

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY

# WARPS

ISSUE 24

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**READY FOR BATTLE!**  
**THE SECOND COMING OF WFRP**

**THIS ISSUE...**

- ☛ **WFRP2 REVIEW**
- ☛ **SPIES IN MARIENBURG**
- ☛ **THE RIVER LYNISK**
- ☛ **CONSPIRACY PART II**
- ☛ **RAT CATCHERS**
- ☛ **NEW WFRP2 CAREERS**
- ☛ **STREET FIGHTING**

**BIGGEST  
EVER  
ISSUE**



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## EDITORIAL

By John Foody

So finally, it is here. The second edition of WFRP is the most important release for the game since *The Enemy Within*. Not only is it a new set of rules, it is also a statement of intent for how Black Industries and Green Ronin envision the background. After all, it is the background that draws most players to WFRP.

This issue we bring you a comprehensive review and other opinions on WFRP2. By now, most of you will have your hands on a copy and have made up your own minds. We have tried to bring you a range of opinions on this important release. However, they are only first impressions and may, of course, change over time as the game is played and developed.

The release of WFRP2 seems to have been very successful. Certainly Internet RPG discussion groups are alive with WFRP talk. It is clear that many ex-WFRP players are excitedly getting involved again. There seem to be few new players involved but it is early days yet.

Talking of forums, last issue I noted that the Black Industries forums hadn't really taken off yet. As soon as we went to print, I was proved wrong. Their forums have definitely become the focus for the WFRP community.

Anecdotal evidence shows that many players of the first edition dislike the direction of the second. Many of these are players who have been fundamental in keeping the profile of the game high since the days of Flame Publications. If these players are lost, then the new edition loses a valuable resource. However, it is also an opportunity for new creative voices to step up and develop the world further. Certainly this does seem to be happening. For their part, Black Industries and Green Ronin have to support and develop this.

You won't find a review of the scenario book *Plundered Vaults* in this issue. This is due to the problems Amazon (and others) have had in getting this and other WFRP2 books out. Black Industries has said this is beyond its control. Whoever's fault it is, it seems a very strange situation, not to mention frustrating for those suffering. On the other hand, Black Industries has received praise from many for sorting out other problems players have had on this front. Of course, I hope that many of you will be supporting your local game stores.

Finally, regular readers will have noticed the price increase this issue. This is largely to cover the increase in pages to 80 this issue and 96 for issue 25. Next issue will be something special. Coming soon, as they say...

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## SUBMISSIONS

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Warpstone is happy to receive submissions of both written work and art. We will *always* respond to submissions, even if they are not suitable for publication in Warpstone. If you send a submission do not hear back from us in good time, please drop us a line to remind us. Failure to reply is a symptom of the chaotic nature of the Warpstone organisation. If you take the time with a submission we will take the time to respond.

**Payment:** A published contribution earns you a free copy of Warpstone.

**How?** We are happy to receive submissions by post or e-mail. Articles should be in RTF (Rich Format) or MS Word format.

**Art Submissions:** We are always looking for artists. You must have an understanding of "Warhammer style" (which covers a broad range of styles, as our current artists will testify!), but we are happy to look at all kinds of work, whether your speciality is maps, caricatures, portraits or anything else. Just send us a picture you think should be included in Warpstone, and some examples of any other work you have done. Please remember not to send originals, but only copies.

**Article Submissions:** Warpstone tries not to include articles that rewrite game rules or are themselves rules-heavy. In the same vein we are not looking for new monsters, careers, skills, etc. (That said, if you have something good send it in.) We are looking for articles that expand the world of Warhammer, filling in the gaps that are present. We also look at how the game is played, discussing issues relevant to all gamers. If you have an article but you are not sure whether it is suitable, send us an outline. We will tell you if we are interested in seeing it developed. If you can include a sample of some other work you've completed at the same time, this would be useful (if not essential).

**Regular Articles:** Comment Articles: We are always looking for articles where you put across your point of view on a particular subject. Cameos: Brief encounters and adventure outlines. Don't include character profiles, only descriptions. Scenarios: Full length, detailed adventures. Short stories: We currently do not accept fiction.

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## REPORTS FROM THE HEART OF CORRUPTION

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Lots of reviews this time round, including a first look at that all important release - WFRP second edition.

"The problem any GM screen designer has is different GMs want different things."



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The latest news from WFRP including dice bags and soon-to-be legendary Dwarf Women Have Beards Too.

"But somehow it is hard to believe a word one reads here."



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"The second and more important release was the excellent Wladca Zimy (Lord of Winter)."



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With the release of WFRP2, we caught up with Simon Butler again.

"Dragging characters half way around the world when they were still finding their feet just seemed a wee bit harsh."



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"It protects the heartland of The Dobryion and has always served the nation well."



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"There is not that much money in it, and even less glory."



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"The Empire and Bretonnia could be said to be super powers fighting a clandestine conflict."



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Things go from bad to worse for our heroes in part two of our epic scenario. (To be concluded in issue 26.)

"The Watch begin to hunt down the agitators with a vengeance."



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"There are plenty of perfectly mundane reasons for a student to vanish - I see no need to assume foul play."



### Deep Down

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Danger at the bottom of the river as the PCs get that sinking feeling.

"No mutation, no magic! All science! Admittance free!"



### ABBREVIATIONS

A	Number of Attacks	Fel	Fellowship	Int	Intelligence	R	Range	W	Wounds
Ag	Agility	FP	Fate Points	IP	Insanity Points	S	Strength	WFB	Warhammer Fantasy Battle
AP	Armour Points	gc	Gold Crown	Ld	Leadership	SB	Strength Bonus	WFRP	Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay
BS	Ballistic Skill	GM	Game Master	M	Movement	SL	Secret Language	WFRP1	WFRP First Edition
Cl	Cool	Gu	Guilder (Marienburg Coinage)	Mag	Magic	SS	Secret Signs	WFRP2	WFRP Second Edition
CR	Complexity Rating	GW	Games Workshop	MP	Magic Points	SW	Specialist Weapon	WP	Will Power
Dex	Dexterity	I	Initiative	NPC	Non-player character	T	Toughness	WS	Weapon Skill
ES	Effective Strength	IC	Imperial Calendar	PC	Player Character	TB	Toughness Bonus	xp	Experience Points

# REVIEWS

## WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY: SECOND EDITION

By Chris Pramas

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by James Walkerdine, Robin Low, John Foody, Wim van Gruisen & François Dubé.



### Expectations

**James Walkerdine:** The Warhammer world has changed and I appreciated that any new edition would have to be brought into line with Games Workshop's current setting. I was curious to see whether the designers could do this whilst maintaining the old feel. I also value a good set of simple balanced rules. To me rules are there to ensure everything is fair, to carefully balance success and failure, and to cover the common situations that

can arise in a game. I'm not a great believer in house rulings, so it was important that any changes to the rules felt logical, were consistent, and above all worked.

**Wim van Gruisen:** When the WFRP1 rulebook was published, the game was still looking for a voice of its own; that voice was found with the supplements, especially with the TEW campaign. My hope for WFRP2 was that the new game would continue from there, from the whole body of reference built up in those supplements and by the work of the WFRP community, instead of re-inventing the wheel.

**Frank Dube:** My greatest hope was to receive a new set of optimised rules to replace the house rules that were needed to patch many weaknesses in the WFRP1 rules. I wanted those rules to stay simple while being more efficient and believable. I also wanted WFRP2 to be in line with WFB6 allowing easier use of both systems in the same campaigns.

I feared we would see really complex game mechanics that would be bad for roleplaying and storytelling. I also feared getting a divine magic system that would give too much room for divine actions, somehow reducing the feeling of fighting against all the odds. I also feared the designers would not change enough rules and background just to please old WFRP fans.

**John Foody:** I had two hopes for WFRP2. Firstly, I wanted improved rules, but ones which still evoked the setting as well as the originals did. No RPG can be perfect - what you want is a spirit, style and template to allow you to enjoy the game, whichever way you choose to play. Secondly, I hoped the background would be more *The Enemy Within* than *Warhammer Fantasy Battle*.

### Presentation

**JW:** Initial impressions of WFRP2 were positive. It is full colour, hardback and crammed full of text. Compared to WFRP1, however, it is thinner and this shows in places; some chapters feel a little too brief. The artwork is impressive although it does illustrate the change

of feel within the Warhammer world. The new cover gives the impression of a far more heroic setting.

**WvG:** The book looks stunning: full colour book, lavishly decorated with illustrations, filled to the brim with text.

**FD:** One of the primary functions of a rulebook is to inspire. In WFRP2, the art is simply great! Inside, as you let your eyes run through the pages, the colours and images are just perfect.

**JFF:** The 256 page rulebook is well laid out, neat and clear, with a lot of text squeezed in. The art is a mixed bunch. Some is good; the career pictures being particularly strong. However, some illustrations are amongst the worst in WFRP. Others are competent fantasy art, but have nothing particularly representative of WFRP.

### Chapter I: Introduction

**WvG:** Chapter 1 begins with an intro story. WFRP2 is set in the Empire after the Storm of Chaos, and by Sigmar, you shall know it! The story shows an adventuring party that gets in one monster fight after another. A "grim and perilous" world indeed. This chapter for me sets the very wrong tone of what WFRP is about.

**FD:** The introduction sets the mood of this grim world of perilous adventure. It starts with an inspiring short story written by Dan Abnett (*Gaunt's Ghosts*) in the ruins of Wolfenburg (Ostland) giving us the mood of the Warhammer world after the Storm of Chaos (a war that destroyed part of the Empire).

### Chapter II: Character Creation

**JW:** This chapter is certainly one of the best in the book. Character creation is essentially the same as in the first edition.

After rolling Characteristics and a Career, the chapter then focuses on ways to flesh out your character. This includes ten questions a player should think about, as well as a selection of background tables to roll on. Compared to most roleplaying games, what is provided here is actually quite good.

**WvG:** We can choose a Human, Dwarf, Elf or Halfling PC, but non-human races have been significantly toned down (or toned up, in the case of Halflings) from WFRP1, bringing their Characteristics closer to Humans. The book gives background and tips on roleplaying these races.

**FD:** There is now only one random table for the starting careers. I found the character creation process good compared to other game systems where creating a character can be a painful and slow process especially when you are new to the game.

Character Creation has a number of small improvements, just enough to provide a stronger system while keeping simplicity. Among the few changes from WFRP1, the Characteristics Leadership and Cool have gone, Initiative is replaced by Agility, and the profile is now on two lines (Main and Secondary Profile).

A weakness I see is the sentence: "All Player Characters have one thing in common: they are adventurers." This is often the case, but is not the only way to play the game! In city adventures, all the PCs can have real jobs and still face extraordinary events once in a while without being adventurers.

**JFF:** The name generator is a waste of space and there are no surnames suggested. There seems to be a fondness for tables. We have a Weight table when we could have 'Dwarf: 1d100+90 lbs,' for example. One interesting table is for Star Signs and the associated sayings. This is

the first of a number of places where the Old World is brought to life through the rules.

### Chapter III: Careers

**JW:** The career structure has always been one of the distinguishing characteristics of WFRP. Thankfully this hasn't changed in the new edition. There is still a long list of Basic and Advanced Careers with entries and exits linking them together. In general these careers suit the new setting, which depending on your perspective may be a good or bad thing. I would have liked to see more non-combat careers.

A good feature is that character development has been slowed. This was a real problem in WFRP1, with characters quickly becoming powerful and easily overcoming challenges. Thankfully this has been addressed and career changes should be less common. However, I would have liked rules enabling characters to stay in the same career on a long term basis.

**WvG:** Quite a number of WFRP1 careers have vanished. In total some thirty basic and advanced careers from WFRP1 do not appear in the second edition anymore. Some of them have been amassed in "container careers"; herdsman, rustlers and other outdoor folk are now gathered in the new 'peasant' career, for example. The exception is the warrior career class, of which almost no career is lost – even though there is not so much difference between soldier, mercenary and marine, for instance. All together the number of combat-oriented careers has increased significantly. I guess that the world has become more "grim and perilous".

The lost careers have been replaced with new ones. A number of these are rather peculiar; I suspect they have come from battle-oriented Games Workshop games - the Kislevite Kossar, for example. Despite this there is a wide career choice, especially in Advanced Careers where we now find interesting careers like Master Thief and Politician.

One thing that should be mentioned is the balancing of Basic Careers. Every career now has about nine advances and twelve skills. There are no weak or strong careers anymore. This has probably been done so players start on an equal footing, but it takes away a lot of the charm of the old edition.

**FD:** It offers most of the old Basic Careers from WFRP1, sometimes grouping similar careers into one template, which is a good thing, and offering us many new interesting careers like Envoy, Hedge Wizard, Kislevite Kossar, Crime Lord, Guild Master, Politician and Steward. These help fill in some of the gaps in the Warhammer World.

**JFF:** It is clear from the trappings that firearms are more prevalent. However, the prices do not reflect this. Some Basic Careers, especially those with firearms, start with a hugely expensive set of trappings. A Roadwarden gets near 600 gc worth of equipment; more than the yearly income of a noble. One oddity in the trappings is that everyone starts with 2D10 gc. It would have been better to have varied this based on career.

### Chapter IV: Skills & Talents

**WvG:** Skills are stackable; you can get a skill a second or third time in order to get a +10 or +20 on skill tests. One must switch careers to do so. However, it would have been nice to be able to create experienced thieves, mercenaries, and so on, without having to move them to other careers.

The combination of basic skills, advanced skills and talents works well. Where WFRP1 had different resolution mechanics for many skills, we now have a clear, uniform system that works the same way for all skills and talents. It is a definite improvement.

**FD:** Characteristics now advance in steps of 5% instead of 10%. This is an interesting way to create more diversity within careers without the need for huge characteristic advances. Sadly, WFRP2 still proposes many very high advances (up to +40%), further increased by skill

mastery and talents. This will lead to some ultra-powerful advanced characters.

Another change in WFRP2 is the language spoken by people in the Old World. Old Worlder is gone. Now every nation has its own language and there are different levels of language mastery. This creates interesting challenges for PCs travelling the world.

**JFF:** The chapter is clearly laid out and simple to follow. Night Vision hasn't been sorted out from WFRP1, so your friendly Skaven still need torches to get around their tunnels. There are also monster-only talents, such as Undead. This sounds odd at first, but makes a lot of sense. Forming part of the creature profile, it is a simple way of representing which rules affect it.

### Chapter V: Equipment

**JW:** Thankfully, WFRP2 has followed on from the first and provides a detailed chapter on equipment. This covers the key areas (weapons, armour, transport, food, clothing, services, etc) and is certainly sufficient for the majority of games.

My only gripe is the chapter also contains rules embedded within it. For example, rules for drinking and for illumination are hidden within. Furthermore there are additional combat rules (eg. weapon qualities), which are introduced before the combat chapter! If I wanted to find rules for drinking, the equipment chapter wouldn't be the first place I'd look.

The rules for weapon qualities bring a new dimension to the game, and make weapons more than just a set of different damage ratings.

**WvG:** Special attention should be given to the slang, colloquialisms, and so on (a Gold Crown is called a 'Karl' in everyday language, after the guy whose head is on most of them), which detail helps to make the world more believable.

**FD:** Together with an up-dated list of prices, WFRP2 details the effect of craftsmanship on the items. For instance, a sword of the best craftsmanship costs 100 gc, gives +5% to Weapon Skill and is 10% lighter, while one of poor craftsmanship costs 5 gc and gives -5% to Weapon Skill.

### Chapter VI: Combat, Damage & Movement

**JW:** The bulk of WFRP2 combat remains unchanged from WFRP1. The same routine of rolling to hit, calculating damage, determining hit location, receiving critical hits, etc, still exists. All this is good as I think it worked well in WFRP1. The main change is in round structure. In WFRP2 a player's turn is divided into Actions, either one full action, or two half actions (there are also free actions). The rules provide a list of the different Actions: for example, an attack is a half action, running is a full action. Actions mean that combat has now become very tactical and consequently less flexible.

