost animalistic, but you share your hidden membership in the Order of Hermes and try to keep each other informed as to what is going on. Will has followed a weird magical mystery tradition that has led to him believing he is the reincarnated King Arthur, Lord of the Greenwood, and Magical King of England. He embodies the Greenwood spirit of liberty, freedom and the very soul of the Realm. As such, the Arcane Connection between Will and the Kingdom is extremely strong, and you are not sure how Magna Carta is signed will effect him, but the Wild Bear of the Woods has come out of seclusion to Nottingham Castle to investigate. You are shocked to see him here – try and teach him manners, and stop him eating anyone. He may be here to rescue his friend **Robin**

Hood who you have heard is locked in the oubliette in the castle dungeon, or to see his other friend **Maid Marion**, or to seek vengeance upon the wicked Sheriff of Nottingham **Philip Marc**. Help him, but make sure you teach him proper etiquette – he is such an uncouth wildman!

You really don't know what to do – but it is clear you are going to have to do something. BooBoo, sorry King John does not know you are his mother, or who you are, or any of the story, but he is making such a terrible hash of being King.

SPECIAL RULES: SECRET OF SHERWOOD – If you need to visit Will Scarlet's Sanctum for any reason you can go there immediately simply stepping over any boundaries and ignoring the maze, and lead others there with you.

SPECIAL RULES: MISTRESS OF THE LABYRINTH: Sherwood Forest is laid out on the floor with string and tape. You may redesign the maze at any time by moving strings using your incredible powers of Herbam magic, but you may NOT move any of the cards on the floor.

SPECIAL RULES: MAGIC! You have spells, and may cast them freely as often as you like. If you casts them in a Divine aura (like Nottingham Castle or Canterbury Cathedral) or Infernal Aura you are fatigued and must rest 5 minutes to recover before casting another spell.

Spells

Phantasm of the Human Form

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind

Makes an image of a clothed and equipped person that can make noise. Under your direct, unspoken command, the person can move about, speak, and behave as a human does.

Wizard's Sidestep

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

Your image appears up to 1 pace from where you actually are, so attacks aimed there are likely to miss you. Whenever the image is successfully struck, it disappears and reappears in another spot.

In combat, early attacks are aimed at the image, and so automatically miss you.

Illusion of Cool Flames

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Ind

A source of heat, such as a fire, seems to lose its heat and drop to the surrounding temperature. It still, however, has its normal beneficial and harmful effects (that is, glowing coals still cook meat or burn a person's hand, though they do not feel hot).

Disguise of the Transformed Image

R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

Makes someone look, sound, feel, and smell different, though at least passably human.

Trap of the Entwining Vines

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Group

Causes strong, woody vines to grow rapidly from fertile earth. The vines cover a circle 2 paces across and reach 6 feet high. Anything caught within them is immobilized.

Wall of Thorns

R: Voice, D: Sun, T: Group

Within seconds, this spell creates a straight wall of woody, thorny bushes. CJ will provide a green

rope to use if you cast this to mark out the boundaries.

Pass the Unyielding Portal

R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Ind

Makes the wood of a door pliable, allowing the magus to bend it open regardless of most locks or bars.

The Great Rot

R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Group

Rots and destroys a large amount of dead wood, up to the amount found in a wooden house or small inn. Wooden structures creak and groan mightily for about a minute before collapsing.

Strike of the Angered Branch

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Part

Causes a large tree branch to swing at a target.

The Happy Cup

R: Touch, D: Sun T: Individual

Makes all liquids within the target room cup safe to drink, giving you to sunset or sunrise to find an antidote before they turn back to poison in your stomach.

Chaos of the Angry Waves

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Part

Causes water to churn wildly, overturning small water craft

Deluge of Rushing and Dashing

R: Voice, D: Conc, T: Ind

Causes a stream to flood, starting at the stream's nearest point to you and continuing downstream. The results of this spell are generally quite impressive. As the stream overflows its original bed, it becomes a raging torrent, sucking in everything near it. Damage from the spell can last for many years.

