

The Secret of Montmajour

by Simone Biagini

The **Abbey of Montmajour**, located on a rocky island and surrounded by swamps, has been abandoned after a big fire. The bodies of the abbot and many monks were never found and the area is considered haunted. Someone sighted a winged beast flying over the ruins, others think that vicious bandits use the ruins as hideout.

PCs are called to investigate the haunting, recover a lost relic, solve the bandits problem or hunt the marauding beast that is hiding on the top of the abbey tower.

1 - The crypt: Almost completely carved into the rock and full of rubbles. *The body of the abbot is here, under a pile of debris surrounded by vermins.*

2 - The church: Part of the floor collapsed into the crypts below.

3 - Church nave: When the light of the moon filter through the stained glass windows the abbot's ghost can be seen near the altar.

4 - Chapel of Notre-Dame-la-Blanche (Our white lady): Two arcosolia on the north side host the tombs of past abbots of the abbey. *The "Holy hand" can be found here*

5 - The Sacristy: Rotten furnitures and clothes

6 - The archives: Book are ruined by the humidity of the swamps. Holy texts (or forbidden rituals) could be found after a long search. *The archivist haunts this place.*

7 - Cloister north gallery: Many arcosolia holding bodies of important members of the order.

8 - Cloister east gallery: Tombs of important donors of the abbey. Buried with their treasures.

9 - Chapter house: Used for meetings. Ghostly lamentations and screams can be heard from here during anniversaries of important events.

10 - Cloister south gallery: The roof is unsafe. Strong rumours or explosions will cause it to collapse.

11 - Refectory: A spiral staircase connects to the dormitories above (full of debris)

12 - Cloister west gallery: Once contained the votive of the knights. Now only rubbles.

13 - The monastery: The fire started here. The roof collapsed and the stones are covered in soot. The floor is covered with dead leaves and mud.

14 - Courtyard: Sometimes bandits are on guard here. They fear the beast in the tower and will not go further.

Ghosts

Abbot Vallet - killed Stephen, started the fire to cover the murder. (*Why has he done such a thing? Love affair, accident, offer to the dark lord? DM can choose*). Wants to be buried in holy ground and get forgiveness from the church. Will try to stop the PCs from "stealing" the bones of his precious novice or the Holy Relic.

Stephen de Fontrefroid - recalcitrant novice. The minor son of an important family. Wants to be buried far from the abbey. Can be seen wandering the ruins under the moonlight.

The archivist - even he doesn't remember his name. A rancorous poltergeist blocked in the archives. Will try to prevent intruders from reading the books throwing them the precious tomes. Can be put to rest if his bones are burned and blessed.



The Beast

A *senile griffin*. It's *near blind* and will attack PCs wearing metal/scale armor mistaking them for big fishes or snakes. Bandits wear leather armors so are safe. Maybe it could have eaten one or two wandering scoundrels getting too near the tower. (*Also a Manticore or a Gargoyle could be interesting enemies - DM can choose*)

15 - Main entrance: Bandits on guard sometimes sleep in the remains of the building.

16 - Tower: A nasty flying beast has its lair on the top of the tower. The interior is full of rubbles, guano, remains of food (maybe corpses) and possibly hatchlings.

17 - The old chapel: It's the oldest building of the abbey. The original church was built here. It's sinking in the swamp and only vermins inhabit it now. Sometimes during the night *Will o'-the wisps* are visible here.

18 - The tombs in the rock: The monks cemetery. All graves are dugged into the rock, not in earth. Near all have been opened and the bodies stolen by swamp predators.

19 - Chapel of the Holy: 500 mts to the est of the abbey. The little chapel was used by pilgrims. Around it a cemetery used for lay people. The bandits use this building as hideout. *Their loot is hidden under a moving stone near the altar.*

20 - Secret entrance to the crypt: The entrance is hidden. The correct stone must be pressed to enter. A trap was set here, but the time has made it harmless.

21 - Basement of the Monastery: *The skeleton of Stephen is here.* The air around it is icy cold.

Bandits

Les Yeux Rouges (Red Eyes) - Bandit Leader (*Why the red eyes? werewolf, half vampire, a curse? DM can choose*)

Etienne Arc Long (Etienne Long Bow) - Second in command, archer

Jean and Adrienne - Twins - Can speak telepathically between themselves, if one dies the other follows. Scared by the ruins. (Add more bandits if needed)

The Holy Hand

The mummified hand of the founder of the abbey, a holy man that performed many miracles. Legends tell that the hand has thaumaturgical powers and can, if the correct ritual is performed, bring back the deads from beyond the Black Gates.