Actions also lead to some illogical or inconsistent situations. Some notable ones include:

- "If an attack only costs a half

### THE REVIEWERS

James Walkerdine has been playing WFRP for almost fifteen years, both as a player and GM. During this time he has been a playtester for Hogshead's *Realms of Sorcery*, and more recently for WFRP2. He is the editor of *Liber Fantica* volume 2.

Robin Low is a long-time fan of WFRP and a *Warpstone* associate editor.

John Foody is *Warpstone* editor.

Wim van Gruisen has played WFRP since 1988. A vocal member of the WFRP2 playtest and one of the founders of *Liber Fantica*, he is editor of the first volume of that series.

François Dubé is a twenty-year veteran of RPGs. Known as Ulric when moderating the Black Industry Forums, he is also a freelancer and writer for *Warpstone*.

action, why can't I make two attacks (two half actions)?"

- "My Attack Characteristic is one - I can move (half action) and attack once (half action). My Attack Characteristic is three - I can still only move (half action) and attack once (half action). My increased Attack characteristic only seems of benefit when I am standing still."

A lot of these problems are caused by the fact that Attacks and actions try to co-exist. Three attacks in two half actions requires a bit of rule fiddling!

**WvG:** Each round a character can choose between about twenty actions, basic and advanced, some which take half a round, others the whole round. Add to this different weapon qualities and we get a very tactical system. A game within the game.

Fortune Points are new. I like the concept. They make Fate Points more than just extra lives, but providing a role during play. Fortune Points also show that PCs are blessed by the gods in ways other than those extra lives. The concept is cool. The actual mechanics are a bit disappointing. There is clear delineation of when and how they can be used (mainly in combat) where a more freeform approach would have been better.

**FD:** WFRP2 brings us closer to tabletop games and the D20 system with regard to how rounds are divided and how movement is controlled during combat. We still have the critical hit tables with some interesting results like the 'damage to armour' indicating a need for repairs.

Some more examples to make things really clear for GMs and players would have been great. Still, I definitely prefer these new combat rules over those of WFRP1.

### Chapter VII: Magic

**JW:** The magic system has been given a complete work over. Gone are magic points, replaced by a spell failure risk, similar to systems such as *Deadlands*. The need to learn each spell has been replaced by the learning of complete spell lists. The basic ideas for WFRP2 magic are very good and help create a fun mechanic with an element of risk thrown in. In some ways, however, it perhaps doesn't go far enough.

I would have liked an increased risk from casting spells. A lot of the Tzeentch's Curse effects seem very minor, and the chances of rolling on the harsher tables are quite remote. My own experiences of running the game is the risk isn't high enough to stop over-casting.

The spells themselves certainly *feel* different to those in WFRP1, but I think this reflects the change in setting.

**WvG:** I quite like the principle by which spell casting is limited without artificial means like magic points or 'fire-and-forget' mechanisms. Each time a wizard wants to cast a spell, he must consider whether it is worth the risk. Nice idea. However, in practice I feel it doesn't work like that. Tzeentch's Curse sounds dangerous, but only becomes so when triples or quadruples are rolled. The effects for doubles are more annoying than dangerous.

**FD:** There are many interesting and simple rules for casting: while wearing armour, while using protective circles, adding spell ingredients or using the Channelling skill before the casting. There is now no limit to the number of spells that can be cast during a day, except for the risk of bad side effects.

WFRP2 makes a wonderfully good job of introducing a new game mechanic that is stronger and more interesting while keeping mechanics simple and fast.

### Chapter VIII: Religion & Belief

**JW:** A lot more information about the different deities, religious festivals, cults, etc, has been provided. Overall this is a thorough chapter adding a lot of flavour to the Warhammer World. Particularly nice touches are the acts of contrition and rites of passage. My one quibble is with the chapter's structure - it would have been better if

the section on Gods and the section on Religious Orders were combined. It feels like there is a degree of repetition.

**WvG:** One of the more outstanding chapters. It discusses the human gods of the Warhammer World (or at least those venerated in the Empire), as well as a section on folk worship, where rites of passage (birthdays, marriage and such) and yearly celebrations and festivals are described. This is very good stuff, giving a view of the everyday life of someone living in the Empire.

Non-human deities get short shrift, though, with less than a page reserved for the gods of the Elves, Dwarfs and Halflings together. The biggest shock to WFRP1 players is the discontinuity between the two versions. This is most obvious in the treatment of the Old Faith, which seems to have disappeared.

**JFF:** One major loss is the disappearance of Khaine, outside a brief Elf-related mention. Khaine was the only real Evil god WFRP had and as Mórr's brother sat in an interesting theological position.

### Chapter IX: The Game Master

**JW:** This chapter discusses two important topics; Fate Points and insanity. Fate points are essentially unchanged from WFRP1. Insanities have been given more of a worldly feel, with names such as The Glorious Corruption. One thing I miss from WFRP1 is a breakdown of the stages a character goes through when they gain an insanity. As it stands I can easily envision a player making their character totally change their personality in an instant, whereas I feel the slow, gradual change of WFRP1 works better.

I have major issues with the notion of Witchsight that is introduced here. If a wizard can see magic auras it means he will always be able to see other wizards. Just imagine trying to play *Shadows over Bögenhafen* with a party containing a wizard. I'm not convinced the idea of Witchsight and its consequences have been fully thought out.

**FD:** The disorders are more oriented towards roleplaying and go far beyond modifiers to the Characteristic profiles. Many of these disorders will be a challenge to roleplay.

The Game Master chapter is a fine addition to the rulebook. WFRP is very different from many other games on the market and must be played differently by the GM and the players. This chapter gives useful advice to help new GMs running in the Warhammer World.

### Chapter X: The Empire

**JW:** In WFRP2, background has taken a lesser role, with both this chapter and the bestiary chapter seeming sparse. This chapter provides a brief history of the Empire, its neighbours and its enemies. Many veteran players will find the setting has changed. Clearly there will be some who are not happy with the changes, and I admit I don't like some of them. However we now have the luxury of two versions of the Warhammer World to use.

**WvG:** What is mainly missed here are suggestions for roleplaying adventures and roleplaying hooks, things that were present in WFRP1. It is inexcusable that Marienburg, the greatest port city in the Old World, is hardly mentioned. While a two-page map of the Old World is provided, it is badly laid out, with most of the important information and much of the Empire falling into the seam between the two pages.

**FD:** The chapter is well written, starting with the story of Sigmar before moving to the description of the provinces and politics of the Empire. I believe the chapter gives a comprehensive update of the new background for the Empire and its neighbours. However, the chapter does not give enough information for GMs to actually play in these (including the Empire) without creating their own material.

### Chapter XI: The Bestiary

**JW:** One problem with WFRP1 was creature characteristics and how

they compared with PC characteristics. This stemmed from the fact that the percentile characteristic system was built around PC races rather than the creatures. This meant that for really powerful creatures the characteristics became ridiculous. For example, Dwarfs could become as strong as Dragons. Unfortunately the same problem still exists in WFRP2.

The bestiary chapter also contains creature careers and a selection of NPC templates. The creature careers are an excellent idea and allow different ‘levels’ of creature to be developed.

**WvG:** Only barely sufficient for an RPG, this chapter’s main function is to make the buyer aware that he should buy the Bestiary supplement as well if he wants to use monsters or run more than just simplistic wilderness adventures.

The monster careers are nice touches; the Brute, Sneak and Chief careers, which have characteristic advance schemes and skills and talents, can be added to any monster. Profiles of common inhabitants of the Old World - beggars, gamblers, sell-swords, town guards and seven more - are easy to use and can be inserted quickly into a scenario.

**FD:** For me, this small bestiary is just perfect. I prefer to have rules and beasts in separate books. Also worth mentioning is the really good improvement of beasts through the addition of skills and talents.

**JFF:** Despite the scarcity of creatures there are a number of signs that the approach to creatures has changed for the better. Having skills and talents for creatures is an improvement. It makes clear what creatures can and can’t do and rounds them out, making them easier to customise.

### Chapter XII: Through the Drakwald

**JW:** This introductory scenario helps players get a feeling for the world, and acts as a precursor to the *Paths of the Damned* campaign. The adventure is good, although it didn’t grip me as much as the Oldenhaller Contract in WFRP1; perhaps it lacked a horror element. Interestingly it tries to deal with the Witchsight problem, with one NPC in the adventure having mastered the art of hiding their aura from others. Clearly this will be an art that all magic using NPCs will learn!

**WvG:** This is the kind of adventure where the actions of the PCs hardly affect the scenario; they may just as well sit by the side and eat popcorn, for that won’t change much of what will happen. The less said about it, the better.

**FD:** *Through the Drakwald* is a simple and well written scenario, perfect for getting familiar with the game mechanics and the new background at the same time. The context of refugees getting together after the war to travel to a safer place is perfect to bring together different characters with potentially very different backgrounds and careers. Still, I did not like the main plot or the background of the main major NPC.

### The Rest

**RL:** The character sheet is appalling. A pointless mannequin surrounded by minute numbers is terrible design. The text is ridiculously small (and my eyesight is excellent). What is needed is a stripped-down, single-sided character sheet specifically for game-time that *only* carries the *essential* information needed to keep the game flowing. In the middle of a session players only need a Current Profile. Skills only need the single number that must be rolled under. A character sheet should be like a good CV. Text should be large and uncluttered, with relevant details visible at a glance on a single side of paper.

**WvG:** We also have an advertisement and this shows a final lay-out flaw; the templates are printed on the back of the last index page, so they cannot be cut out without destroying the index. I cannot help but

wonder why those templates were not put on the back of the advertisement.

### Conclusion

**JW:** My problem is that rather than bringing the two settings together, the WFRP1 setting has essentially been discarded. I would have liked some bridges built between the two settings - admittedly this might have been an impossible task.

So what has changed? The most noticeable thing to me is it has become much more heroically dark; it’s almost as if things have been purposely exaggerated. On the whole the magic mechanic is an improvement. Tzeentch’s Curse is a good idea.

There is no denying that WFRP2 is a good attempt at modernising WFRP. However, my personal opinion is it won’t go down in history as a fantastic RPG system - to me it’s good, but it could have been better and it feels like a wasted opportunity - some bits just don’t seem to work that well.

I also find the tone for which WFRP was known has been lost in WFRP2. Saying that, it is early days and future supplements may help to bring back the essence of what I see to be WFRP.

**WvG:** WFRP2 is an improvement over WFRP1. Mechanics have been updated and streamlined, faults with the original have been removed. The system is recognisably the old system, but streamlined and with snags removed. WFRP2 only uses d10 and d100 rolls.

It is not all positive, however; discontinuities with the WFRP1 background and the stress on grim and perilous combat are annoying or worse. Magic is based on an interesting idea, but the mechanics have holes. Also, since the background comes forward in many of the rules, the new world of Warhammer forces itself into your game.

One final mention of sloppy design is that the book is not self-contained or complete. We have Troll Slayers and Giant Slayers, but the bestiary doesn’t contain Trolls or Giants. We have Vampire Hunters, but no Vampires. Characters like Seamen and Marines can come from “the great port of Marienburg” and even have knowledge of the place and the surrounding Wasteland, but those places don’t even get two lines of description. The designers promised the rulebook would be complete (especially the bestiary and the Empire chapters), but it isn’t. You will need supplements. And, as a lot of people have already remarked, it is likely that one of the best supplements is already on your bookshelf: your copy of WFRP1.

**FD:** WFRP2 does an amazing job to build a game that is complete, strong and simple. The careers, the skills, the combat mechanics and the magic system are all wonderful improvements that will work side by side with the new background to give us amazing gaming sessions.

I believe WFRP2 has all it takes to stand tall in the RPG world and be a serious alternative to D20.

**JFF:** I remain unsure about the new rulebook. Some rules have improved from WFRP1, but flaws remain. This is an acceptable update of the WFRP1 rules, but the feel and background of the game is worse. There appears to be a simplification of the world and a firm move towards a more heroic game. It isn’t *Warhammer Fantasy Battle*, but it is a step closer. The game is much more combat orientated, from careers to artwork. Chaos and the supernatural are much more prevalent now. In some ways this is good, as it recognises the fact these things affect the world. In other ways, it just means the game is awash with these elements and they become the focus of the game.

There are some excellent bits of background in this book. These are usually in the sidebars of articles, and give an insight into the Old World. Sadly, there are not enough of these.

### ...and the rest

The full reviews are available in full at the *Warpstone* website. Check it out at [www.warpstone.darcore.net](http://www.warpstone.darcore.net).

## The Loathsome Ratmen

By Mitchel Scanlon

Published by The Black Library

Reviewed by John Foody



*“A horror greater than all the beasts and hordes of Chaos combined.”*

*The Loathsome Ratmen* and all their Vile Kin, to give its full title, is a background book for the Skaven and, like the recent *Liber Chaotica* books, comes without any rules. Like the *Liber Chaotica* books it looks good, with some well-chosen, excellent atmospheric art. It is an improvement over the earlier books as the layout is much more

elegant. Some of the material in *The Loathsome Ratmen* is taken from previous Games Workshop releases.

Skaven are perhaps WFRP players’ favourite monster. Existing in a hidden underworld, they plot and scheme to destroy the world of men in the name of their god, the Horned Rat. In Warhammer Fantasy Battle they are amongst the most popular armies and a frequent presence in Black Library fiction. Arguably their portrayal in the Battle game and the Warhammer fiction makes them too visible, too mundane.

WFRP never really used the Skaven in the official material and Hogshead’s long promised sourcebook never saw the light of day. WFRP fan material has used the Skaven more, most notably Garrett Lepper’s *The Book of the Rat*.

Nearly all the background and fiction failed to really get to grips with the central problem of portraying the Skaven. That is, how to talk about them and use them without destroying the mystery and secrecy that surrounds them.

When I came to *The Loathsome Ratmen*, I hoped it would be more than just a tally of Skaven troops. Would it help in using the Skaven in WFRP?

As with the *Liber Chaotica* series, *The Loathsome Ratmen* is written from the point-of-view of an Old Worlder, this time written 200 years before the Warhammer setting. The “author” is a veteran soldier, trying to warn the world of man of the threat it faces from the Skaven.

The first part looks at the origin of the Ratmen, discussing various theories including whether they evolved from man or rat. This is followed by details on their appearance, use of Warpstone and just why the Skaven act as they do. Part two concerns Skaven society, from the Horned Rat down to slaves. On the way it looks at the various clans that dominate their society and those few that rule it. It does well in bringing to life the internecine warfare that dominates Skaven society.

Next comes background on the different ways the Skaven wage war, from mobbing with slaves to the famed Clan Eshin assassins. There are even details on two new diseases, allegedly created by Clan Pestilens. This section ends with a look at those that help and serve the Ratmen; sadly, it is rather brief.

The final part looks at the history of the Skaven from the

recorded mention in a poem named *The Doom of Kavzar* (included in full) to Mordheim and beyond. Special mention is given to Miragliano, where they recognise the threat of the Skaven, detailing the measures they take to combat them.

Finally, the book ends on a call to arms, pleading with mankind to unite against the Skaven: “Let us go to war”. There is also an in-game bibliography, which in itself is useful background for GMs.

*The Loathsome Ratmen*, understandably perhaps, does fail to deal with the conflict between background and game. We are told the world must wake to the threat of the Skaven - unknown to the common man. However, we are then told again and again of armies and invasions throughout history where they have been seen by thousands. The two points of view visibly conflict.

From a WFRP perspective I would like to have seen more in depth material, particularly more on their human servants in the Old World. However, there are plenty of ideas here for GMs, whether using the Skaven directly or having them firmly in the background.