As long as you concentrate, the stream remains at flood levels. Anyone caught near the stream when it floods is struck by the rush of water

Waves of Drowning and Smashing

R: Sight, D: Mom, T: Ind

Raises a wave 5 feet high and 30 paces wide, which can submerge swimmers, overturn rowboats, and damage sailing ships. It starts as a small, curved wave and grows for the first 10 paces, at which point it reaches maximum size. If it travels 100 paces without striking an object large enough to break it up, it dissipates.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, who can countermand his orders, and vice versa. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. **Maid Marion** is being educated (or held as a hostage) at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle. Robin, captured having returned from exile, is locked in the oubliette.

Baldric - Eleanor's child, and rightful King of England.

Maid Marion: the daughter of Robert Fitzwalter, she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She was due to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French.

King John - Your unfortunate son BooBoo, though he does not know it! King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, Hugh de Lusignan, by running off with his cute little

fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had Hubert de Burgh killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, King Richard, and his poor wonderful father Henry, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a **Bad King**. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the Good Knight **William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. It is the Barons, the wicked **Eustace de Vesci** and the villainous **Robert Fitzwalter** who are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it!

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). Still most people think John is right to be wary of the blatantly pro-French Archbishop.

Pandulf is the deeply sinister Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very dodgy. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence, that just happens to have also dispossessed many of the nobles there, and caused massive bloodshed. A few years ago Pandulf called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the King to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still King John

managed to embarrass Pandulf – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priest's mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly in the Pope's eyes profitable for King John!

Will Scarlet is really Artorius of Bjornaer, a fellow magus and your friend, even if he has no manners and should never be allowed near the Court. Look after him. He embodies the Spirit of the Realm.

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little Henry John's son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. King John married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is your kind of girl – gets what she wants. Try and befriend her!

Louis the Lion, Dauphin of France. Son of the French monarch and if anything happens to John's child Henry the strongest claimant to the throne of England (after Baldric who is rightful King) through his marriage to John's niece **Blanche of Castille**. He has proved himself a fine military commander defeating King John's armies in Normandy, and has raised a sizeable army to invade England which is waiting just across the Channel for when he decides to claim the English throne. Friends with **Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury** he hates the traitor **Philip Marc, Sheriff of Nottingham**, as a Frenchman who chose to take King John's side.

Robert FitzWalter is a handsome Essex baron with extensive lands in Cornwall and the North, who commands one hundred knights who owe him fealty, and more importantly is leader of the 25 Barons, taking the title Marshal of the Army of God. Everyone knows that **King John** tried to seduce his daughter **Maid Marion**, who is held as a hostage in the Castle at Nottingham by the Sheriff **Philip Marc** on behalf of King John. John's attentions to his daughter made FitzWalter so angry that a few years ago when the King was excommunicated he plotted with de Vesci and others to assassinate the King, or at least abduct him, and when the conspiracy was uncovered he was forced to flee to France before he could be executed for treason. There he made friends with fellow exile **Archbishop Stephen Langton**, and was allowed to return under the same peace deal negotiated by **Pandulf** between the Pope and King John. King John wrote off his debts to the Jews, but FitzWalter was not grateful – instead he gathered an alliance of 25 barons, the “Army of God”, and at Bury St Edmunds abbey they drew up *Magna Carta*, a document that if he attaches his seal will force King John to behave. Robert and the barons with their army of some 2000 knights and endless levies have seized London, excepting the Tower of London whose garrison remain loyal to King John, and are chasing the villainous monarch around the country, trying to force him to sign.

Eustace de Vesci is **FitzWalter's** second in command. He was a faithful servant of the Crown until **King John** tried to seduce Eustace's wife, Margaret of Scotland, half-sister of **King Alexander II of Scotland**. He fled in to exile in Scotland, but was allowed to return through **Pandulph's** settlement that ended the Interdict. He has joined the Army of God, is an enthusiastic supporter of Magna Carta but has recently fallen out somehow with FitzWalter, but he is vital to the success of the plan as he brought the Scots to invade England.

Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at Kirklees and a nun. You don't know anything about her really.

Hubert de Burgh is a troubadour in the Provençal tradition. He spends his cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention, loves to compose romantic poems and to sign his chansons, most notably his composition “La Dame en Rouge”. Hubert is a romantic fellow, but unfortunately he is also the loyal minion of **King John**.

