

Glossary

of French words and phrases and their intended meanings
in Master of Illusion Books I to IV.

à bientôt – see you soon.

a carte blanche - nineteenth century euphemism for an offer from a gentleman to set up as his mistress. As opposed to *carte blanche* – a free hand.

accelerando - (It.) musical term – accelerating. Used to indicate a gradually increasing pace.

à demain - see you tomorrow.

à la bonne heure - good timing. Literally, in a good hour.

à la mode - in fashion.

à l'instant! - right now, this minute.

adieu - goodbye, farewell. Literally, go with God, as in Goodbye forever.

affaire - matter, business. *affaire de coeur* - love affair.

allons - come, now; let us go.

alors - then.

ami(e) - friend.

amitié - friendship.

amour - love

amour-propre - self-esteem.

amusant - entertaining, amusing; *fort amusant* - greatly amusing; very funny.

ange - angel

arabesque - ballet term – pose on one leg, with other extended backwards and arms extended, one forward, one backwards.

aria di bravura - (It.) musical term - aria requiring great technical excellence and skill, and performed with such.

armoire - cupboard, wardrobe.

atroce - atrocious.

attention! - (pay) attention!

au contraire - on the contrary

au fond - deep down. Literally, at the bottom.
au revoir - goodbye, as in, see you again.
aussi - also. *moi, aussi* - me, too.
aux anges - over the moon, ecstatic. Literally, to/with the angels.
avant-garde - pioneer in any art, forefront of fashion.
à vrai dire - to tell the truth.
ancien - old, ancient; *ancien regime* - former regime; nobility by birth.
bagatelle - trifle.
bal - ball; *bal masqué* - masked ball.
beau (m) - beautiful, lovely.
beau-père - father-in-law. (*belle-mère* - mother-in-law.)
beaucoup - a lot, very much, many. eg *merci beaucoup* - many thanks.
bel canto - (It.) musical term for a classical, mellifluous singing style. Literally, beautiful singing.
belle (f) - beautiful. *La belle* – the beautiful one.
belle époque - period of settled and comfortable life before WWI.
belle-fille - daughter-in-law.
belliqueux - belligerent.
bêtise - stupid thing, storm in a tea cup.
bien - well, good.
bien sûr - of course, surely.
bienvenu - welcome.
boche - derogatory term for German enemy during WWI.
bon - good, right.
bonheur - happiness.
bonjour - good morning/afternoon.
bonsoir - good evening.
bonne chance/nuit - good luck/night.
bordel - bordello, brothel.
bouche béante - open-mouthed.
boucle à boucle - loop the loop (aircraft).
bouleversé - turned upside down, bowled over(with shock/surprise).

canaille - villain(s).
chanson - song.
ce, cette - this.
Cela va sans dire. - That/it goes without saying.
Cendrillon - Cinderella.
certainement - certainly.
C'est fini, cela. - That's finished/over. Literally, It is finished, that.
C'est la vie. - That's life.
château - castle.
châteaux en Espagne - castles in the air. (castles in Spain.) Air dreams.
cher, chère - dear.
cher ami, chère amie - lover.
chéri(e) - darling.
chevalier - knight.
chic - style.
chocolat noir - dark chocolate.
chou - cabbage.
chut! - sh!
comme ci, comme ça - so-so.
comme il faut - proper.
comment? - pardon?
comprenez-vous? tu comprends? (informal) - Do you understand/comprehend?
con spirito - (It.) musical term - spirited; with spirit, vigour.
convenable - suitable.
coup - successful stroke or move.
dame - lady.
de rien - not at all, it is nothing.
de rigueur - obligatory.
de trop - too many.
depuis longtemps - for a long time.
déjeuner (le) - lunch.
démentielle - mad, demented.