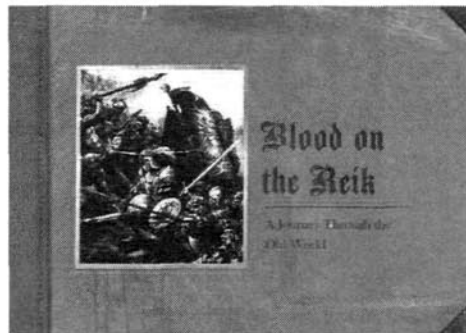
*The Loathsome Ratmen* is a success. Well written, it is an enjoyable read and gives a good summary and introduction to the Skaven. It has lots of nice touches and I particularly liked the footnotes and picture captions. *The Loathsome Ratmen* is the kind of book Black Library do best: atmospheric and fun. Less useful if you have other Skaven sourcebooks already, but for those who want further detail on the Skaven, *The Loathsome Ratmen* is recommended.

## Blood on the Reik

By David Gallagher, Matt Ralphs & John Blanche

Published by Black Library

Reviewed by John Foody



In the style of recent Black Library releases *Blood on the Reik* purports to be a publication of the Old World. It is the sketchbook and part memoir of Tobias Helmgrat, an

Imperial who has travelled The Empire and beyond. However, although it is subtitled “A Journey Through the Old World,” the focus is really The Empire with only a cursory glance elsewhere.

A hundred or so pages long, the book is designed as a sketchbook with its *faux* leather cover and parchment pages. Inside are over 250 concept sketches and twelve colour pictures, accompanied by text and captions describing what is being shown.

The bulk of the book shows us the citizenry of the Empire, as well as various street furniture, such as roadside shrines and public torture devices. These pictures by David Gallagher really bring the population of The Empire to life, from beggars to wizards. Even the more high fantasy characters are given a gritty, dirty feel. Each picture has various captions highlighting points of interest. So for a street vendor we are told he has an untrustworthy



face and a bunch of suspicious looking rats hanging from his belt. The font on these captions does get a little tiresome after a while.

There is a less realistic feel than I would have liked, but overall it works well except where some elements of the pictures are a little silly. Skulls are everywhere and the number of characters wearing candles implies wooden buildings must have high ceilings. There is also an odd lack of religious imagery across many pictures - the graveyard has barely a symbol of Morr in sight.

The supporting text is also good although less convincing alongside the John Blanche colour plates which don't really add much to the book.

After the Imperial pictures, there are sketches of a few creatures and monsters. These work well (bar the stupid squigs) and they fit nicely into the overall feel of the background. Of these the Beastmen, Treemen and Basilisk were my favourites. Slightly out of place are pictures of Arabyan characters - their inclusion is odd here as no other county is described. However, they do raise the question of whether Arabyan material is on the way.

*Blood on the Reik* is a good, enjoyable sourcebook for the Empire. It shows many of the common people that make up the population alongside more exotic characters. I found myself considering parts of the background afresh, especially the Empire's apparent obsession with death.

I recommend the book, assuming you are happy to spend £15 on mostly pictures, for some good background and ideas on the Empire, a country that this book helps bring to life.

## Liber Fantica: Volumes 1 & 2

Reviewed by Simon Dennett



Have you ever tried to review a supplement that is completely free, composed entirely of optional additions and written by unpaid fans as a favour to the WFRP community? It's not an easy task! To be critical feels rather churlish and self-aggrandising - like being offered a box of assorted chocolates, only to smack them out of the offerer's hand, tell him that they're mostly disgusting and then look around to see who was watching. So it was very

fortunate that *Liber Fantica* is excellent - offering useful and inspiring ideas to augment WFRP2 with very little that is surplus to requirements.

*Liber Fantica* is a two-volume collection of rules and articles for WFRP2, available for download online. The first volume "The Character Compendium" is largely compiled to provide players with additional inspiration for fleshing out their PC and further career information. The second volume is entitled "The Perilous Arts" and concerns itself with additional combat and spell mechanics. Both are the work of a group of writers who

first became acquainted during the playtesting of WFRP2, compiling some of their suggestions and additions for the game that didn't see print. Edited by Wim van Gruisen (Volume 1) and James Walkerdine (Volume 2), both volumes were launched simultaneously with WFRP2 to great response online.

Visually, the documents are yet another example of fan work that looks almost professional. The choice of artwork is inspired - especially the cover to the Character Compendium, which features a sketch of a crowd of various unsavoury and grotesque individuals reminiscent of Brueghel.

Broadly speaking, the contents of both volumes fall into three types - rules that bring back old mechanics (such as 'lost' careers), rules that add depth to the current game and completely new ideas. Some rules were clearly excluded from WFRP2 for good reason, so there was a risk that *Liber Fantica* would bring them back because the authors *just can't let go*. Fortunately, this is not the case and most additions are well-considered and worthwhile.

The Character Compendium is the better of the two volumes, primarily because it is packed with content that will inspire both players and GMs to create memorable characters. Furthermore, it is just as useful for wide-eyed WFRP virgins as for leathery old WFRP1 veterans.

The first three articles are concerned with fleshing out PCs and NPCs. So we have a neat little article in "Ten Questions - Expanded" which prompts players to think deeper about their PCs' background and ties them deeper into the world - it should be especially useful for players who are new to roleplaying. Along similar lines is "Character Motivations," a structured approach to giving your PC reasons for doing what he or she does. As a list of suggestions it works well, although it may be a little too formal for some styles of play. GMs will have to be careful that it does not encourage black-and-white absolutist roleplaying to which WFRP can easily become prone. Some may choose to view motivations as a more sophisticated replacement for alignment, which would be entirely appropriate.

The jewel in the *Liber Fantica* crown is the "Character Backgrounds" article. A simple premise (replacing WFRP1's character classes) leads to a wealth of possibilities for players and GMs alike. By reflecting the Empire setting, Wim has created ten character origins (such as 'Waterline' or 'Mercantile') that will get players thinking about their PC before they even roll for a starting career. Each consists of a brief overview, suggested trappings, religious tendencies and tables of sorted skills, talents and careers. This is the perfect example of what *Liber Fantica* can do - simple rules that don't need to be remembered every session, don't add needless complexity but do suggest countless ideas for play.

The majority of the remaining articles in the Character Compendium concern themselves with careers. "Career Guidance" deals with that hoary old issue of whether Hans the smuggler gave up dealing in illicit goods when he became an adventurer or whether he continues to practice his 'profession' in between sloshing around sewers and flying about on griffons. Most GMs and players will work out a pragmatic compromise, but the article suggests some decent ways to resolve the (perceived) conflict and use starting careers and career changes as adventure hooks. This is followed by a brief and stimulating

article on “Psychotic Careers” (i.e. those that represent a mindset rather than a trade or profession).

In my opinion, the careers section of the new rulebook is mostly great (if a little combat obsessed...), but there were some odd omissions, such as the absence of ‘Beggar’. The “Lost Careers” article reinstates those perfectly adequately, although the author was a little overeager to state that Druids and Seers are ‘impossible’ in the new edition background - a recent White Dwarf article (also available at <http://uk.games-workshop.com/warhammer/religion/1/>) suggests otherwise.

The final article will have the most immediate application for those of us who want to convert existing WFRP1 PCs to the new edition. With a little fudging, the guidelines here will allow fairly straightforward adaptation of well-loved characters for the new rules.

The “Perilous Arts” volume consists principally of articles for GM use, with the emphasis on those moving from WFRP1. The first chapter is concerned with combat and the first two articles focus on almost diametrically opposed approaches to roleplaying fights. “Narrative Combat” provokes the imagination into creating more dynamic and creative scuffles, encouraging GMs to run them as an exercise in storytelling where the dice are used only to help advance the action and resolve success. This would work best for smaller parties and looks easy to adapt to individual styles of play. The second article is something of a curate’s egg, presenting an alternative combat system to WFRP2. It borrows a little from both editions of the game, but doesn’t seem to reduce complexity or improve the flow of the game markedly. I ran a few ‘dry runs’ of both approaches and couldn’t see a clear advantage of the proposed alternative. However, I have never been particularly concerned with combat rules (making me poorly qualified to review these!) and I’m sure that some GMs will prefer the different actions and mechanics suggested here.

The final combat article concerns itself with damage and healing. There is a great set of ideas around combatants passing out from particularly severe blows, which was something that was badly needed in WFRP1, where a protracted “slug away until someone loses a limb/head or runs off” exchange was all too common. This is followed by a welcome return and refinement of elements of the healing rules from the first edition, addressing some of the more... ahem... eccentric rules in WFRP2.

The second chapter is concerned with spells and spellcasting. The “Corruption” article provides an optional mechanic for representing the risky nature of magic in the Warhammer world. Corruption points are an unobtrusive and colourful idea, which would work well if kept hidden from the player as they are acquired. The author could have tied them into the existing Tzeentch’s Curse mechanic and the dice pool. The article revises the casting rules to fit corruption points, and seems to be superfluous and less elegant than a fully-integrated approach to the new magic rules. At the end of the article is a helpful suggestion for learning spells which limits the bizarre open-ended approach to spell knowledge for Lores in WFRP2.

“Perilous Arts” ends with a considerable undertaking to convert spells from WFRP1. This will prove invaluable when using older adventures with the new edition, but it’s also a great way to expand magic while we wait for the new *Realms of Sorcery*.

Most of the recommendations for where each spell fits into the new categorisation seem appropriate and reasonable. This section requires the original spell references (for ingredients and full descriptions), but it’s another useful tool for WFRP1 GMs looking to change editions.

Overall, *Liber Fanatica* represents an excellent (and free!) selection of suggestions and optional rules - a remarkable achievement given that both volumes were released alongside WFRP2. There’re tonnes of ideas for many different types of GM, as well as a decent amount of material for players. There was always a risk that a release like this could have become bogged down by an anti-WFRP2 agenda - lead more by a desire to prove that WFRP1 was superior than to help GMs of the new game. This is certainly not the case and you get the impression that the authors are embracing the new edition with open minds. As such, it would be a shame if *Liber Fanatica* was only downloaded by veteran WFRP GMs rather than those who are newer to the game.

Details on *Liber Fanatica* can be found on page 10.

## WFRP Character Pack

By Chris Pramas

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by John Foody



Character packs are often seen as a moneymaking exercise, offering little real substance. However, there is no reason why they cannot be worthwhile. What can make these products interesting for many are the extras.

The WFRP Character Pack comes in three parts. The main bulk is made up of 50 character sheets as per the design in the main rules. There is also a sixteen-page booklet containing various tables and summaries. First though, we start with the wraparound cover (terribly thin paper), which shows “Character Portraits”. These are taken directly from *Blood on the Reik* and are a useful addition to the background atmosphere. However, as they are available elsewhere in greater numbers and come with no supporting text they are not really a reason to buy.

The final part of the pack is a sixteen-page booklet. This starts with a character generation summary which could help speed up character generation. However you will still need the main rules. There are then six pages of names for Imperials, Dwarfs, Elves and Halflings. The names are a useful addition but perhaps presenting them in random generation tables is a waste of space. One of the more interesting tables is the *Foretelling of Doom*. This could be a great idea, but here is just a lost opportunity. This should have been in the *Game Master’s Pack*, supported by an article giving Game Masters advice on how the Dooms could be incorporated in the game. Here, players could have been given advice on how to roleplay them. Personal Heraldry is similarly underdeveloped.

We are also presented with random tables for Human

birthplaces. This is okay, but works against the main rule tables. Here you can only come from a population centre larger than a village, something that was covered in the main rules. The spell lists and Action summaries are more useful.

If you want anything more than the character sheets, then this is not worth purchasing. It offers little value. Where it is good, it could have been improved with a little more thought. Much of this material should have been available as initial support on the Black Industries website. Certainly, Black Industries have rather cynically pushed players towards this pack by not making a character sheet available as a PDF.

In short, avoid.

## WFRP Game Master's Pack

By Alfred Nuñez Jr & Chris Pramas

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by Robin Low



The *Game Master's Pack* for WFRP has three components: a cover sheet, a four-panel GM screen and a 31 page black and white booklet.

The glossy cover sheet is a detail of the Beastmen from the WFRP2 rulebook's cover. On the reverse is a black, grey and white map of the Old World, including Albion, showing terrain features, political boundaries and settlements. The text is small and a little crowded; it

is reasonably clear but don't expect to find places in a hurry. The paper is very thin, but the right size to laminate easily.

The GM screen is unusual as it is landscape rather than portrait; that is, each panel rests on its longest edge. The GM can see dice rolls made in front of it without stretching so far, but it requires space to open properly. On the players' side, the two central panels show the WFRP2 rulebook's cover, with smaller pictures from recent WFRP2 publications. The outermost panels depict engraved-style flavour text with the twin-tailed comet of Sigmar below. The card is rather thin, but it stays upright.

The GM's side of the screen is covered with black and white tables. There is a lot of information and the text is very small. For me, there is much wasted space. Take the fourth panel as an example: Illumination is a matter of common sense; Combat Movement is on character sheets and can be prepared for NPCs; Local/Overland Movement depends on terrain, plot and the GM; Test Difficulties are supremely simple to remember. Remove these tables and the others on this panel could be doubled in size: Combat Difficulty, which has examples with the modifiers, would be easier to read.

There is also bad design. Again with panel four as the example, the Actions by Type table could have easily contained the Basic and Advanced Action table - a simple (A) or (B) after each action would have done the trick. Similarly, the Test Difficulty table is already within the Combat Difficulty table!

With fifteen minutes thought, seven tables are reduced to three.

The extra space could be used to give more detail on how various Actions work- it's great knowing a character can take the half-action Feint, but if the GM must look in the rulebook for an explanation nothing has been gained. Alternatively, there would be room for the almost essential Critical Hits table, which unbelievably has been left off.

The problem any GM screen designer has is different GMs want different things. Some do want details of weapon characteristics, but I record details on individual NPC sheets. However, focusing on trivia like Illumination ranges encourages GMs, especially novices, to think that minor rules matter, when they don't. Worrying about this stuff slows down play and ruins atmosphere.

There is a compromise. Lose the purposeless pictures on the players' side and replace with attractively bordered panels containing player information, such as Combat Summary with explanations of Actions. Some duplication is fine: if GMs don't have to keep answering players' questions, time and atmosphere will be saved. By spreading and sharing information fonts can be enlarged, practical detail added and time wasted answering questions reduced.

Faults with this GM screen are not unique to this type of product, but I would have liked Green Ronin/Black Industries to avoid the usual approach of sticking a load of pictures on one side and a load of tables on the other. It's not without use, but little effort or thought has gone into its design.

The booklet contains a scenario and a section entitled *Buildings of the Old World*, a straight, but valuable lift from WFRP1. It concludes with: an NPC record sheet (four NPCs to a page, summarising basic details); a Combat Tracker (record name, current wounds and notes for twelve combatants, with a table for recording initiative order); summaries of Necromancy and Chaos Lores (side effects are described in detail, but spells just get Casting Number and Time, so you still need the rulebook for effects); equipment tables from the rulebook. This latter stuff is filler: it should be online as pdf files.

The scenario, *Pretty Things*, is written by Alfred J. Nunez, Jr. (regular Warstone contributor and author of *Dwarfs: Stone and Steel*) and is thirteen pages long, with four pre-generated characters taking another two. It is a good introductory scenario for new characters, GMs and players alike, combining on-the-road, rescue and safe delivery plot elements. It is linear, but with options; clever players might even avoid combat. New GMs get a simple but eventful game to run; experienced GMs will be able to develop its potential for atmosphere, roleplay and action. Depending how they play it, PCs could end up with two future foes. Furthermore, the ending hints strongly at local political skulduggery that GMs can exploit. No reference is made to the Storm of Chaos. The art is attractive and simple, and there is a map of part of the Talabecland-Stirland border.

Overall, the *WFRP Game Master's Pack* is expensive, but no more so than similar products. However, the key selling point is the scenario. It reads well but could have been longer if six and a half pages of filler had been left out. Some GMs will regularly use the screen, but the lazy design is irritating. The *Old World Bestiary* is a standard product type, but with an original approach; it's a shame the GM screen couldn't have been as innovative.