William the Marshal, Greatest Knight in the World. Superhero of the world of jousting, he is the most famous sports star in Europe, and while seventy years old he is still a ferocious warrior equal to the nine best knights in any kingdom in combat. He rides, fights, and commands in battle better than anyone else. Now retired from the jousting circuit, his fame means everyone recognises and adores William. A man of integrity, honour and immense bravery, he has remained loyal to **King John**, refusing to betray his liege lord, while openly criticising the King's conduct. He has a friendship with **Hugh Bigod**, and **Nicolaa de la Haye**. He knows who you are, and you know his son is an idiot, and you guess you are friends!

Queen Isabella of Angouleme is clearly part faerie, and performing some role, unconsciously making others play parts in whatever story she embodies. Poor little thing does not know it, but that is the plain truth. **King John** have eloped with her after meeting her at the preparations for her wedding to his only strong ally on the continent, **Hugh de Lusignan**. De Lusignan of course switched sides, and **King John** lost Normandy, all for a little teenage temptress. Then John went one stage further, divorcing his wife who happened to be the sister of a powerful Welsh prince, and alienating them to, so now the Welsh have joined the rebellion against him. Then he married Isabella, and ignored all business to spend all his days in bed with her, not even answering the door to **Hugh de Burgh** or **William Marshal**, till **William Marshal** kicked it in and dragged the king protesting to his throne.. **King John** invented a new robe, which he calls the dressing gown, which he wears to avoid having to get dressed (this is actually true!) and when he is not reading he likes to be in bed with Isabella.

This destructive little trollop might not realise what she is doing but she definitely needs taking care of, and getting away from your son. Find grounds to get the marriage annulled, and get **Pandulf the Papal Legate** to approve the divorce on behalf of the Pope.

Alexander II of Scotland. This squeaky voiced shcoolboy only recently became King of Scotland. He has been convinced to invade England by the Rebels, in the person of **Eustace de Vesci**, but has so far been hesitant to do much.

Nicola de la Haye is a sweet and gentle lady, of the highest birth. She is co-sherriff of Nottingham and Lincolnshire with **Marc Philip**, but lets him deal with the forestry law. She is a very efficient castellan and administrator at Lincoln, and is the only woman in England or Wales to command a castle. You knew her and were great friends with her when young, so she is bound to recognise you. Find some way to deal with that problem – think of what to say to explain things to her.

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Don't try and win – try to have fun, outrageously overact and maybe deal with some real historical themes along the way. Make sure others have fun!

Only clergy can read and write. So only Clergy can read or alter the Magna Carta, or any other document. Clergy have a Church on their name badges.

If someone is in disguise, no matter how awful, you don't recognise them – unless your character sheet says you do. If they say they are a washerwoman, you act as if they are a washerwoman, even if you the player knows it is the King of Scotland.

Everyone always recognises King John – his face is on the money!

All women are secretly enthralled by Outlaws (Robin Hood and Will Scarlet)

If someone shoots you with an arrow, or hits you with a sword, you are injured. You can't die till the last scene. You lay around making melodramatic noises like a sick cow till someone with medical skills stuffs leeches down your codpiece, or similar. Oh OK, bandages you up!

Talking of shooting with arrows, and hitting with swords – not real ones. The referees will explain. Please don't bring any real weapons to the game.

Not everyone speaks the same language, as was the case in 1215. Mine, gesture, sing!

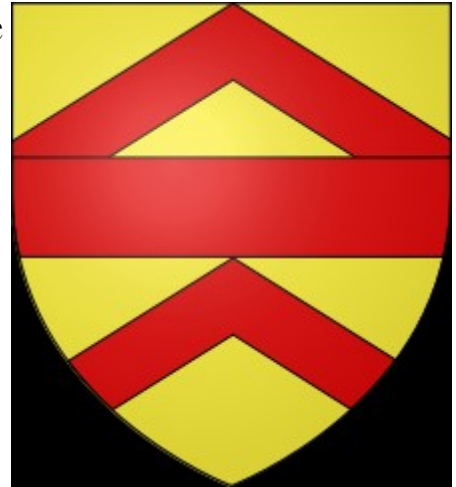
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The game deals with very serious themes about politics, liberty, and grown men dressing up in tights. Please treat these themes with the respect they deserve. :)

