

Sartorial Reference – an adventure for the Dying Earth RPG

By Steve Dempsey

The Kaiin Player's Guide is of benefit to GMs intending to run this adventure.

Master Wilbon Sar, a member of the Scholasticarium, teaches XIIth Aeon Custom. Wilbon dresses in typical style of that period, that is to say cumbersome robes that splay out into a calf length skirt. They are highly pretentiously decorated and definitely impractical for anyone performing manual labour, but employing slightly inferior materials, none of them very expensive, with the following embellishments: Outsize Showy Beadwork, Milky-Coloured Crystals, Fashionable Buttons, Glittering Gilded Buckles and Exaggerated Fastenings, all in puce and tangerine. He claims they are the robes appropriate to the Elder Sage of a Syronical Potentate and that he is justified in wearing them because he is the last descendant of the Syrons.

Another member of the Scholasticarium, **Ildegar Wemms**, has entered into a wager with Wilbon that he cannot prove this by sundown tomorrow. Wilbon has engaged the PCs to help in this endeavour, either because they are his students and he holds absolute power over them, or they are tempted by the lure of the terces that a man of such stupendous dress must surely possess. In any case, the point is moot, and the game afoot.

All Wilbon needs is to cross-reference his clothing in the Codex Sartoricus to prove his point. Unfortunately he has had his library privileges withdrawn through non-payment of fines. He recently spent all his money on a XIIth Aeon pelgrane-scarer that now hangs on the wall above his desk. It looks like a bright yellow funnel. Obviously he will be loath to go into such petty details but if pressed will make excuses about some amorous tryst that he must keep as a favour to a friend.

Gaining entrance to the Library is no great feat for a Scholar or Master in good standing, and in the unlikely event that any of the characters fulfil this criterion they can easily find the Codex Sartoricus. Otherwise they must contend with **Quirethomble the Twk-man**, head librarian and his stun-lance wielding enforcers and probably pay up the 10t daily fee. At least 3 characters must become members of the library because the Codex contains full size plates showing the fashions of the ages. They must use the winches, pulleys and ropes supplied (for a mere 3t) to raise the Codex into a standing position from the pit in which it is stored. In fact it, when stood up, it resembles more a large wardrobe than a book. Unfortunately, the item which the characters are looking for is missing. The plate on the page has been detached and all that is left is a pencilled note, the ominous "See footnote, Master Index, Page XX". If they unwisely notify the librarian of this, they will be in for some rough treatment, stunning and fines unless they can persuade him that it has been like that for some time.

The Master Index has a reference to all the books in the library. It is an enormous collection of tomes of all shapes and sizes that is kept in a separate room, jokingly known as the "chasm" to the Masters. The full weight of all the volumes stored in this single room is so stupendous that the inferior volumes have been compressed and turned to oil. This leeches out into a procidence in the local rock strata and is drilled to fuel the kitchens of the Scholasticarium. A visit here is akin to a caving expedition with the same dangers, book falls, gas pockets, bats and less welcome creatures. The search will be in any case fruitless.

Page XX, of course, refers not to an unknown page, but to page twenty of the introduction to the index. This sits on the master librarian's desk and serves as a bivouac to the trainee librarian.

This page, blank on one side, was recently removed from the Index by young **Calipole** to use as a laundry list. Their launderer of choice is the tailor **Ripegiano** who resides in the Undercity. Only a someone with a fine touch is capable of suitable treatment to such small garb. Entrance is easily gained to this area via the Scholasticarium entrance. Just remember that no-one else should be present (for the guards will call out, "Deodands present!" and slam the doors), and that you must persuade the guards that you have legitimate business therein, as you are from the time or dimension in which the Undercity was created.

Ripegiano is famed for his creations and dresses even the Prince himself. In spite of this he is quite approachable and if plied with enough strong liquor will remember using the slip of paper to make a papier-maché mask for the ball of the night before. The order was from the palace so he assumes it was worn by some noble. The mask itself resembles nothing more, says Ripegiano, than a bright yellow funnel with a single narrow aperture through which the wearer must see, eat and drink.

Obviously this is the very item that hangs on Wilbon's wall and the denouement is left as an exercise for gamesmasters aspiring to greatness².

Statistics for All Concerned

Wilbon Sar: Persuade (Forthright) 8 Rebuff (Lawerly) 8 Attack (Caution) 6 Defend (Vexation) 10 Magic(Studious) 14 Appraisal 4 Etiquette 8 Pedantry 12 Perception 4 Scuttlebutt 8 Wealth 9 Wherewithal 5 Gourmandism 2 Rakishness 2 Health 4 Any spells and items as appropriate. Wilbon is always rather too quick to attack the opinions of others making him unpopular with students¹ and it is only a matter of time before he is taken down a peg.

Ildegar Wemms: Persuade (Charming) 6 Rebuff (Wary) 12 Attack (Ferocity) 12 Defend (Vexation) 4 Magic(Insightful) 12 Appraisal 8 Etiquette 8 Gambling 6 Pedantry 12 Perception 6 Scuttlebutt 6 Wealth 3 Wherewithal 8 Gourmandism 2 Rakishness 2 Health 5 Any spells and items as appropriate. Ildegar will only fight when in his cups preferring to defuse any situation with clever gambles.

Quirethomble the Twk-man (Kaiin p113)

Calipole, (Twk-Man, DE page 172) Calipole is a young and delicate librarian but he tries his best. He is hoping to impress Quirethomble because if he doesn't make the grade he'll be sent back to the rather more dangerous environment of the Vale of Flowers.

Ripegiano (Kaiin p173) Persuade (Eloquent) 6 Rebuff (Purehearted) 8 Attack (Finesse) 2 Defend (Parry) 2 Appraisal 8 Craftmanship 14 Etiquette 7 Perception 8 Wealth 6 Health 3 Ripegiano is a happy and clever tailor, well versed in dealing with the mood-swings of rich customers. He knows that his clientele need him if they are to compete with the most fashionable in Kaiin and so brooks little nonsense from them.

¹Although the rather more perspicacious apprentice will butter him up for good grades.

²For those suffering an uncharacteristic lapse of imagination, the page does indeed prove the provenance of the clothing, but not, of course, Wilbon's ancestry. In all likelihood, Wilbon will blame the PCs for bungling their job and on some trumped-up charge, fine them an amount equal to the wager, plus enough for a small glass of 2nd best Mendolence for himself and his betting partner.