# WARPSTONE FRAGMENTS

BRIEF REVIEWS AND NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF WARHAMMER



Black Industries

Black Industries will be appearing at Origins this year and Games Day (25th September, Birmingham NEA). They have also said they will be at Gencon US, although no games have been announced as yet.

Forthcoming releases we know about are *Old World Armoury* (June 2005), *Sigmar's Heirs* (July 2005), and *Paths of the Damned: Spires of Altdorf* (August 2005), which is the second part of the *Paths of the Damned* campaign. *Realms of Sorcery* appears to be due in January 2006. Black Industries is also releasing a pair of WFRP Dice Bags. Also check out Black Industries' website for increasing amounts of fan-produced WFRP2 material including creatures from the first edition and new careers, the Gong Farmer and Executioner among them.

As we went to press Black Industries announced it will be producing a DC Superheroes RPG game.

## Alfred Nuñez Jr Scenarios

In addition to writing *Dwarfs: Stone and Steel* and numerous *Warpstone* articles, Alfred has written and run many WFRP convention scenarios. These, including the excellent *Witch-Hunter Cometh* (co-written with Tim Eccles), are available on his website [www.madalfred.darcove.net](http://www.madalfred.darcove.net).

## Dwarf Women Have Beards Too

WFRP Fanzine - Issue 3

Reviewed by Clive Oldfield

A few copies of a free fanzine arrived at *Warpstone*. Labeled issue 3, this should beg the question what happened to issues 1 and 2? But somehow it is hard to believe a word one reads here.

It is styled as a typical fanzine: A4 sheets folded and stapled together. There are two sheets and therefore eight pages. The cover promises an exclusive, 'I was a playtest w\*\*\*e!' I've been trying to work out what the three asterisks might stand for, but I was one too, I imagine. Anyone wishing to read the exclusive is directed to 'Page 9.'

The fanzine is funny and has some very funny bits. It seems like a throwback to the golden age of crappy fanzines, unashamedly so. There is a 'spot the cultist' competition, new background tables and a brand new career, Godslayer.

There is also a review of *Warpstone 22*; in case you think this might be mutual backslapping it includes, 'Inside they still carry on with the same drive! Foody and the others completely miss the point of what WFRP is about.'

It took a bit of effort to actually work out if this thing is for sale and how to get hold of it, but we think you can request your free copy by emailing:

[FrankieAndBeastie@hotmail.com](mailto:FrankieAndBeastie@hotmail.com).

I highly recommend it.



## Carnel

Issue 30 of the fanzine *Carnel* is out now. This and the last few issues have been excellent. Issue 28 was dedicated to Lustria, containing background (to be concluded in issue 31) and a scenario. Subscriptions (6 issues) are UK: £10, Everywhere Else £17. Write to Robert Rees, 10a Eldon Grove, London, NW3 5PT or visit [carnel.sdf-eu.org/carnel](http://carnel.sdf-eu.org/carnel).

## Flagship

Issue 113 of *Flagship* is out now. Issue 112 contained an article by John Foody looking at WFRP and an interesting article by Robert Rees (based on his booklet) about starting your own zine. For more details on *Flagship* check out [www.flagshipmagazine.com](http://www.flagshipmagazine.com).

## The Warpstone Website

There have been some recent excellent additions to the *Warpstone* site. We are pleased to present two German WFRP scenarios from Karl-Heinz Zapf. Then we have all the articles from Tim Eccle's fanzine *The Origin of Tree Worship*. This is a wide-ranging and very useful source of WFRP articles, under appreciated when first published. Check them out!

## Warpstone Charity Auction

The e-bay auction for *Warpstone* issue 23 proofs were sold for £63.50. This was donated to the Tsunami disaster appeal fund. Many thanks to the winner for his generosity.

## Brettonnia Project

Check out the Brettonnia Project. It focuses on a non-Arthurian background for Brettonnia in keeping with the description in the WFRP1 rulebook. It is a dark swashbuckling setting based on renaissance France. After some time in hibernation, the writers have decided to launch new websites in 2005. Since the release of the free Brettonnia Sourcebook in 2003, they have been working mainly on play-aids and a collection of inspiration material for the Brettonnia Sourcebook. Brettonnia Project is a reasonably active Internet project, which is open to contributions. Check out Brettonnia Project [English] [www.warhammer.net/brettonnia/](http://www.warhammer.net/brettonnia/) or Brettonnie-jdr [French] <http://malpy.free.fr/brettonnie/> or contact project coordinator Peter Butterworth on [wfrp.brettonnia@laposte.net](mailto:wfrp.brettonnia@laposte.net)

## Timcon III

The third Timcon held in London in March 2005 was a success. All the games received enthusiastic reviews. Sadly, this could well be the last Timcon and will be a sad loss.

## Liber Fanatica - Fan-Made Compendiums for WFRP2

The *Liber Fanatica* books (reviewed this issue) are the work of WFRP fanatics who playtested the WFRP2 rules and came up with ideas that didn't find their way into the official material. In *Liber Fanatica I - The Player Compendium* there is material on how to flesh out your character with background and motivation, articles on enhancing the roleplaying of careers, and notes on how to convert characters from WFRP1 to the new rules. *Liber Fanatica II - The Perilous Arts* is packed with articles on two of the most dangerous aspects of WFRP, magic and combat, including alternative rules for both and notes on how to use WFRP1 spells with the new rules.

In the forthcoming *Liber Fanatica III - Game Master's Guide* there will be: *Articles* on various aspects of running WFRP, a *GM's toolbox*, including the means to instantly flesh-out NPCs, and a generator for quickly coming up with books to be found (and perhaps feared) by your players and *Appendices*, intended to inspire GMs with various ways of playing WFRP, including a comprehensive presentation of PbEMs, and a look at designing convention scenarios.

The *Liber Fanatica* books can be found at a number of websites. Check out page 7 and the *Warpstone* site for links to these.

## Chaos - North Lands: Le Grimoire Issue 20

The latest issue of the French fanzine contains information on History of Chaos, the gate of Tannhauser, realms of Chaos, De Beastiis Chaotis bestiary, Realm of Kislev (Erengard and Praag city description) and hobgoblins description. It also includes descriptions of Malal and Arianka, Norsca description, how to create a Norse (werewolf) character, new careers, monsters of the sea of Claws and a scenario to end the French campaign *Pour la Gloire d'Ulric*. Contributors include Alfred Nunez, Antony Ragan, Russ Nicholson and Gary Chalk. This will be the last ever issue of *Le Grimoire*. More details at [www.legrimoire.net](http://www.legrimoire.net).

**THEY'RE NOT JUST SHAVEN SKAVEN**  
MEET THEM AGAIN FOR THE FIRST TIME - ONLY IN WARPSTONE 25

# SPEAK LANGUAGE (VARIOUS)

## A look at the companies translating WFRP2

Recently Black Industries announced that WFRP2 would be translated and released in five countries. The companies (and countries) were announced as Copernicus Corporation in Poland, Nexus Editrice in Italy, Darwin Project in France, Feder & Schwert in Germany and Edge Entertainment in Spain. We thought we would have a look at these companies and find out how popular WFRP is in each country.

At the time of writing, the release schedule for the translations is unknown. Each of the companies will work to their own schedule. In addition to translating work produced by Green Ronin, each of the companies will be able to produce some original material. Simon Butler at Black Industries said this is limited to their own “scenarios and supplementary information” although “everything has to be approved by us.” However, they will not be able to produce “hard background.”

Black Industries is currently in discussions for licences in Japan, Russia and Portugal, although these are not the limit. Simon says, “If anyone comes up with a workable solution from anywhere else, we’ll listen.”

### FRANCE

By **jd Lanz**

Warhammer may not be the most popular game in France, but it still contends solidly with heavyweights such as *AD&D*, *Call of Cthulhu* and *Vampire*. Jeux Descartes translated all the books of the first edition without missing a single one (something they did not do for, say, *Shadowrun*), and they used to be the biggest French publisher. They also published a scenario by a French author, *Pour la Gloire d’Ulric (For the Glory of Ulric)*. That was to be the first of a whole campaign, but the best-laid plans of Skaven and men, as they say...

*Le Grimoire*, the main French fanzine for WFRP, has been around for decades, which is enough of an indication of the following for the game.

Darwin Project is a games and magazine publisher based in Paris, active in the gaming press for ten years. They publish five different magazines: *Fantasy.RPG*, *MaNiaK*, *Lotus Noir*, *Duel Masters* and *Codex Arcanum*. *MaNiaK* is centred on younger kids’ games such as *Yu-Gi-Oh*. They also cover manga and comic topics. *Lotus Noir* is, as its title implies (French for Black Lotus), all about Collectible Card Games while *Duel Masters* is dedicated to the card game of the same name. *Codex Arcanum* is about fantasy miniatures. They are also involved in *Picto Mag*, a general information magazine focused on the view of the hearing-impaired on the world and culture. Last but certainly not least, the astutely named *Fantasy.RPG*, whose first cover sports the same Slayer who appears on the WFRP2 rulebook cover, takes the place recently vacated by the Darwin Project’s *Backstab*, a good, old-fashioned roleplaying game magazine that had been around since around 1996. It promises to have a WFRP scenario every two months alongside other material.

Aside from that bustling activity, they also publish the P’tit Jeux line, games that fit in your pocket. (Well, in my big waist pocket anyway.) These are fast, simple and brightly coloured (not to

mention, in the case of the game *Sillage*, directly linked with a successful quality comic book, and soon to be followed by two other great names, *Thorgal* and *Kookaburra*), making them easy to present to non-hardcore gamers, while still interesting to dedicated players.

### GERMANY

By **Alexander Kurtzahn**

Before the recent announcement that Feder & Schwert would be translating the second edition, the status of Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay could be simply described as non-existent in Germany.

WFRP has not really been available in German. There was a German version between 1997 and 1999, translated by Schwarzes Einhorn (Black Unicorn), but it was not really supported by Games Workshop and their stores. Schwarzes Einhorn translated the rulebook, *The Enemy Within*, *Shadows Over Bögenhafen*, *Death on the Reik* and *Power behind the Throne*. I haven’t heard of Schwarzes Einhorn since. Only one WFRP fanzine was published in Germany; this only lasted three or four issues. There is currently a small community of WFRP players in Germany who publish material, mostly on the Internet, but this includes Karl-Heinz Kapf’s printed scenarios [some are available for download at the *Warpstone* website – Ed].

It seems less than five hundred copies of WFRP were sold in Germany compared to over 15,000 *D&D* 3E and *Shadowrun*, with *Call of Cthulhu*, *Midgard* and *Vampire: The Masquerade* close behind. Smaller games such as *Cyberpunk*, *Earthdawn*, *Paranoia* and *Magus (Mage)* have sold ten times as many.

Therefore, as you can imagine, nobody is really waiting desperately for WFRP2. However, Feder & Schwert is very well known and has been very successful in the past; for example, it translated and published all the White Wolf games. The company seems to be doing well. One of the main factors for this is the high quality of Feder & Schwert products. Feder & Schwert is planning the release of four to six WFRP products per year so WFRP should get a massive boost in Germany.

### ITALY

By **Max Ribaric**

The first Italian edition of WFRP came to light in June 1994, soon followed by a GM screen and *Il nemico dentro (The Enemy Within)*. During recent years all *The Enemy Within* campaign was translated into Italian together with the supplement/companion *Compendium* (sort of *Apocrypha Now* with a mix of old articles from *White Dwarf* and other places).

This January (2005) *I Regni della Magia (Realm of Sorcery)* finally arrived, together with a reissue of the WFRP1 rulebook, this time in soft cover.

The name of the Italian edition, *Martelli da Guerra*, is a bit horrible! The company stated this change was made as Games Workshop wanted to separate the roleplaying game from the wargame (still called Warhammer) to avoid confusion. *Martelli da Guerra* literally means *Hammers of War*. For some people this name sounds odd because when it came out in Italy there was a big

political scandal and one famous politician (from the now defunct Italian Socialist Party – P.S.I.) involved in the process was Claudio Martelli. Thus at the time there were all kinds of jokes made.

The translation of WFRP1 was quite good, but what I really dislike is the general layout, which is far less powerful than the original. Some pictures are missing altogether, and while the drawings by Paolo Parente are beautiful they lack the real Warhammer feel.

Nexus Editrice, which is producing the Italian edition of WFRP2, was born around ten years ago and were behind the now defunct *Kaos*, at the time of one of the biggest national game magazines here in Italy. It printed the Italian editions of various roleplaying games (*Killer*, *Shadowrun*, *Toon*, *Macho Women with Guns* and French RPG *Simulacres*), boardgames (*Doom* for example), comics, a couple of miniatures series (especially the old glorious *Atlantic* from the late '70s), and books (including Warhammer novels such as *Ignorant Armies*). It also developed original games such as *Ken il guerriero* (an RPG from the Japanese anime *Hokuto No Ken*).

## POLAND

### By Radek Drozdalski

Polish players will soon have a chance to enjoy WFRP2 in their native language. The company producing this translation, Copernicus Corporation, has been present in the Polish market for quite some time. It released a Polish edition of *Cyberpunk 2020* in 1996, followed by a number of supplements. Nowadays, it is releasing Black Library books from the Warhammer and WH40K universes.

The first edition of Warhammer was released in late 1994 by the first Polish RPG company MAG. It was the first foreign roleplaying game translated into Polish. No one really anticipated how popular this game would become, and how much the fan base would grow. MAG followed its release of the core book with two supplements a year later: the *Character Pack* and *Lichemaster*. Since then, all of the Flame Publications and Games Workshop supplements have hit the Polish market. MAG lost its publishing license around the time Hogshead rose to power in the UK.

It could easily be said Warhammer nursed and raised a whole second generation of Polish roleplayers (the first generation played with imported games). WFRP was the first and only complete Polish language RPG available at the time. Almost immediately after its release Warhammer became a cult game; everyone loved it and played it. This game really allowed the Polish RPG community to grow. Its biggest selling points was that it was in Polish and very reasonably priced; true of all the MAG Warhammer releases.

MAG supported the game in its own RPG magazine, *Magia i Miecz* (Sword & Sorcery), which lasted for 103 issues. The magazine had its own WFRP column, *Zmagania z Chaosem* (Struggle against Chaos). The first articles were translations of *White Dwarf* articles, but with the growth of the community, the first Polish authors began to be featured.

After its release, two unofficial Polish supplements were published. The first of them appeared in the seventh issue of the RPG magazine *Labirynt*. This 128-page book, *Guide to the Old World*, focused on describing lands beyond the boundaries of the Empire and on The Empire itself. The second and more important release was the excellent *Wladca Zimy* (*Lord of Winter*), by Portal publishing. *Lord of Winter* was 202 pages long and featured the biggest names in the Polish WFRP community. In this massive campaign the players took up the roles of a small company of soldiers stationed on the eastern reaches of the Empire, facing the

threat of a massive Orc invasion. The book featured detailed information on life as a soldier in the Empire's army, new rules and careers, and a whole chapter on winter magic. This campaign was highly praised among fans, but sales weren't as high as the publisher expected.

Throughout all those years many WFRP fanzines were published. The most important was *Goniec Imperialny* (*Imperial Courier*), which lasted four issues. All of the major Polish RPG portals have pages and forums dedicated to WFRP, and by the numbers of posts there, we can be assured that the new edition of the game will remain one of the most popular games in the Polish market.

## SPAIN

### By Enaid in WFRP Forums

WFRP2 is going to be released in Spanish by Edge Entertainment, a publishing company based in southern Spain. Edge has earned a good reputation both in the quality of its products and its translations, at the same time boasting a fringe or trendy approach to its lines. They have published the Spanish versions of a handful of d20 settings (*Conan* RPG and *Iron Kingdoms* to mention but two) along with a dozen or so other lines, ranging from *Over the Edge* and *Unknown Armies* to Dreampod 9's *Heavy Gear* and *Tribe 8*. It is worth mentioning *Feng Shui*, Hogshead's *New Style* range and *Hero Quest* (Glorantha's new incarnation) to get a picture of a preference for innovation and generally being unconcerned by the big names. Actually, *Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay* is arguably their highest profile license up to now.