Baron Robert FitzWalter, Marshal of the Army of God

You are the originator of *Magna Carta* (with some help from **Archbishop Stephen Langton** as you don't read and write) and commander of 2,000 knights, the forces of Twenty Five Barons who have named themselves the Army of God and gathered to demand Justice from **King John**. If you succeed you will have struck a vital blow for Liberty and Constitutional Government, and against Tyranny and Arbitrary Rule. It is vital you succeed, and **Bad King John** is brought to heel and forced to put his seal on the document. Of course that won't completely keep him under control, but the Twenty Five stand united and pledged to ensure that John stops outraging wives and daughters and henceforth will govern with the consent of the Barons. You are an idealist, a man of vision, and your concept of the world *Magna Carta* will usher in will even protect freemen and clergy from the Evils that kings do, though the other Barons are to be fair more concerned with (indeed on the whole exclusively concerned with) the rights of Barons!



You drew up *Magna Carta* last year at Bury St Edmunds, and swore upon the relics of the Glorious King and Martyr St. Edmund on his Feast Day of November 20th that you would force **King John** to sign it before the year was out. Now Easter has come and gone, and Pentecost, and John has repeatedly said he is “considering the matter”. It is clear the time has come to force him to sign, and so with two of your closest supporters from the Rebel Barons – **Eustace de Vesci** and **Hugh Bigod** – the **Papal Legate Pandulf**, and Archbishop Stephen Langton, you have come here to make him bloody well sign, cornering him in Nottingham Castle.

The Sheriff of Nottingham **Philip Marc**, a Frenchman and part of the hated d'Athee clan of foreign favourites who you *Magna Carta* will require John to expel from the castle has no choice but to let you in. Years ago **King John** earned your eternal hatred by trying to seduce your little daughter, Maid Marion – and you were forced to send her off to be fostered, eventually sending her here to Philip Marc, who despite his many many faults has been

a very good fosterer to her. (It is normal practice for the children of nobles to be fostered in another nobles household and educated this way). Marion and you remain close, but the dear dear girl now speaks only French, the language of the Sheriff, and you grieve that you spent so many years apart.

Of course during those years she grew up, and took a lover, **Robin Hood**. The Earl of Huntingdon's son banished in to exile by John, Robin had set up camp with the wild man **Will Scarlet** and with the assistance of the skilled healer and **Prioress Alice de Scriven** in the woods, carrying out a guerilla war against King John during the period when he was Regent of England and attempting to stage a coup against King Richard who was away on Crusade. The Merry Men proved very efficient freedom fighters, and you admire their guts and determination. Eventually King Richard returned, and Robin was made Earl of Huntingdon, and asked for your permission to marry Maid Marion.

Unfortunately you could not give it – through an indiscretion of your father's with another man's wife, Robin and Marion are 7th Cousins; and 7th Cousins are within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity of Holy Mother Church. You can't explain why to them without explaining your father's adultery, and while he, the lady and her husband are all long, long dead, it would be vile incest for Robin and Marion to marry. Unless of course the Pope ratifies it, in which case it is finer, holy and perfectly above board for them to marry. You had Pandulf write down all the facts and send word to the Pope, and the Pope suggested that God could smile upon their union for the small administrative fee of 12,000 Marks! Why to is barefaced robbery, and despite your devotion to the Church you have concluded that Innocent III presides over a Curia that is a nest of vipers. You still hope to persuade Pandulf to issue the special license to allow them to marry, but for now you are refusing to explain to Marion why she can't (and it maybe your lack of French helps there – FitzWalter speaks exactly as much French as the player) and refusing to explain yourself to Robin too.

King John has of course recently disennobled Robin, banishing him again, and you can't allow him to marry Marion anyway until he regains his title, which is currently in abeyance, and the gift of the King.

You are delighted to see **William the Marshal** and **Hubert de Burgh** here. Both are good men – if you discount claims that Hubert murdered poor

Count Arthur of Brittany on John's command – and you are sure that both would support you if they could only have their eyes opened to what a complete bastard King John really is. Rather than fighting them, it would be so much better if you could convince them to join you, and convince John he has no choice but to sign.