demoiselle - young lady, maiden.
demoiselle d'honneur - bridesmaid.
désespoir - despair.
diable (le) - devil. *Le Diable Rouge* - The Red Baron, WWI German flying ace.
dîner (le) - dinner.
droit de seigneur - alleged right of a lord (to take the virginity of his tenants' brides/ daughters.)
Dieu me sauve - God save me.
dommage - shame. *Quel dommage!* - What a shame!
doucement - gently, softly, quietly.
douceur - sweetener (reward or tip for services by servants).
du vrai - in (of a) truth.
éclat - brilliance.
écoutez-moi - listen to me.
élan - spirit, momentum.
en avant - forwards. (command to horses.)
enceinte - pregnant.
enchanté - enchanted.
en effet - in effect.
enfant - child.
enfin - at last, finally.
en grand jeté - ballet term - large leap.
en grisaille - woodwork inlay pattern in shades of grey.
en pointe - ballet term, dancing on points of toes.
entente - friendly understanding between states.
entremetteuse - go-between, brothel madam.
épatant(e) - amazing, super.
épris - handsome, gorgeous. Literally, someone to fall in love with.
espièglerie - mischief.
esprit - spirit.
et - and.
fantaisie - fantasy, whim.

farouche - unsociable, wild.
faux pas - mistake. Literally, false step.
femme (la) - woman.
feu follet - will-o'-the-wisp. Literally, mad fire.
fiche le camp! - clear off! (Impolite.)
fille - girl, daughter.
filles de joie - prostitutes.
fil - son.
formidable - fantastic.
frère (le) - brother.
fou, folle - mad. *fou furieux* - completely mad, crazy.
foudroyant(e)! - stunning!
fouette - ballet term - quick whipping movement of raised leg.
fourgon - wagon.
Fourneyron - French inventor of turbine; one of his inventions.
fugue amoureuse - elopement.
gamin(e) - urchin.
garçon - boy, waiter. *mon gar* - (familiar) - my boy.
garde-robe - wardrobe.
gare - railway station.
gauche - awkward.
glissando - (It.) musical term – gliding, sliding scale played on an instrument.
haut(e) - high. *haut monde* - high society.
Haute École - high school dressage training of horses. Airs above the ground.
hein? - eh?
hélas - alas, sadly.
holà - hey(!) Called out to get someone's attention; greeting.
hôtel - mansion.
ici - here, come here.
idiote - idiot.
il/elle - he/she *ils/elles* - they
Ils ne passeront pas! - rallying cry, vow, during WWI, of French soldiers in the

trenches against the enemy. 'They shall not get past us!'

imprévu(e) - unexpected.

incroyable - incredible.

ingénu(e) - naïve (person).

Je - I. *Je vous assure* - I assure you.

J'espère - I hope.

Je ne sais quoi - Literally, I do not know. Used with 'a certain' to mean 'a certain something'.

jeune - young.

jeux - games.

lapin (le) - rabbit.

le beau monde - polite world, French society. *le monde* - the world.

le bon Dieu - the good God.

le dernier cri - the last word; most fashionable/popular.

Legion d'Honneur - medal, highest civilian honour for service to France.

ma fille - my girl/ daughter.

ma foi! - exclamation/epithet - well(indeed)!

ma/mon - my

ma/mon pauvre - my poor girl(boy).

magnifique - magnificent.

mais - but.

maison (la) - house; *maison close* - brothel.

mal de mer - seasickness.

manoir (le) - manor.

maquillage - make-up.

maquis, maquisards - French Resistance fighters (south of France) in WWII.

marché (le) - the market.

Mardi Gras - Pancake Tuesday, literally, Fat Tuesday, the day before Lent.

matin (le) - morning.

mauvais - bad.

mécène (le) - patron of the arts.

méchant(e) - wicked.