WFRP has not enjoyed the same level of popularity in Spain as it has in other European countries. Until relatively recently WFRP was not even translated. It has had an audience since the mid-Eighties; the prestige of Games Workshop coupled with the excellent *The Enemy Within* campaign gave it a permanent shelf-slot in the imports section of any good games store. Although the English language RPGs coexisted with the Spanish language ones, and a couple of modules appeared here and there in the Spanish RPG magazines, as more and more games got Spanish versions WFRP largely vanished from the public view.

Some time after that, Games Workshop opened an office in Spain exposing thousands to the Warhammer phenomenon, and for the first time the Warhammer world spoke Spanish officially. Later on, a big general publisher, very strong in fantasy, decided to translate Black Library's Warhammer novels. Just two years before, an RPG publisher acquired the licence for WFRP, the core rulebook going on sale in 1998. The Spanish translation of WFRP1 happened in the Hogshead era and all WFRP material of that era has been made available in Spanish. Despite that, the Spanish version did not bring about a noticeable dedicated Spanish speaking WFRP community. The fact that so much material is available in Spanish indicates a certain acceptance of the game, but the belatedness of the Spanish version as compared to the original release, the perceptible gap between WFRP1, WFB and the Black Library novels currently available in Spain and the not very well regarded translation might explain the relatively low number of Spanish players engaged in this roleplaying game.

Edge Entertainment might be able to give the game a better place in the Spanish speaking world and reinvigorate it, not only because WFRP2 will be seen as more suitable to the GW/Warhammer world as it now stands, but because the company is likely to live up to its reputation in translation quality and product support. Let us hope for a brighter life (granted – grim, as well) for WFRP in these southern lands.

# THE WARPSTONE INTERVIEW

## Black Industries Head Simon Butler Answers the Questions

### Which element of WFRP2 are you proudest?

That's a really difficult question! Each of the people involved would give you a different answer. From the Black Industries side of things, we're really pleased with the way the game has been so well received by the fans. We knew there were lots of people out there who had played WFRP in the past, but we were totally unprepared for how strong the positive response was going to be. From events to forums to emails and letters, we've had so many people contacting us and talking about how exciting they found the new edition; really, we couldn't have dreamed it would go this well. Ultimately, it doesn't matter that we're really pleased with the look of the book, or the humour, or the evocation of everyday life or whatever, what matters is that people like it, and they're out there playing it. That's what we're proud of.

### Is there any part of the game that you are unhappy with?

For a variety of reasons, we ended up with some typos in the first couple of titles. If I could go back and fix anything, that would be it. Beyond that I'm extremely proud of WFRP2, and think we got it pretty much spot on.

### What challenges did *Storm of Chaos* bring?

We had to make sure all our writers were well up on the events, then we had to encourage them to imagine what this huge event would do to people on an everyday level. What does war do to a country? How will it affect people? Trade? Politics? How will people react to such an overt Chaotic threat? Will they become more devout or will they despair? Really, it's such a complex thing in its own right, let alone set against the complicated backdrop of the Empire. Graeme Davis did a great job on the setting section of *Ashes of Middenheim* and I think the real challenge is making sure we live up to that level of writing in the rest of our books.

### Generally seen as one of the weaker WFRP scenarios, the inclusion of *Haunting Horror* in *Plundered Vaults* was a surprising one. Why was it chosen?

*Plundered Vaults* was designed to be a cross section of various playing styles. A new GM can quickly get a good idea of the range of adventures that WFRP can support, whilst also being helped through the process of learning how to run games, catering to their group's preferences and so on. *Haunting Horror* is an example of a certain style of adventure; it may not be to everyone's taste, but we don't see it as our role to judge how people want to play the game.

### Why did you choose to rewrite aspects of the older scenarios in *Plundered Vaults*? Why did you not use the original artwork?

The older adventures were retouched for a variety of reasons. Some of it was rules based, some of it was to 'refresh' the adventure for older players who might have been through the adventure before, some of it was due to changes in the background, others to do with our guidelines on our depiction of violence.

We chose to re-illustrate the older adventures for a variety of reasons as well. We wanted to make it clear that this was a WFRP2 book,

with an updated style that was a fair representation of what the other books in the line would look like. We wanted to ensure the images in the book were clean and clear. Some of the old illustrations have physically not aged well and we didn't want to produce a book of fuzzy scans and mouldering edges.

### Early on we were told that the rulebook would have everything needed to play the game. However, this is not the case, especially with a reduced bestiary. Why was this decision made? Do you find it surprising that players have already started to release house rules and variants?

I don't think that's true. The rulebook does contain everything you need to play the game. With the benefit of hindsight, I might be tempted to include Vampires and Giants in the bestiary for the sake of completeness on the Slayer careers. But beyond that, I think we got the balance about right.

As to whether I find it surprising that people are writing their own material for WFRP, of course not. They do for every other RPG, why should ours be any different?

### Will there be any WFRP tie-in with the forthcoming *Lustria WFB* campaign?

I doubt it. We had discussed putting together some sort of "Wrath of God" affair that would have seen parties faced with perilous sea journeys, rats, pirates, scabies et al, but in the end it just felt like too much of a jolt. Dragging characters half way around the world when they were still finding their feet just seemed a wee bit harsh.

### Given the success (both gaming and commercially) of the use of figures in D&D, the fact that GW is principally a miniatures company, and the presentation within the rulebook, can we expect a range of official figures in the near future?

There are no plans for WFRP miniatures in the near future. Our job right now is to look after WFRP, supporting it with lots of great books, event presence and encouraging the fan community. We want to put 100% of our time into that. Whilst the idea of a range of suitably grubby peasants, thieves and n'er-do-wells is attractive, not everyone who plays Fantasy Roleplay is into using miniatures. It's much better for the game to make sure we spend our time writing books that appeal to a wide selection of the fans, books about magic, Chaos, countries and monsters, sort of 'the greatest amount of perilous to the greatest amount of people.'

### Realms of Sorcery and Realms of Chaos aside, what is the most exciting material on the horizon for WFRP?

It's difficult to say for sure, as we literally have around sixteen titles in various stages of development at present. Of my own personal favourites, we've just finished some preliminary briefing work on some Skaven related books, which look fantastic. Also the books we have coming out in the slightly nearer future on Bretonnia and Mousillon look blindingly good. Slightly closer, *Sigmar's Heirs*, a 128 page background book for the Empire written by Anthony Ragan is superb, as is *the Old World Armoury*, and *Karak Azgal*.

# CROSSING THE LYNISK

The River Lynsk By Tim Eccles

There are a number of contradictory sources on Kislev, including WFRP itself, *Something Rotten in Kislev*, many Games Workshop Warhammer Fantasy Battle tomes and countless fan materials. Whatever the effects on an individual game of each different source, Kislev serves two basic uses. The first is as a region for adventuring (and as a distinct entity very different from The Empire) and the second is as a border marcher region - most obviously as the first line of defence against Chaos but also for the usual border squabbles. This article intends to examine the second of these functions for Kislev, and in particular its nominal northern border along the River Lynsk.

Rather than simply drone on about the contradictions, errors and plain nonsense, my own campaigns necessitated my doing a lot of work on Kislev when the campaign moved northwards. What follows is my view on the River Lynsk. I think it is useful for two important reasons for campaigns. Firstly, like all march and border regions, it offers scope for adventures to be placed in the less regulated and policed regions of the world. Secondly, the Lynsk is effectively the border between the 'safe' Old World and the unsafe or, worse, actually Chaotic, Old World. To this end, most people would recognise its importance and at least have some notion of the Lynsk. Thus, it can also be used as colour for any adventure in the form of rumours, fables, political arguments or simple news items.

## The River

The River Lynsk is the traditional primary line of defence for Kislev from invasion from the north. It protects the

heartland of The Dobryion and has always served the nation well. Garrisoning small trading posts along the river is also economically efficient, since it allows the government to use low quality garrison soldiers and a small number of elite cavalry and river patrols to guard the length of the river. These posts and garrisons are officially termed in

the Classical tongue *oppida* and are theoretically placed equidistant, or at key points, along the southern riverbank.

In reality, the survey done at the time of their creation was flawed and a number have also been deserted for economic reasons.

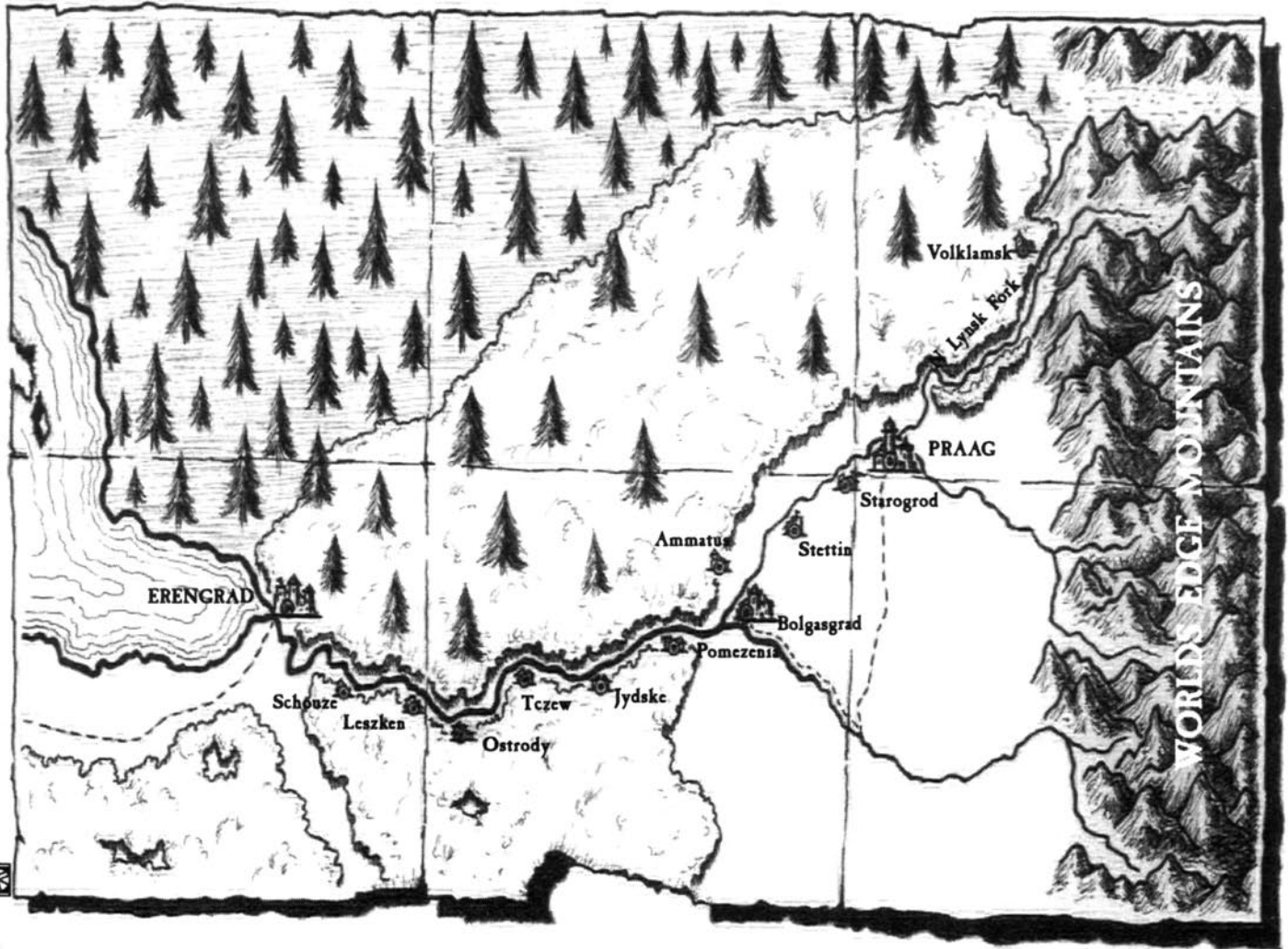
The reality of the defences is very different from those on the strategic maps in Kislev, but no one underestimates their importance to the defence of Imperial Kislev. Bolgasgrad forms one such bastion in this line of defence (though its portrayal in *Something Rotten in Kislev* belies this).

The Lynsk also separates the traditional Motherland from the Trans-Lynsk colonies, now being evacuated in the face of increased raiding from the north in order to defend the far easier Lynsk. For these socio-economic reasons, the River Lynsk is firmly held by all Kislevans to be an immensely important political and religious feature. Oaths are frequently sworn upon the river as a means of underlining gravity and a number of local deities and minor spirits are associated with the river.

Major natural features of the Lynsk, for defensive purposes, are that it rarely freezes, is wide and is generally fast flowing. This makes crossing difficult except at bridges - and the Kislevans are not so foolish as to build any! The fact that bridges are expensive to build and even more costly to maintain has nothing to do with the matter at all. No,







Kislevan homeland security staff have calculated (using the most efficient cost benefit analysis) that bridges are a bad idea. On the few occasions that the Lynsk has frozen, catastrophe has followed - most notably in 2302 and the Battle of the Frozen Lynsk, which heralded the commencement of what the Kislevans call the Great Patriotic Chaos War. Many theologians believe that only supernatural power can actually freeze the river, and many Kislevans regard it as a defeat of the deity that resides within the river. Certainly, as can be seen on the map in *Warpstone* 19, the winter ice mark along the Sea of Claws must come many miles south to affect the river.

The primary man-made defence of the River Lynsk is a series of fortifications along the southern bank, supported by patrols. However, constructed defences also defend both the river itself and the southern bank. The bank is heavily overgrown with a tough, wiry thorn bush that is encouraged to grow and (officially) supplemented with dry hedge too, whilst the river is heavily staked in places. Of course, over two centuries of relative peace the military need for the defences has apparently waned, but they also serve an economic purpose. Passage across and along the river is very difficult without guidance, particularly for river traffic.

Therefore, the river remains defended by a series of pits, stakes, mines and the like along many stretches, continually altered and repaired, which require an authorised pilot to direct boats through - for substantial fees of course! This has hampered trade along the river, but the Erengard nexus ensures that sufficient money is sent south by merchants who recognise that the speed and safety of the river is worth the extra charge.

The north bank is sparsely settled to a distance of about 150 miles from Erengard. Nearer the city, and the protection of Castle Alexandrov and the Ever Victorious Army, a number of settlements exist. These are small villages, surrounded by maintained wooden palisades and ditches. Walls are patrolled and entry is via a drawbridge raised every night or on the approach of any group. Along the bank itself, a village is to be found approximately every eighteen miles apart, just about the maximum daily marching distance for foot travellers. Other villages can be found to the north as are some individual homesteads, but these are usually tower structures, clearly built for defence and sited on some source of wealth. The region is quite wealthy, which is the only reason why it is settled. Agriculture is surprisingly productive, but forestry, furs,

fishing, hunting and honey are the region’s main exports. Rock salt has been found in quantities but is too plentiful in the south to be economic, except very close to the merchants at Erengard, who use it as ballast and commodity. Open cast mining for tin, coal, lead, silver and other metals remains the primary export for a number of business interests, who have been granted Protectorate jurisdiction of parts of the north. Locals might even profit from localised monster attacks as official bounties are paid upon such creatures.

The regions to the north are controlled either by these Protectorates or through Voivodates. These are set up as tsarist vassals ruled directly by a voivode (governor). The Trans-Lynsk colonies are thus either titled along the lines of North Lynsk Mining Company Protectorate or the Voivodate of Sibiria.