Still if it does come to a fight you will need allies. Eustace de Vesci fled north when you fled to France after the affair of 1212. Three years ago, King John tried to seduce your daughter again, and then tried his hand at de Vesci's wife, Margaret of Scotland, at de Vesci's wedding feast. Outraged the two of you made a plan to ride to London and kill John at Windsor, but John learned of it and exiled you both, after taking the child or wife of every Baron in England as hostage. John is always willing to hang hostages – he hanged seventy little Welsh nobles aged under twelve when the Welsh rebelled a few years back, and you know that if he threatens to hang their loved ones the army of Twenty Five might fall apart. So de Vesci has persuaded the Scots to march South, and their army is now waiting just north of Lincoln, while you tried to persuade the King of France to invade.

John is cunning however, and took the Cross, promising at some future time he will go crusading. This means technically no Christian monarch may attack him. The **Dauphin Louis the Lion**, spurred on by his pious and militant wife Blanche of Castille has raised an army – the Pope has forbidden his father, but has said nothing about him – and has promised to come to your assistance is necessary, but it still seems wise to see Pandulph's blessing. This split between the pro-French and pro-Scottish Rebel factions is unnecessarily divisive, and you are far from certain of Eustace's true motives. He is a vicious anti-Semite who would love to drive the Jews out of England, which is NOT in the spirit of Magna Carta – the foreigners you wish to expel are the Royal Favourites like Philip Marc. Hugh Bigod meanwhile appears to have gone even more mad, if such a thing is possible, and taken to riding around the East Anglian countryside burning witches.

Ultimately though you are a chap with an admirably simple goal – to ensure Magna Carta gets signed and John abides by it.

What You Know About...

Philip Mark, Sheriff of Nottingham. A Frenchman, and as a foreigner unpopular with the barons, he is actually joint Sheriff of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire with **Nicolaa de la Haye**, but she is a woman so doesn't count. His job is to uphold the Forest Law, which is nothing to do with woods; a Forest is the King's own hunting estates, where special laws apply, most of which involve hanging or chopping bits off anyone who as much as catches a rabbit or takes a twig for their fire. This makes him about as popular as the Black Death.

When King Richard was on Crusade, Philip was the only person who backed **King John** when he tried to stage a coup and seize the throne from his brother, and was rewarded with his current position. Unfortunately **Robin Hood** an outlaw fought a guerilla campaign from Sherwood Forest, and on his return made Robin Earl of Huntingdon and threw Philip in a dungeon. When John came to the throne, he exiled Robin and restored Philip as Sheriff. Your daughter **Maid Marion** is being educated at Philip's court at Nottingham Castle.

Baldric – a smelly peasant, servant to the Sheriff of Nottingham. You may give him orders, obeying is his job. Amusingly he looks a bit like King John! You realise he is the son of Baldric FitzGilbert, who was Master of the Royal Whores and Castellan of the de Burgh castle in Normandy back during the reign of King Henry. You haven't seen him about since he was a young man. Well he is a peasant now, but no reason not to be kind to him.

Maid Marion: your daughter she was placed in the care of Philip Sheriff of Nottingham as a young woman, and has been educated at Nottingham Castle. She is a notorious tomboy who used to run away in to Sherwood Forest a lot, and had a crush on Robin Hood a notorious outlaw. She wanted to marry him after Robin became Earl of Huntingdon, but then King Richard died and John exiled Robin, and Marion was sent back to Nottingham Castle. She is very innocent and easily misled, but having grown up in the foreign court at Nottingham speaks only French.

King John – King of England and Ireland, he was the youngest of the sons of Henry I and was never expected to become King, only doing so because all his elder brothers died, most recently Richard who was King before him. During King Richard's reign John was left in charge as Regent while Richard went on Crusade, and then when Richard was kidnapped on the way home by the Holy Roman Emperor John tried to take over the country and declare himself King, but only one baron, the French born **Phillip Mark** (now Sheriff of Nottingham) joined him. When Richard returned he bizarrely forgave John, and on Richard's death John became King. His reign has been a catalogue of disasters.

Inheriting large continental possessions, the Angevin Empire, John has now lost almost

all of them. He still holds Ireland, but managed to upset the Irish kings by tugging on their long beards and mocking their fashion sense. He upset the one man who might have helped him save the Empire, **Hugh de Lusignan**, by running off with his cute little fiancée **Isabella**. John divorced his wife, Joan – upsetting the Welsh, for she was sister of a Welsh Prince. Both turned their backs on him, and Bretons aren't keen on John either as their Count Arthur disappeared aged ten while enjoying John's hospitality. Everyone knows John had **Hubert de Burgh** killed the boy by putting out his eyes with a red hot iron, though John denies it. Anyway the Bretons rose against John, and he lost Normandy to the French. John has betrayed everyone, even his brother, **King Richard**, and his father, who died of a broken heart after John joined Richard's rebellion against him!

