# How to Play Montsegur 1244

## Before Play

- Place the game board on the table in front of you
- Give the yellow cross to the player with the deepest voice
- Shuffle the scene cards. Draw three and place them on the board positions
- Shuffle the story cards
- Choose characters

## In Each Act

- Mark the current act by placing the heretic figure next to the act on the game board
- The player with the yellow cross reads aloud the text for the act
- Each player sets a scene in turn. The player with the yellow cross goes first.
- The player with the yellow cross passes it to the player on his left
- Have a 15 minutes break after Act Two

## In Each Scene

- Choose a scene card and draw a new one
- Set the scene
- Play out the scene
- Optionally: Narration is taken over by another player
- Draw a story card

*Enjoy*

# Welcome to Montsegur 1244

Montsegur 1244 is a story game inspired by the siege of Montsegur in 1243-1244. The castle was home of the Cathars, a group of people who followed a religion with roots in early Christianity. When the castle surrendered, the survivors were given the choice of renouncing their faith or being burnt at the stake. More than 200 chose death, including more than twenty who converted during the last two weeks of the siege.

We know this because inquisitors wrote down detailed accounts from the survivors. We know the names of many of the Cathars; we know who their families were, and we know their vocations. But we do not know why they acted as they did.

## Your Task

It is your task – together with the other players – to create a story about who the Cathars were, and why so many chose death rather than to renounce their faith.

You will play the role of one of the besieged Cathars. Through play you will decide the fate of this person. At the end of the game, you must choose one of three fates:

- To repent before the inquisition
- To burn at the stake
- To escape into the night

Montsegur 1244 has no game master. All players work together to create a shared story. The rule booklet describes how.

*Choose a player to read aloud the rules booklet.*

# Playing Tips

Read this after playing the prologue.

## Playing Your Main Character

Answer the character's three questions before the game is over. Use them to determine what is important to this person.

Decide on the fate of your main character through play. If you, during play, feel too certain on what fate, you will choose, then consider what could make your character choose another fate. What could make Bertrand denounce his faith? What could make Phillipa choose death in the fire? Try to make the final decision as difficult and painful as possible.

## Playing a Supporting Character

Set focus on the main characters. Put them in difficult situations where they can thrive.

## When Not Playing in a Scene

Be an active audience. Pay attention and suggest ideas, if play is stalling. Let the other players know when you think they are doing something awesome. Surprise them by taking over narration with a scene card and bring new wood to the fire of the story.

## Using the Narration Right

Use narration to control the flow of the game. Increase the pace by jumping forward in time. Decrease the pace by stopping up for detailed descriptions.

## Coming up With an Idea for a Scene

- Put your main character in the spotlight
- Cut the chase and seek out the dramatic moments
- Get inspiration from a scene card or a story card
- Describe a situation from everyday life. Think of a location or an activity. Establish a routine and break it.
- Glue together the story by reincorporating items, locations, and characters from previous scenes.
- Ask the other players for ideas
- Do the obvious

## Setting a Scene

- Describe where and when the scene takes place
- Briefly explain the situation and the purpose of the scene
- Decide on the persons present in the scene initially
- For each person present, ask a player to play this character
- Direct the players that participate in the scene

## Remember the Basic Rules

- No player can control more than one character in a scene
- No player can kill a character controlled by another player without consent
- Main characters cannot die before the epilogue
- At least one main character must burn at the stake. At most one main character can escape into the night.