**Oppida**

These villages operate subsistence economies and have little surplus or trade. Their purpose is simply to be self-sufficient border posts. Their only source of income is taxation on trade and travellers. This usually involves the boats that use them as safe places to spend the night, but the occasional traveller or convoy still travels to (or more usually from) the Trans-Lynsk. Those who live here are frequently retired soldiers and their families are offered a land grant or descendants of invaders from Norsca. Kislevan-Norscans are predominant here; they comprise almost all of the military and non-peasant inhabitants. Further north has historically been more popular, but recent events have led to an influx of refugees. Fortunately, the Lynsk is traditionally an unpopular place to live and these newcomers are welcomed for their skills and hard work. Government appointees, usually military commanders, rule the oppida. Oppida is the official term for these settlements, based upon a Classical word, which Kislevan generals feel they ought to use. Locals refer to these settlements in Slavic as Zveda.

The primary feature to note about the settlements is that the buildings are almost universally made of wood. Walls are made of either hewn logs (planed on one side) or planks. These are then filled in to keep out draughts and painted. Floors are usually solid packed earth covered with moss, but might be of wood. Roofs are made of turf. Palisades and defensive ditches surround the villages, though they are often not well maintained. Buildings are often equally poorly maintained, although once inside are reasonably comfortable. The typical peasant dwelling is a single room dominated by a hearth, which has no chimney or flue. Whilst this helps keep the heat in, it also causes a very heavy atmosphere that many non-Kislevans will struggle to cope with. Most houses have a small corner devoted to the owner’s deities and visitors are expected to offer some

form of devotion upon entering. Communal facilities provide ovens, storage facilities and the like. Wealthier villagers might have two or three rooms for some privacy, but even the local (and poorer) nobility will have little more than this. Domestic animals live inside the houses. Most houses have gardens of some description, fenced off (to keep animals out) from the otherwise muddy and filthy ground that acts as paths between the houses. Sometimes stepping stones are to be found allowing one to step above the refuse, but even where these exist, stones are missing more than present. The stench is noisome. Some details can be found in *Something Rotten in Kislev* [page 16].

Oppida are frequently in two parts, the main village being ‘safely’ settled on the southern bank of the river, whilst a fortified strongpoint is located on the northern bank. This is because oppida operate ferries across the river for travellers and traders, and need to defend them from seizure. Visitors entering villages are liable for tolls and approval of their warrants to travel. Official regulations upon tariffs, taxes, weapon permits and the like are all readily negotiable, but locals are wary of strangers given their precarious location. They have little interest in the world to the south, which is seen as remote, but are hungry for news from the north or along the Lynsk axis. Oppida fly flags to denote their allegiance to Imperial Kislev and any local nobility.

What follows is a brief description of the river as travelled

**Summary Timetable**

Place	Miles from previous	Miles from Erengard
Nieszawa	—	18
Czorn	18	36
Tuchola	18	54
Schonsze	18	72
Eczbor	18	90
Leszken	18	108
Ostrody	36	144
Rogowic	18	162
Konieczpole	18	180
Tczew	36	216
Jydske	20	236
Pomezunia	70	306
Bolgasgrad	70	376
Stettin	70	446
Starogrod	70	516
Praag	70	586

It should be noted that all distances are taken from official records. It is perfectly obvious that in reality, villages are not exactly eighteen miles apart. However, according to official records, they are!

by someone foolish enough to cross Kislev from Erengrad to Praag along the Lynsk by foot. This assumes an eighteen mile average journey, the nominal marching distance for armies. This shows the military design of the Lynsk settlements when they were originally developed. Sensible travellers utilising river transport will find distances easier to cover.

### Erengrad to Bolgasgrad

The journey from Erengrad to Bolgasgrad is about 350 miles following the winding course of the River Lynsk. A traveller can reasonably expect to cover about eighteen miles per day, which coincidentally happens to be the approximate distance between villages along the route. Oppida settlements are about 70 miles apart. The first leg of the journey is the 70 miles (four days) to **Schonsze**. This involves spending the nights in the villages of **Nieszawa**, **Czorn** and **Tuchola**. This region of the Trans-Lynsk is reasonably prosperous. **Schonsze** is the nominal supply centre for Stepin Rasin and the Ever Victorious Army, which is the sole Kislevan field army operating in the north. Unlike other oppida villages there is no ferry here and boats individually cross south to north. The intent is clear; the EVA is to be prevented from ‘tactical withdrawal’ south of the Lynsk. The village is also something of a refugee clearance centre, and is struggling to cope. Crime is rife and life is cheap, though the local garrison manages to control the worst of the violence. In part this is because the other point of note for the village is that there are a dozen Ogres within the garrison. These are Janissaries bought from the Chancellor of Ostermark and are respected members of the community. They will be pleased to hear any news from The Empire if visitors are from the south.

Continuing on the journey, the next two nights are spent in the villages of **Ecabor** and **Leszken**. This stretch of the Lynsk very rapidly becomes less populated and by Leszken, signs of agriculture are very localised. Beyond Leszken, there are almost no signs of habitation and the third night out from Schonsze (the seventh in total out of Erengrad) there is no village to offer shelter. The next day’s travel will reach **Ostrody**.

Continuing from Ostrody, the first night can be spent at the village of **Rogowic** and the second at **Konicpole**. Both these are essentially mining compounds. Neither has the typical village structure, but both sprawl along large cuts in the ground, where open cast mining is carried out. Each has a small wooden citadel built upon a mound of compacted spoil for defence. Both communities are warm and open, and glad to receive visitors. Both are raucous places, whose inhabitants work hard and play hard. The third night out of Ostrody (eleventh from Erengrad) the traveller must once again camp out in the open, as the next

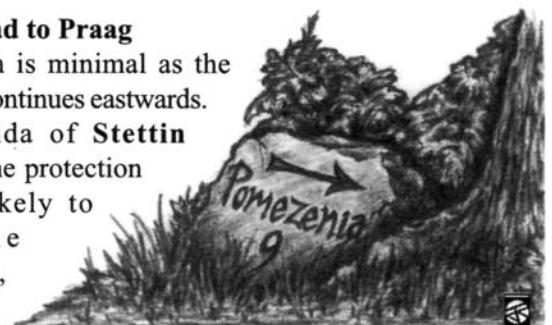
day sees them arrive at **Tczew**, an oppida. From here to Bolgasgrad, travellers will meet only two further settlements, the oppida of **Jydske** and **Pomezenia**. Pomezenia styles itself the regional capital. This is untrue as there is no such administrative region here. However, it is certainly the pivotal Lynsk defence for the Imperial Kislev military. An impressive wooden fortress lies on the southern bank of the Lynsk, including piled strongpoints in the river itself. The Great Bulwark lies on the north side of the River Lynsk. Pomezenia is also the centre for land trading routes, particularly since the North Lynsk Mining Company must transport its product by road from the east (as described below). Its main gate on the outer side bears a plaque above, carved in Slavic; “Confederated States of Imperial Kislev”. On the inner side, the plaque reads “Confederacy of Kislevan States”. The message is clear; those entering the Dobryion are joining ‘Imperial Kislev’, but the north is held much more tenuously.

The **Bolgasgrad Principality** will not welcome visitors. The town has already apparently destroyed its docking and other facilities. This is clearly an excuse to avoid having to resolve the *Something Rotten in Kislev* situation and to explain some of the apparent inconsistencies with the town as presented (such as the lack of docks). The authorities of Pomezenia can explain that visitors will not be welcome in Bolgasgrad, whose ruler has become increasingly peculiar in recent years. However, he pays taxes and the government has therefore overlooked the apparently irrational behaviour. Ships also avoid stopping there, particularly as now there are no docks. No one can explain how the town continues to survive, given its lack of interaction with the prosperous Lynsk trade route. Things will be brought to a head since the North Lynsk Mining Company is making a formal petition of complaint about the loss of the Bolgasgrad docking facilities, which force the company to transport its ore by cart to Pomezenia. At the least, they are proposing the construction of a new settlement on the north bank, outside the suzerainty of the Principality of Bolgasgrad. The lands of the North Lynsk Mining Company Protectorate, a quasi-state under Tsarist licence, are located to the north. It consists of three small mining settlements, **Nordrog**, **Adelsfeld** and **Ammatus**. The mines produce copper, iron, nickel, zinc and some tin.

### Bolgasgrad to Praag

Habitation is minimal as the traveller continues eastwards.

The oppida of **Stettin** offers some protection and is likely to welcome travellers,



assuming that they do not appear too disreputable or numerous. Further east, **Starogrod** is a settlement under permanent siege. The ferry has been terminated for approximately twenty years after the northern defences were overrun by local chaotics. Starogrod seems to be used by local chaos groups as a testing ground, as there has been little serious attempt to take the southern fortress. Attacks generally consist of a rush at the walls, ‘how long can I stand in front of the walls without being hit by a missile’ and similar fun games. For shipping using the river, this section is extremely dangerous. Ships can be very lucky and see no enemies or just as easily run into a powerful force, in which case they are probably sunk. A rapid pace to the **Kingdom of Praag** is heartily recommended. Here King Zoltan of Praag rules a rather paranoid kingdom, dependent upon support from Kislev and the south to maintain itself and the eastern Lynsk defences and with limited trade opportunities. The Wheatland Colonies were at one time the lifeblood of the region, but over the last 50 years trade has slowed down. No word has been heard from the Colonies in the last twelve months and escorted convoys have not been heard from. No one now travels to the east.

## SCENARIO

### Migrating Marauders

The principle of the River Lynsk and its defensive line is, of course, to prevent invasion. But, when is an invasion not an invasion? One interesting aspect not previously covered in WFRP is that of migration. Supposing a group of people wished to enter the nation as immigrants? And supposing these people were “a band of Chaos Marauders”? This adventure is a diplomatic tangle and consists of the PCs negotiating between an under-strength oppida garrison under orders to prevent ‘chaos invaders’ crossing the Lynsk and a clan from the north, pushed out of their lands by other forces.

A camp, consisting of tents, horses and carts, surrounds the oppida’s (select to fit the campaign) fortified ferry terminal. Outlying scouts see the PCs’ approach and a group of horsemen will await them on the outskirts of the camp. Seven riders will slowly approach with both hands raised in a gesture of peace (although PCs can take this as surrender if they so wish). Four males are bearded, a younger man is clean-shaven, as are two females (unsurprisingly). The youngest will speak to the PCs in broken Old Worlder.

The tribe consists of a people who might be described as ‘westerners’ rather than the more typical Kislevan or Norse. All have long dark hair, the men are bearded, except for youths - who must undergo a rite of passage before growing a beard. Women are equals in all things, and actually outnumber male warriors in this group. They are expert light horse soldiers relying primarily upon the bow, which

they can fire in a 360° arc from horseback, to keep foes at a distance. Their bow is a short recurved composite bow of horn, wood and sinew with a sinew string. Other favoured weapons include hammer, lance and javelin. Their bow and quiver is held in a single case (goryton), usually highly decorated. Armour is horn or iron, but some of the elders have theirs decorated with gold. Shields are rarer, of (variously) wicker or iron. They tend to be rectangular with a contracted middle (almost like a figure ‘8’). They dress ostentatiously and love fine colours and gaudy decorations. The group is extremely colourful since most of their wealth is portable, in the form of personal adornment and decoration of their raiment, horse trapping and weaponry. They wear wrap-over tunics and baggy trousers, brightly dyed (purple, red, green, blue, white) and embroidered or sewn with precious metal plates. Clothes are of silk, leather, felt, wool and linen with coats of fur or lined with ermine and sable. Geometrically patterned cloth is also used. These are currently, however, somewhat dusty and travel stained - not helped by the fact that these people do not wash for religious reasons! Zoomorphic and swirling patterns are tattooed on their limbs, whilst everything is adorned with gold. They refer to themselves as the Sakae-Kalim and will not give a tribal name associated with the Chaos Marauders in **Hordes of Chaos** (if the GM has the GW Army Book) - not that PCs should know them anyway! Male names include Pazyruk, Aripharnes, Rumo, Geilimar and Zazo. Female names include Thurima and Sisyrana.

The Marauders require passage southwards and to be allowed to settle behind the safety of the Lynsk. This has clearly caused consternation in the oppida settlement whose commander, Evgenia Lychenko, has little authority and less ability. She has refused the Marauders permission to cross the Lynsk outright and sent messengers to the other outposts for help (which she will not receive) and to Kislev (where any help will be too late and too little). The Imperial Kislevans are in a very difficult position since it is unclear if the oppida could prevent the tribe crossing the river as they are under standing orders to do. They currently prefer to cower behind their walls and hope the problem goes away. The oppida is here to prevent invasion by enemies of the state. Chaos Marauders clearly fall into this category. The commander has no authority to authorise land grants to aliens, nor any land under her ownership. She believes that it is easier to defend the walls and protect the status quo than attempt a more radical, and uncertain, solution.

The tribe’s position is quite clear. They wish to move south and are quite prepared to swear fealty to Tsar Radii Bokha. They seek protection from other northern migrating tribes (and this will hopefully cause real concerns about a possible future invasion). They will reject outright any suggestions that they are chaotics. They will claim that they are ‘good tribesmen’ and that they have always followed

the 'true gods' - or more accurately their patron goddess, whom they call Amex, and the tribal spirit, Aeryn. To this end they can produce a variety of iconography in the form of banners, symbols and three portable shrines. This will not necessarily help their argument, as PC clerics will not recognise it. For those with an appropriate skill, two runes are also featured. They are High Elf runes of Quyl-Isha (sorrow, mercy, endurance, mourning for lost children, the tears of Isha) and Ceyl (law, order, justice, passion, the sword that draws blood). When asked why they are escaping south, they will say that the northerly tribes are moving south and have forced them to migrate by strength of numbers.

Interrogating prisoners that they captured, these men claimed that they were fleeing a god that names itself Ahti, arisen from the depths of the ice pack. They are reluctant to discuss the north and are vehement in their denials of being Chaos Marauders. They believe that the lands here are the lands of their ancestors, but that they were betrayed millennia ago by the god Suka-Kalim and his people. They know nothing of the god, except that he is an infernal creature of fire. They are simply returning home, where they wish to fight for Tsar Bokha against his enemies and live under his wise and beneficent rule. Life is hard where they have come from, relying upon the hunting of wild animals and gathering natural crops that grow in abundance in some regions. Obviously, these regions are the home of the most powerful tribes who are a constant source of raiding and warfare. Further interrogation will likely yield little. They are understandably wary about admitting to knowledge of what - here - is forbidden knowledge. They will repeat that they are opponents of the forces of Chaos, particularly those of their neighbours.

These deities they will (reluctantly) name as Tuluk, Insane God and Dim Ponn. They know very little of any of the practices of their followers and care less. They will strongly oppose proposals to inspect them for signs of Chaos, but

will eventually be willing to agree to some form of inspection if this assures them the right to settle. The tribe does have some mutants in their number, though mutations are very minor and generally beneficial (since the others died en route). However, they will clearly try to evade attempts to find these individuals. The most obvious trick is that their most beautiful females will present themselves for inspection (since most of the Kislevans are males) and attempt to undermine the rigour of any inspection. If a random sample is chosen, the tribe will attempt to replace mutants selected with others. Even if a mutant is inspected, the mutations are minor and will need careful spotting and might be explained as natural (inasmuch as Chaos features are not normally natural!).

Particular solutions are best played out within the particular campaign. However, the most obvious is that



the one's needs serve the other's. The oppida is undergarrisoned and of very low morale. They have little support from the centre and lack workers for the land that they do own. Any PCs with relevant military and agriculture skills can see this on the most cursory visit. The tribe is more than happy to work for their land and are very capable fighters. Whilst not much use at garrison duties or farming, they can provide patrols north of the river, strong mobile reserve forces to chase raiders away and are generally keen. They also have a higher proportion of females to males, whilst the garrison is almost completely male. Provided the tribe's women are not seen as either whores or mothers, but equal members of the community, they are not averse to settling down. The primary problems are linguistic and cultural. The tribe are not used to urban life and the Kislevans inherently distrust Marauders. Whilst the village commander has no authority to grant land rights, she is equally under instruction to defend the village and patrol this area of the Lynsk. It is very unlikely that anyone in Kislev will even notice the extra population!

