

Ultima V Forsan

The Iron Crown

ULTIMA FORSAN

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The Iron Crown



n Ultima Forsan short campaign in three Episodes for three to six Novice or Seasoned characters.

The Heroes are recruited to find an ancient relic of great political and symbolic value: The Iron Crown. This ancient crown is said to contain one of the nails of Christ's Cross. Due to its history, it also represents the ideal of a unified kingdom of Italy. If the characters have already played the free adventure *The Confessional of the Black Penitents*, this campaign could be played as a sequel and the Podestà of Modena happily entrusts them with the task.

You can download some [pre-generated character](#) or create your own.

INTRODUCTION FOR THE PLAYERS

In the fourth century AD, the Emperor Constantine I ordered that the entire area of Golgotha be unearthed and a basilica erected there. According to tradition, during the excavations, the "true" cross of Christ was found. Constantine's mother, Helena, brought the nails from the cross to Rome, and ordered that one of them be embedded into her son's helmet, to protect him in battle. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Helm of Constantine was brought to Constantinople, and later

passed into the hands of Theodoric the Great, king of Italy, who made a Crown out of it.

The presence of the nail of the Crucifixion and the history of the Helm of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, make the Iron Crown an object of very strong symbolic value, linked to the divine and to continuity with the Roman Empire. That is why the Crown was used by the Lombard kings, and then by Charlemagne and his descendants, for the coronation of the King of Italy.

After many vicissitudes, just before the Dies Iraes, the Crown was stolen by Bertrand du Pouget, Cardinal of the Cathedral of Monza, and sent to Pope John XXII in Avignon, where it has remained for two centuries.

A few weeks ago a thief belonging to the Guild of the Guiscards, Jenò de Jambelen, stole the Crown from Avignon and has vanished, perhaps headed toward Italy.

Your mission is to find Jenò and bring the Crown to Francesco Guicciardini, the Podestà of Modena.

BACKGROUND FOR THE GAME MASTER

The Crown is and remains a relic of powerful symbolic value, and many aspire to own it. The Pope King Constantine II is eager to have it back in Avignon, but in Italy there are many who understand that his determination is not dictated solely by devotion. Possession of the Crown allows Constantine II to further justify his ambitions to extend the imperial dominion over the Italian peninsula. This is a project that he has long cultivated and which he is determined to carry on in the coming years. The very name he chose when he ascended to the papal throne, "Constantine", was chosen precisely for this reason. Now, the entire mosaic has lost its most important piece ...

For this reason, the Pope King has sent the Bishop Captain Stéphane of Navarre to retrieve the artifact. He is one of Constantine II's most trusted servants, and has already started a terrible manhunt.

At the same time, the news of the theft has spread from Avignon and has reached many Italian lords and Teutonic princes, some of whom have sent emissaries in search of the thief as well.

Francesco Guicciardini, lord of Modena and promoter of the League of Canossa, is among those who have come to know of the crime and he is not about to let Constantine II get his hands on the crown again. He intends to keep the relic for himself and, after concluding the Macabre War in the north, to crown himself or one of his trusted allies as the new King of Italy. For this reason, he sends the Heroes to find the crown.

But there is more to the Podesta's schemes than meets the eye. It was Francesco Guicciardini himself who ordered and planned the theft. He sent Jenò de Jambelen to Avignon with the means and information necessary to accomplish the task. But Guicciardini does not want to become famous as "the one who stole the Crown." He would rather be famous as "the one who recovered it from the thieves." For this reason, he gave Jenò clear instructions on how to proceed after the theft, so that he could send some impartial witnesses (the Heroes) to intercept him and recover the artifact. Even if the Heroes should fail, Guicciardini's fallback plan would remain viable. Jenò will take the Crown to Venice to sell it to an intermediary who will deliver it to Modena.

HOW TO INVOLVE THE HEROES

The PCs can become involved in the mission in various ways. You can use one of these hooks for the whole group, or combine them according to their inclinations and background stories.

- * If the Heroes played the free adventure *The Confessional of the Black Penitents*, the job is already done. Guicciardini calls them straight away.
- * If they completed the campaign *Once upon a time in Lucca*, Guicciardini may request the help of the Heroes of Lucca, and the players' characters are those who answer the call.
- * Alternatively, the Heroes can be among the representatives, delegates and ambassadors of the Fiefs that are part of the League of Canossa, and therefore, for all practical purposes, already be "at the Podesta's service". In this case, keep in mind that the League involves only some