John is a **Bad King**. He has extended the Forests (lands that belong to the King where special very severe laws apply, not wooded areas) all over the country, invented new taxes to rob everyone and tried to seduce almost everyone's wife or daughter. In a country where few people agree on anything, everyone agrees John is a bad king. Still the **Good Knight William Marshal** stays loyal to him because he is the rightful King, as does the long suffering **Hubert de Burgh**, his chief minion.

His enemies are many. Archbishop of Canterbury **Stephen Langton** has long been a critic of the King, and **Pandulf the Papal Legate** has not forgiven him for his many sins against the Church. You are leading the campaign against the King however, trying to get him to sign a charter of liberties they have drawn up called Magna Carta, which would limit the King's power. John is refusing to sign it!

Archbishop Stephen Langton was appointed by the monks of Canterbury, which really angered **King John**. Stephen was educated in the university at Paris, and is a friend of **Louis the Dauphin**, King John's deadly enemy. King John tried to block his appointment but the Papal Legate Pandulf took the case to the Pope who ruled Langton was the legitimate Archbishop, and if John would not accept it John was to be excommunicated, and the nation placed under Interdict. John refused, so Stephen Langton fled to Paris, and Pandulf placed England under interdict. For four years, until just last year, no one could be buried in consecrated grounds, go to church, or be married in a church. Marriages were held in church porches. An excommunicated King does not have to be obeyed, and John only got out of the Interdict by agreeing to go on Crusade (he hasn't yet), let Stephen Langton back in to the country and accept him as Archbishop of Canterbury (he has), and stop hanging any priest he should meet on the road and cutting off their genitals (the King only does this when no one is looking now. It is John's main hobby other than reading and wenching). You and de Vesci were able to return from exile by the same deal that let Stephen back in the country.

Pandulf is the deeply holy Papal legate. As the Pope's righthand man, he is obviously very pious. Innocent III has launched a crusade against the Cathar heretics in Provence proving he is a good and effective pope and Pandulf was one of those responsible.

Could he declare a Crusade against **King John**? A few years ago **Pandulf** called the Interdict, excommunicating **King John** and closing all the churches, eventually forcing the **King** to let **Archbishop Stephen Langton** back in the country though. Still **King John** managed to embarrass **Pandulf** – he gave up murdering priests, and instead had every priests mistress arrested and placed in prison, and only released them when the priests turned up and paid a fine. The English Church has not been very good on celibacy, and in fact some priests are married, so this was a major embarrassment – and depressingly profitable for **King John**!

Will Scarlet is an outlaw, whose fortunes have mirrored those of **Robin Hood**. He is rumoured to be a wild man, who killed his father's steward and fled to the woods. When **Robin** was pardoned along with all the outlaws by **King Richard**, **Will** chose to stay in the woods, and his knowledge of Sherwood forest is unrivalled. The man is something of an enigma however.

Rosamund of Jerbiton is a mysterious incredibly beautiful noblewoman who you have never seen before. Her manners mark her as from the highest echelons of the aristocracy, and her accent is English not French, but you don't recall seeing this youthful beauty before. Her unusual name reminds you of the tragedy of **Rosamund Clifford**, **Henry's** mistress lain by **Eleanor of Aquitaine**. You saw **Rosamund** once as a young boy and this young woman is just like her, stunningly beautiful. Why it could be her ghost!

Blanche of Castille is the niece of **King John**, and if anything happened to little **Henry John's** son her husband **Louis the Lion**, Dauphin of France would be heir to the English throne which would be united ultimately with that of France. **King John** married her off as part of a short lived peace treaty, and she was a bit annoyed about it apparently. A Spanish princess, well that was where she was raised, she is a wonderful Queen who would command troops herself given the chance and is positively baying for **John's** blood! You adore her, in a platonic friendly sense, and flirt with her just a little!

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Alice de Scriven is the Prioress at Kirklees . A pretty young nun, but aren't they all. Ask this Holy Woman and good friend of Robin Hood for her blessing if you can.

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