This adventure is based upon *Hordes of Chaos*, the Games Workshop *Warhammer Fantasy Battle* army book. It offers some intriguing hints that not all those who worship Chaos are actually chaotic. Given the power of Chaos in the north, such inhabitants are given a clear message - submit or die. However, acknowledging Chaos deities as the bullies on the block is one of those nice grey areas in which WFRP excels. Perhaps one tribe elects to migrate south and west, rather than submit.

### ADVENTURE HOOKS

**Restless Ancient:** The lands of the North Lynsk Mining Company Protectorate, a quasi-state under Tsarist licence to a Marienburg venture company, consist of three small mining settlements: Nordrog, Adelsfeld and Ammatas. The mines produce copper, iron, nickel, zinc and some tin.

Adriaan Remeus, the Marienburg agent for the Protectorate, needs professional troubleshooters to solve a problem; the dead have risen in Ammatas! Remeus explains the problem as one of labour relations. The Gospodar (slave) miners are to blame, though he is not too sure how they raised the dead. The mines introduced the new Protectorate Working Regulations Directive on the advice of a firm of engineering consultants, Andersen de Zout. Remeus cannot explain why the slaves objected to the new procedures - since they did gain rest time from them - but they began a stealthy campaign to undermine the operation of the mine. Canaries were freed, lights went out, rails were bent over a period of a couple of weeks. Then swarms of beetles began to attack the engineers, obviously controlled by a Gospodar hedge wizard hiding amongst the slaves. Most of the miners (slaves and

engineers) began to hear knocking sounds; some claimed to see a creature emerge from the rock. Mysterious pockets of gas appeared as if by magic and exploded upon contact with the lantern lights. Minor rockfalls began to occur, becoming steadily worse. The miners refused to return to the mines, until the ringleaders were hanged and they were whipped into submission. And then the dead arose, though Remeus will be loathe to admit that they just dump the dead in a pit on level four of the mine.

The cause of the problem is the local spirit within the mine, who has become incensed at the lack of respect shown by the miners. The new working regulations removed devotional places and miners were granted rest breaks instead of their morning devotions. Obviously once his services are restored, the spirit will once again be placated - although he might also demand restitution.

**Siege:** The oppida are walled forts placed to protect the borders of Kislev. There is scope for many different groups to be discovered outside the walls by travellers. Most obvious, and least interesting, is a Chaos warband attempting to burn and loot or to cross the river. Alternatively, deserters from the Ever Victorious Army might be attempting to flee south. Perhaps more interesting is the secret of Starograd. Why do Chaos forces continually attack the place and in such a casual manner?

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## Conclusions

In my view the River Lynsk is a primary part of the Kislevan national identity, providing cheap transport for trade and defence against invasion. All Kislevans should respect it. Imperial Kislev without the Lynsk is simply not tenable. From this perspective, it is readily apparent that I cannot accept the Bolgasgrad described within *Something Rotten in Kislev*. The fact that Imperial Kislev allows such an important town to be seized by the total antithesis of everything that the lawful religions proclaim – by Chaos and necromancy – seems impossible. Even if we ignore the religious teachings of Ulric and Mórr on the undead, which is unlikely in the heartland of the nation, it simply does not make sense from a trade or defence perspective. Give up the Lynsk to petty breakaway nobility, never mind Chaos and heretic necromancers, and the Kislevan State simply collapses. I have fudged the Bolgasgrad issue within the text above to allow individual GMs to choose their own

course. After all, this is WFRP. Just because losing Bolgasgrad is impossible for the Kislevan state this does not mean that it has not happened!

Equally, some campaigns might focus on the disintegration of Kislev as a more visible part of the rise of Chaos. Even the most optimistic Kislevan could accept that the Tsar might be unable to control border boyars, but to not even attempt to regain control would be the end of an Imperial Kislev. In any event, this article intended simply to offer some background thoughts on the region. The Lynsk is a symbol to the entire nation and has always formed the first serious line of defence against invasion from the north. I am in no way suggesting that any of these states or towns is particularly loyal to the Tsar. It is important that Kislev remains a weak state, but at the same time, the apparent normality of the region is politically necessary, and also allows a framework for PCs to once again find themselves embroiled in the machinations of the enemy within.

## SOURCES FOR KISLEV

**WFRP** rulebook itself offers the basic overview on Kislev, which should be our starting point for all things Kislevan as it sets a good mood for the region. I prefer this to some of the detail in other products.

**Something Rotten in Kislev** contradicts itself and everything else, but is still the core WFRP book on the region.

**Hordes of Chaos** is Games Workshop's Warhammer Army book and offers a lot of useful colour. It introduces the idea that in the north, 'Chaos' worship might be simple pragmatics rather than true faith. This is a nice touch for a mass battle game.

**White Dwarf 288** contains a Kislev supplement that explains Games Workshop's current views on the region. Their intention is to remove the purely real-world history and ancient spirits and to 'modernise' the region, principally so that they can produce Renaissance Polish figures. Some promising ideas are found here, though the quality is noticeably inconsistent.

**Chaos Dwarfs** is an out-of-print Warhammer book, but is still readily obtainable from the usual second-hand sources. It is of marginal use, being a collection of reprints from White Dwarf articles it represents a shift in the nature of the Chaos Dwarfs.

**Warpstone 19** includes a useful article on the Sea of Claws, which offers additional material on the western part of the region discussed in the article.

**Strike to Stun:** The WFRP website at [www.strike-to-stun.com](http://www.strike-to-stun.com) offers various ideas about Kislev. This is always a good starting point for any online investigation.

**GURPS Russia** is a generic FRP examination of Russia. Given its inherent limitations it is very good and worth purchasing to add extra flesh to your Kislev.

**Citadel Journal 2** (first series; 1985) contains a scenario including Dolgans and a centaur 'wise man' (of good

alignment), whilst **Citadel Journal 14-15** (second series) includes a two-part Kislev army list. Neither are really worth buying at collector's prices for the material is now very dated compared to current Games Workshop thinking upon the region. However, I like the original intention on centaurs and Farside examined here. The Kislev army list is mostly subsumed by the recent GW list in White Dwarf 288.

**Slayer's Guide** series by Mongoose cover **Hobgoblins** and **Centaurs** for generic D20 RPGs.

**Inferno 6:** Offers a very good story and artwork by Ralph Horsley concerning the Chaos Incursion of 2302, including the Battle of the Frozen Lynsk.

**Osprey Men-at-Arms** books cover a whole range of real world armies, including those of Poland, Muscovy and other eastern European nations. Others cover various 'horsemen' cultures including Scyths, Huns, Mongols and the like. They are worth a look for extra (military) detail in a single point of reference.

**Wargames Foundry** produce suitable figures from their historical ranges (designed by the Perry twins too) for those wishing to utilise miniatures to add further to the Kislevan feel. **Citadel's** recent figures are excellent, but larger and more expensive. Wargames Foundry offer more variety to the 'Cossack' and 'Polish' style of Citadel figures, including Huns and Scythians, Renaissance Polish, Muscovy and similar styles of figure (including Mongols and Koreans) – all perfect for Kislevan armies. Care is needed with the scales of these figures – some will fit with Citadel, others will not. Check out [www.theminiaturespage.com](http://www.theminiaturespage.com) or [www.sfsfw.com](http://www.sfsfw.com) as a starting point. There are far too many manufacturers to comprehensively cover here. My favourites include **Redoubt**, **Warrior**, **Old Glory**, **Essex** and **Front Rank** (no Renaissance, but some very nice Citadel-compatible baggage carts and the like).

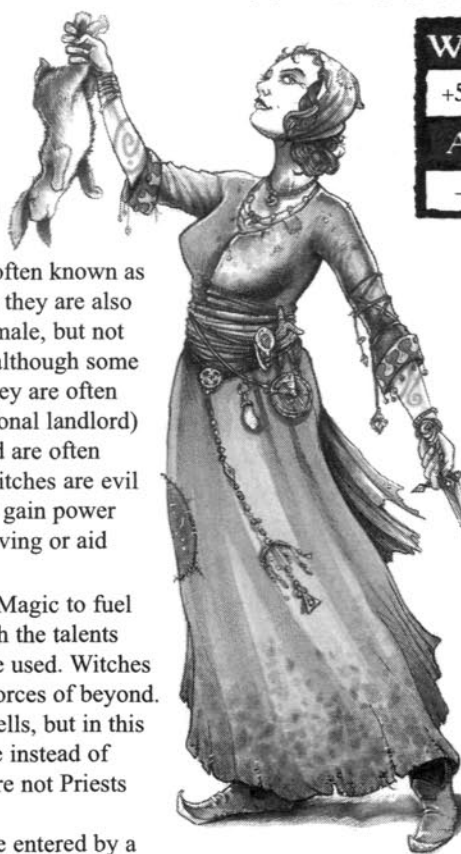
# - WITCH -

Hedge wizardry, sometimes known as witchcraft, is highly illegal in the Empire. Many Hedge Wizards are hunted down and executed by Witch Hunters. Others go to the Colleges of Magic or become Priests. Still, there are some who go another way. By trial and error they develop their strange abilities and grow in power. They are often known as village healers or wise ones; in Norsca they are also called shamans. Witches (many are female, but not all) often live alone in remote places, although some live near or even in a small village. They are often sought out by peasants (and the occasional landlord) for potions, charms or magical aid, and are often respected or feared. Although some Witches are evil characters who use their knowledge to gain power and wealth most just want to make a living or aid those in need.

**Notes:** A Witch can learn to use Dark Magic to fuel her spells, but if she does rules for both the talents Hedge Magic *and* Dark Magic must be used. Witches play a very dangerous game with the forces of beyond.

They can also learn Petty Divine spells, but in this case use the rules for Tzeentch's Curse instead of Wrath of the Gods, because Witches are not Priests even if some claim so.

Witch and Master Witch can only be entered by a character with no formalised magical training.



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+5%	+5%	+5%	+10%	+10%	+15%	+20%	+15%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
-	+3	-	-	+2	-	-	-

**Skills:** Channelling, Charm *or* Intimidate, Common Knowledge (any one) *or* Gossip, Common Knowledge (any one), Heal *or* Hypnotism, Magical Sense, Outdoor Survival *or* Speak Language (any one), Perception *or* Search, *Any three of:* Evaluate, Haggle, Prepare Poisons, Trade (Apothecary), Trade (Herbalism), Charm Animal, Sleight of Hand, Performer (Palm Reader)

**Talents:** Aethyric Attunement *or* Dark Magic, Dealmaker *or* Menacing, Flee! *or* Rover, Lesser Magi (any one) *or* Petty Magic (any one), Lesser Magic (any two), Resistance to Disease *or* Resistance to Poison, Very Resilient *or* Sixth Sense

**Trappings:** A set of bone dice, Antitoxin Kit, Healing Draught, Hood, Mandrake Root, Deck of Cards, Wicked Long Knife, Dark Sense of Humour

**Career Entries:** Hedge Wizard

**Career Exits:** Barber-Surgeon, Charlatan, Journeyma Wizard, Master Witch, Outlaw, Scholar, Death at the Stake

# - MASTER WITCH -

The magic Witches wield often wracks their bodies and minds, but sometimes they manage to master their abilities and grow in power. If they live long enough to reach such a level they are often called Master Witches or Great Shamans. Of all human magic-users who have never learned a formalized style of magic in a college or a temple this is the highest degree of power they can reach. It may be possible that in the times before Teclis founded the eight schools of magic this was the most common way of human spellcasting. Even a Master Witch cannot attune herself to one of the eight magic colours without help. By invoking the ruinous powers and listening to the inhuman whispers of nameless things on moonless nights, they learn the dark ritualistic language of Daemons, though they may learn it from another Master Witch. They know many small spells, charms and cantrips, but they still do not have a Wizard's magical might. Like Wizards they often become very strange and perceive the world in quite a different manner. Many peasants and even some noble lords seek out a Master Witch for advice and it is rumoured that some Master Witches even became part of Nobles' courts.

**Note:** If a Master Witch learns the Arcane Language (Daemonic) skill, she must also know and use the Dark Magic Talent. This means she still has to use one extra die, but only follows the rules for Dark Magic. The chances of evoking Tzeentch's Curse are still high, but the chance to cast a spell properly is much higher. Using Dark Magic and Arcane Language (Daemonic) together will not expose a Master Witch to additional side effects unless she uses a Dark Lore.

The Arcane Language (Daemonic) also allows a Master Witch to learn rituals, but she must either know how to read and write, or she must learn the ritual from another Master Witch (paying 100 Experience Points in addition to the normal costs to learn the ritual properly). A Master Witch cannot learn or create a ritual by herself (not until *Realms of Sorcery*). A Master Witch can learn only arcane rituals using the Daemonic Language.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+10%	+5%	+5%	+15%	+15%	+25%	+30%	+20%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
-	+4	-	-	+3	-	-	-

**Skills:** Channelling, Charm *or* Intimidate, Common Knowledge (any one) *or* Gossip, Heal *or* Hypnotism, Magical Sense, Perception *or* Search, Speak Arcane Language (Daemonic) *or* Speak Language (any one), *Any three of:* Evaluate, Prepare Poisons, Trade (Apothecary), Trade (Herbalism), Animal Training, Charm Animal, Outdoor Survival

**Talents:** Aethyric Attunement *or* Dark Magic, Fast Hands *or* Mighty Missile, Fearless *or* Sixth Sense, Lesser Magic (any one) *or* Petty Magic (any one), Lesser Magic (any two), Meditation *or* Schemer, Strong-Minded *or* Hardy, Unsettling *or* Menacing

**Trappings:** A Set of Bone Dice, Antitoxin Kit, Healing Poulitice, Hood, Lucky Charm (usually a dead animal's paw, like that of a rabbit), Deck of Cards, Small Animal (usually a black cat or a crow), Wicked Long Knife, Strange but important-looking item with no real purpose

**Career Entries:** Witch

**Career Exits:** Charlatan, Journeyma Wizard, Outlaw Chief, Scholar, Slowly Tortured to Death



# A FISTFUL OF RAT TAILS

Rat Catchers by Robin Low



The Rat Catcher is arguably the definitive WFRP career - it is a grimy, unpleasant job and far from heroic in scope, no matter how valuable a role it plays in improving standards of living. Hardly anyone looks up to a Rat Catcher, even if he has just cleared a nest of disease-ridden vermin from the basement. There is not that much money in it, and even less glory, only the satisfaction of a job well done. That said, you never know what excitement might be waiting for you round the next bend in the sewer.

The honest profession of rat catching is both rural and urban in nature. Although urban Catchers are principally concerned with the rat, rural Catchers often have a broader range of critters to occupy their attentions. Magpies, moles, rabbits, foxes and flocks of seed-scoffing birds are all considered vermin out in the countryside, and most rural Catchers are versatile enough to accept the varied challenges. There is a measure of mutual snobbery between urban and rural Catchers, the former seeing the latter as ignorant yokels, and the latter seeing the former as limited in their skills.

A Rat Catcher is a skilled and knowledgeable tradesman, required by the rich almost as much as by the poor, and rarely, if ever, lacking in work. Consequently, a career in rat catching can provide a reliable income (if not a great one) and a degree of professional pride; both points can make the career an attractive one. More often than not, rat catching is a family business, with

### Poachers

In the same way that the Rat Catcher can be redefined as Mole Catcher (or catcher of any other sort of small vermin), the career description could easily be applied to a Poacher career. Even though the Gamekeeper career can be reinterpreted as Poacher, there is no reason at all why a player who rolls Rat Catcher should not reinterpret this career, too - GMs should not be afraid of allowing players to tinker with careers in this minor way.