merci - thank you.
merde - slang - shit.
mère (la) - mother.
métier - profession.
milice (la) - French police formed by Vichy govt in WWII to help Germans capture French resistance fighters.
mille – a thousand.
moi - me. *C'est moi, ici.* - Here I am.
mon ami - my friend
mon brave - my good man. (Term of friendship/affection.)
mon/ma cher/chère - my dear.
monde (le) - world; *beau monde, haut monde* - high society.
mon Dieu! - my God!
mon fils - my son.
mon gar - affectionate - my boy.
montagne Russes – roller coaster. Literally, Russian mountain.
naturellement - naturally.
n'est-ce pas? - isn't it? aren't they? doesn't it? don't they?
noblesse oblige - responsibility/obligation of the nobility to their tenants/dependants, as opposed to *droit de seigneur*.
nom de Dieu - in the name of God.
mon de guerre - war alias.
nom d'un chien - epithet. Literally, name of a dog.
non - no.
oeil (l') - eye.
Oh, là, là! - exclamation of amazement or dismay. Literally, Oh, there, there!
on dit - snippet of gossip. Literally, one said.
oui - yes.
outré - 'out there'; beyond; extreme; beside the point.
papillon (le) - butterfly.
parbleu! - epithet, by heaven!
parfait - perfect.

pas de bourrée - ballet term – tiny steps on points of toes.
pas du tout - not at all.
pas seule, de deux (trois) – dance for one, for two (three).
passé (de mode) - out of fashion, old-fashioned.
pauvre le(la) - poor boy(girl).
penchant - inclination, liking.
père (le) - father.
petit(e) - little one.
petit déjeuner (le) - breakfast.
petit paquet - little parcel - nineteenth century euphemism for unborn child/pregnancy.
petits pois - peas.
peut-être - perhaps.
pièce de résistance - most important or remarkable item.
pirouette - ballet term – spin.
Poilus (Les) - French soldiers in WWI. Literally, 'the hairy ones.'
politesse - politeness.
pommes de terre - potatoes.
poulet - chicken.
poupée de chiffon - rag doll.
précisément - precisely.
prochainement - soon.
Quatorze Juillet - 14th July, Bastille Day - French National Holiday.
quel(le) - what, which. *Quel dommage!* - What a shame!
que sera - what will be.
quoi - what.
raison d'être - reason for being.
rapporteuse - tell-tale.
ravissante - ravishing.
regretter - regret. *Je regrette infiniment* - I am infinitely sorry.
reine (la) - queen. *Vive la reine!* Long live the queen!
remerciements - thanks. *Mille remerciements* - a thousand thanks.

ronde - round (repetitive nursery song).
roué - rake, libertine.
salle de danse - dance studio.
salopard - slang – bastard.
 salope - slang – bitch.
sangdieu! - oath, epithet, God's blood!
sans-culottes - poor people. (From French Revolution. Literally, without breeches.)
sans doute - without doubt, undoubtedly.
sans pareil - without parallel or peer.
scélérat (le) - villain.
se trompe-l'oeil - fooling the eye; a type of painting that does this.
s'il vous plaît - please. Literally, if you please.
soigné(e) - neat, well-groomed.
soir (le) - evening. *Ce soir* - this evening.
soirée - social evening esp. for music, conversation etc.
somnambule (le) - sleepwalker.
spectre (le) - ghost, phantom. *le spectre* – the ghost, the phantom.
succès fou - complete success, literally, mad success.
Sûreté - French CID.
Sûr le pont d'Avignon - On the bridge of Avignon – nursery song (ronde).
tante - aunt.
tête-à-tête - in private. Literally, head to head.
tiens(!) - exclamation denoting surprise. Really? (or meaning, hey!).
tigre (le) - tiger
tout à fait - completely.
tout de même - all the same.
tout de suite - immediately.
très - very.
tu - you (singular, informal)
un(e) - a.
un peu - a little.

vacances (les) - holidays, vacation.
vaurien(ne) - good-for-nothing, guttersnipe.
vieillard (le) - old man.
vieille (la) - old woman.
vieux - old man, *mon vieux* – affectionate term, old man.
vin du pays - local wine.
vite - quickly.
voilà(!) - here is, see (here), look(!).
voiture (la) - motor car. *Cette voiture-ci.* This car here.
voix de tête - music term - head voice (for operatic/classical singing).
vous - you (plural or formal).
vraiment - truly.