

DOCUMENT 1: THE INITIAL GENERATION PROMPT

VAULT OF AGES — MIDJOURNEY GENERATION TEMPLATE

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HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This template is the starting point for every image in the Vault of Ages Roman catalog. It has two layers:

- **Constants** — style frame, atmosphere, palette, and switches that travel with every prompt unchanged
- **Accuracy constraints** — the period-specific exclusions that define what does not belong in the image

When adapting for a different historical period, the constants stay identical. Only the accuracy constraints change.

Replace [SCENE DESCRIPTION] with your specific scene before submitting to Midjourney.

THE CONSTANTS

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[SCENE DESCRIPTION] -- Must look like a photograph, not an illustration.  
Bronze and ochre palette. Gritty atmospheric lighting. Aged, worn,  
authentic surfaces throughout -- weathered stone, scuffed leather,  
hammered metal, unbleached linen. Every visible surface appears  
inhabited and used, not new or pristine. --ar 2:3 --chaos 5 --v 6 --q 2
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THE ACCURACY CONSTRAINTS *(Add these to every Roman prompt)*

Lighting and fire: open flame only -- torches, oil lamps, braziers.
Roman oil lamp on simple ceramic or bronze vessel with wick. No electric
lighting of any kind. No glass-paneled lamp housings. No pipe runs or
conduit on walls. No Victorian bracket lanterns. Lamp housings of iron,
clay, or bronze only.

Clothing and footwear: Roman garments only. No zippers, no buttons, no
elastic waistbands, no modern tailoring. Footwear is Roman caligae or
bare feet only. No sneakers, no rubber-soled boots, no modern sandal
designs. No wristwatches, no rings with modern settings.

Armor and weapons: No medieval full-plate armor. No enclosed visors. No Gothic pauldrons or articulated gauntlets. No katanas, longswords, rapiers, or non-Roman blades. Swords are gladius or spatha only, worn on the hip, never on the back. Shields are scutum or parma only. No crossbows, no stirrups, no medieval horse barding.

Symbols and iconography: No crosses of any kind. No Christian iconography. No medieval heraldic emblems. No fleur-de-lis. No coats of arms. No Arabic numerals on any surface. Roman numerals only if numerals appear at all.

Architecture and materials: Round arches only -- no pointed Gothic arches. No medieval crenellations or battlements. No Renaissance facades or Baroque ornamentation. No iron or steel I-beams. No poured concrete with visible rebar. No brick in modern running bond. No window glass that is clear or flat -- only thick, cloudy, imperfect blown glass if glass appears at all. No hinges or hardware with modern machined appearance. No post-Roman architectural decay or ruin. Primary building materials are brick, stone, and tufa -- not white marble. No gleaming pristine marble surfaces.

Hairstyles and grooming: No modern fade haircuts, undercuts, or styled gel hair. No anachronistic beard shapes. Roman male hairstyles only -- short, natural, unstyled or simply cropped.

Gladiator-specific: If a gladiator appears -- substantial build with visible body fat over muscle, not lean modern athletic physique. Period-accurate body composition. Sword worn on hip, not back. Period-appropriate hairstyle. Specify gladiator type explicitly and name correct equipment for that type.

General: Every visible element must be consistent with the 1st--3rd century Roman world. No object, texture, pattern, symbol, or material that postdates 300 AD. Gritty, worn, authentic surfaces throughout.

EXAMPLE: Assembled Prompt

Portrait of a Roman legionary standing guard at a fort gate at dusk, lorica segmentata armor, open-face galea helmet with cheek guards, gladius worn on right hip, scutum shield resting against the gate post, torchlight casting warm directional shadows across rough stone walls -- Must look like a photograph, not an illustration. Bronze and ochre palette. Gritty atmospheric lighting. Aged, worn, authentic surfaces throughout. No Gothic arches, no enclosed visors, no katanas, no glass-paneled lanterns, no pipe runs, no medieval elements of any kind, no white marble, no pristine surfaces. --ar 2:3 --chaos 5 --v 6 --q 2

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