Converting the Rat Catcher career to Poacher requires few changes: Concealment/Silent Move Urban become their Rural equivalents and Animal Trainer-Dog may become Animal Trainer-Ferret (player's choice), using the Stoat details from the Bestiary. However, even though Rat Catchers can be looked down upon, they are seen as necessary and useful elements of society. Poachers, on the other hand, are simply criminals stealing from private land (and in the Old World, there's more private land than common land - even the most dense, unexplored woods are often considered the property of some noble or other). That said, in some places Poachers are seen as local heroes, at least by the common folk, and tales of outsmarted gamekeepers and nobility become the stuff of local legend.

children learning the basic skills of training dogs, clubbing rats, setting simple traps and using a sling. The prevalence of Catcher families within certain towns and cities sometimes limits room for others to enter the profession.

Despite the number of rats available to be caught, rat catching is *not* an easy job. The thing is, rats are small and they run very fast. They can hide in hard-to-reach places. A swarm might provide a huge source of targets, but in dark and confined conditions it can be disorientating and sometimes frightening even for experienced Catchers.

### Employment and Organisation

Most Rat Catchers are solitary folk who work alone with their dog. In rural areas, they are often travellers who journey from one village or farmstead to the next, offering their services wherever they might be required. The Catcher may be paid in coin, but is just as likely to receive bed and board, food or a useful item (such as a clean blanket or a new knife) in return for his services. As travelling outsiders, rural Catchers can be viewed with varying degrees of mistrust, but others are settled in one area as established members of a community. In either case, Catchers often hear all sorts of gossip and news, becoming invaluable sources of local facts and fancies.

Larger villages or towns commonly have resident Rat Catchers, who may be independent operators or employed directly by a town council. In larger towns there are often many Catchers, each working a particular area, which may

be as small as a single street or as large as a whole district. There may even be well-established Catcher families present. The presence of a number of Catchers can lead to feuds and fighting over rights to operate in particular areas. If faced with such problems, town councils often impose a licensing system as a method of regulation. However, minor scuffles between Catchers and their dogs can be regular occurrences in some towns. This is less of a problem where Catcher families have lived for generations and territories are clearly defined, but that's not to say boundaries remain undisputed.

In the largest towns and cities official arrangements may be in place. For example, in Middenheim the Kommission for Health, Education and Welfare is responsible for controlling rats and other vermin and the Kommission is supposed to directly employ a team of Rat Catchers for this purpose. However, the Chancellor of the Kommission refuses to formally employ them and pay a wage (this may be to keep such people off the public payroll or part of some financial scam). Consequently, Rat Catchers in Middenheim are freelancers, even though the bounty on rat tails is paid by the Kommission. (Incidentally, Middenheim's Kommission for Public Works oversees the maintenance of the city's sewers and Catchers keep it informed of blockages, crumbling masonry and other problems, and act as guides for the Kommission's labourers and masons.) In Marienburg, rat control has traditionally been something undertaken by individual merchants who employ Catchers to protect the contents of their warehouses and periodically try to clear ships of vermin. The importance of goods and trade to the city has meant that vermin control has been focused on the docks, warehouse and market areas, often to the detriment of the rest of the port, particularly low-class residential districts. Catchers work preferentially for merchants, who pay marginally better rates than the city authorities. However, the recently created Board of Public Health, set up by the Shallyan High Priestess Sister Anneloes van de Maarel (see *Marienburg: Sold Down the River*), has been trying to change this emphasis in order to improve health and save lives. However, many merchants consider people to be easily and cheaply replaceable, unlike their precious goods.

At present, there is no concept of an Empire-wide guild. Instead, there are simply a few larger towns and cities in which Catchers have come together to set up a Catchers' union. In some places this has been a response to fighting between Catchers over territory. However, the principal advantage of (and motive for setting up) a good Catchers' union is that guilds can more effectively negotiate with local authorities for higher bounties on rat tails and charge private citizens more to have their homes cleared. The threat of a union withholding the services of *all* its members is an influential one. For this reason, not all local



authorities are enamoured of Catchers' unions; on the other hand, some authorities feel that it is cheaper to have an outside body licensing and organising Catchers. Indeed, some Catchers' unions have brokered deals with local authorities for the legitimate use and supply of poisons (sometimes employing their own alchemists). Unions also sell traps (made by specialist artisans) and some even breed and train suitable dogs for ratting. Some unions actively recruit and train Catchers, usually teaching animal handling, trapping and poison-use skills.

Most commonly, Catchers conduct their work in public areas, down the sewers or out on the streets. However, both independent and council-employed Rat Catchers will often work directly for private citizens with particular vermin problems that they want dealt with, charging for their services *and* picking-up the bounty on the tails. The situation changes if a local Catchers' union exists. Private citizens with particular rat problems are expected to talk directly to the union, which will charge a fee and authorise the local Catcher. If someone attempts to bypass the union, the Catcher is expected to inform the union and failure to do so will lead to fines if the Catcher is found out.

To avoid paying union rates, merchants (particularly those trading in consumables and cloth) sometimes hire non-professionals or non-union Rat Catchers (often people who have made enemies in a union) to protect their warehouses. Such employees are officially hired as 'watchmen'. However, as there is potential for money to be made in warehouse districts by Catchers' union members, watchmen who are really working as private Catchers are often on the receiving end of anonymous thumpings and dog bites. Or a merchant may find his home overrun by a sudden influx of the smelliest and most vicious rats in the city. That said, many merchants with ships and barges also employ Rat Catchers to keep those vessels as clear as possible, and most reasonable Catchers' guilds accept such things as being outside their territory.

Nobles sometimes have Rat Catchers of their own to keep down vermin on their properties - these Catchers are often a bizarre status symbol or just an amusing (but useful) joke, and presented with needlessly impressive uniforms and titles such as Master of Vermin. These are most common in city residences; out on the country estates, a noble's Gamekeeper and Rat Catcher are usually one and the same. Catchers' unions don't like this, as it bypasses union rates of pay, but there is little they can do about it; attacking an employee of a noble counts as damaging a noble's property, so it is hardly worth the risk given the scale of the situation. Instead, simple mockery is applied.

### Tools of the Trade

Rat Catchers have a number of weapons in their arsenal, of

### Catcher Families

Families with a history and tradition of rat catching are not found everywhere, but they are common enough in many larger towns and cities, and in the cities there is a good chance of there being more than one such family. Most Catcher families are human, although Dwarfen Catcher families are found in places where Dwarfs have lived in significant numbers for many decades - Middenheim is the best example, and there are one or two Gnome and Halfling Catcher families to be found elsewhere.

In Altdorf, there are three Catcher families, each with very clearly defined territories separated by the Reik and Talabec rivers. The most powerful family, the Frettchens, serves the largest area to the south and west of the Reik, while the Hermelin family controls rats north of the Reik and Talabec. The Wiesel family, the largest, but least wealthy and influential of the three families, works the deprived and crowded East End districts; given the deprivation and poor sewage facilities here, the Wiesel Catchers are kept very busy indeed and are only just holding their own against the rats. These families have held a grip on their respective territories for centuries and are happy with their lot. However, the Frettchens and the Hermelins have recently begun talks with the view to forming a guild; the Wiesel family has been ignored in this and it is not at all happy. (For further background on Altdorf and its districts, there are two excellent pdf files at [www.strike-to-stun.com](http://www.strike-to-stun.com).)

which the primary one is a small dog. These are typically terriers of some sort, shorthaired to limit the filth they collect from the unpleasant working environments, and possessed of a tough and vicious nature. Whilst there are ratters with friendlier, even apparently slothful dispositions, even they become savage beasts when fighting a rat. Catchers' dogs are *subject to frenzy* against rats, including Skaven, but only when given a command like, "Get 'em, boy!" Despite this, Catchers' dogs never eat what they kill - as the Catcher relies on a rat's tail as proof of a kill to claim the bounty, dogs are trained very early on to leave dead rats for their masters. The most important thing about these dogs is their speed - rats are small and fast moving, and Catchers rely on the high-speed mania of small terriers to make a profitable number of kills. Dogs in general can separate out specific smells from amongst the many odours of the sewer, and ratters tend to excel at hunting and tracking in here.

However, a good number of Rat Catchers also make use of partially domesticated weasels to 'ferret out' rats. The celebrated Ike Matthias, an intelligent and literate Catcher, wrote in his book, *Fulle Revelations of a Professional*

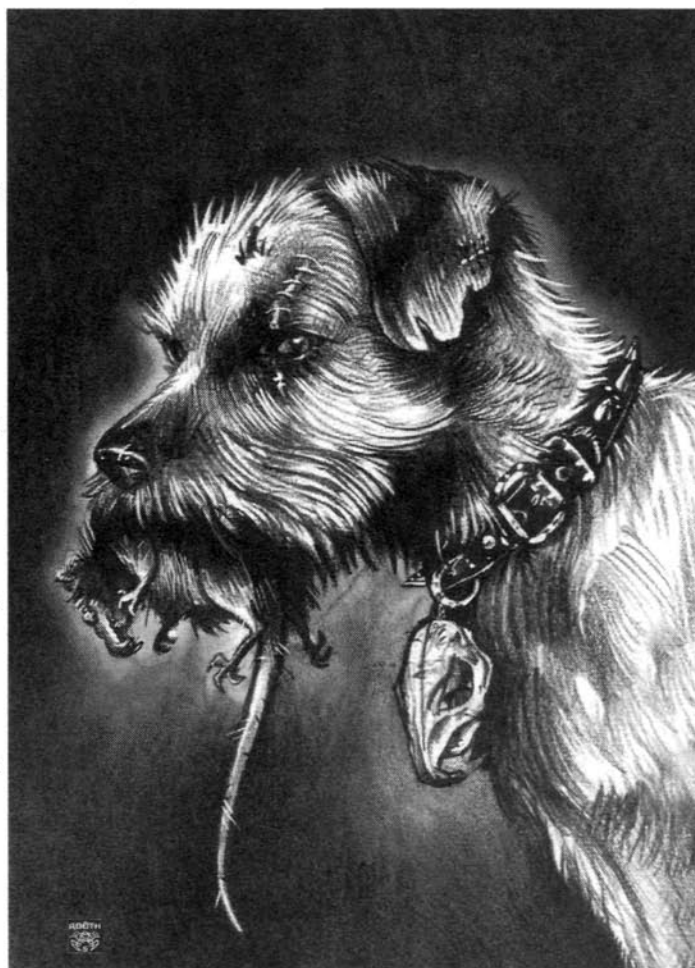


*Ratt-catcher*, “Ferretting is a goode plann for deftroying rats in cottages, stables and innes...” In his description of the technique, Matthias describes how a Catcher should lift a board up at each end of the floor joists and then, with a net secured at one end, put a ferret down the other. Each joist would be ferreted out one at a time. (Who knows what might be found beneath old floorboards?) Many Catchers own a copy of the book, although few can read it. Fortunately, Matthias anticipated this and the book is illustrated with numerous step-by-step woodcuts and cartoons of amusing incidents from his career.

One favoured pastime of Rat Catchers is competitive ridding, in which each Catcher’s dog is placed one at a time in an open-topped pit or large barrel of live rats and given one minute to kill as many rats as possible. After the minute is up, the dead rats are counted, the pit restocked with live rats and the next contender put in. The winner is the Catcher whose dog killed the most rats; bets are placed, especially if non-Catchers have come to watch, or every Catcher participating pays a fee to compete, which the winner is awarded. Obviously, a good dog will earn considerable renown in these public displays, and animals can become sought after for breeding purposes by Catchers or anyone seeking a vicious dog as a status symbol.

The Big Stick is almost as vital to any Rat Catcher as his dog is and often becomes a treasured and personalised item. For the majority of Catchers only a gnarled, knobby bit of hardwood is considered robust enough for their work, and urban Catchers will leave the town for the countryside to find something suitable. Catcher folklore suggests that a stick cut from hard, thorny shrubs are best for catching-work, and sticks with wild climbing rose or bramble stems twined tightly around the working end are a not unknown sight. The addition of bent nails or thick fishhooks can help catch fleeing rats or pluck them from tight spots where dogs cannot go. Some Catchers prefer shorter clubs for wielding in confined situations, while for others the traditional ratter’s pole, more akin to a quarterstaff, provides a longer reach for rooting out nests and deep holes; a few carry both. Many Rat Catchers identify themselves by one or more dead rats hung swinging from the stick resting over their shoulder. Clubs and staves whose ends have been carved into the shape of a snake’s head are becoming a more common sight. For most Catchers, this is just a case of following a recent fashion, explained by the fact that some snakes hunt vermin. However, unknown to most, the trend was started by a select group of Catchers for whom the snake’s head has a deeper significance (see **Faith**).

Most Rat Catchers make use of reusable traps, essentially large and especially brutal mousetraps, but at least a dozen are necessary for any chance of catching enough to earn a decent bounty. Catchers find them an easy source of tails to



keep money trickling in if a dog dies, or for setting in houses with just a few rats. However, the traps need to be checked and reset at least once a day - rats are cannibalistic, and if traps are not checked the bounty may be quickly lost. Typically, traps are most effective when deployed in houses or warehouses. Traps for catching live rats are usually baited boxes with one-way doors and are of variable size. Traps are usually made to order for Catchers, but some artisans in larger towns specialise in making them for the mass market, which is a concern for some Catchers and their unions who fear losing work. Additionally, there has been trouble for unions when Catchers have allegedly stolen from traps belonging to other members, or even different unions.

Poisons are being used more often, although this is still far from commonplace. Although they can yield many rat-tails, many Catchers regard poisons as lazy and unprofessional, as well as being a hazard to dogs. Also, effective poisons are often expensive and not always easily available. Many towns and cities either outlaw the sale and purchase of poisons altogether or at least restrict their use to licensed groups, such as Catchers’ guilds. Guilds normally have to negotiate with their local authorities for a given number of licenses for poison-use, which are valid



for one year. The licenses are then sold, rented-out or awarded to certain Catchers, but the Catcher in question is expected to have been trained (and what constitutes training varies) in the safe and effective use of poisons. Poisons are usually used in conjunction with some sort of bait, and different Catchers swear by personalised formulations of rat delicacies.

A good light source is essential for work in cellars or sewers, whether in the form of a lantern, torch or candle. Steel and flint or matches to light them are also essential. Candlestick holders are useful for setting a candle down without it going out and some Catchers fashion devices to attach candles to the end of their stick, enabling them to examine narrow crevices and holes. Of course, a build up of methane and other gases in sewers can be ignited by naked flames.

A few strong drawstring bags are essential on any rat hunt. At least one is needed for keeping severed tails in and a larger one is usually kept to carry rats that are taken whole. Catchers also use bags as traps, keeping the neck of the bag open with a cord tied to the drawstring and hung over some projection above, which can be pulled suddenly to whip the bag up, the weight of the caught rat pulling the bag closed. Of course, rats are good gnawers, so the rat either has to be subdued or the bag has to be extremely tough. Bags also come in handy for gathering other items of interest that get washed into the sewers.

Many, though not all, Rat Catchers carry and



### Tall Rats

If you secretly listen to the Catchers in their favourite corner of the tavern, as they sip their ale and smoke their pipes, sooner or later you'll hear mention of 'Tall Rats'. It's an expression that's whispered, but you'll hear the hint of anxiety or even fear in the voice of the speaker. For you see, 'Tall Rat' is Catcher slang for Skaven.

Within The Empire, only two cities, Middenheim and Nuln, have any significant Skaven presence, although there are relatively extensive tunnels under the southern half of The Empire. Marienburg also has a Skaven lair, although their activities in the Wasteland have long been challenged, surreptitiously, by the Fimir. As a result, few Catchers have ever actually encountered any Skaven, despite what many say - you can usually tell those that have from those that haven't, because those that have don't usually like to talk about their experiences and no longer work below ground if they can avoid it.

Skaven are nasty creatures to encounter. The weakest operate in packs and those that travel alone find little threat in a Catcher and his dog. Is it any wonder that Nuln's sewers are patrolled by teams of sewerjacks and mercenaries whose mission is *not* mundane rat catching? Skaven encounters are not so much survived as avoided, usually by running for it. Fortunately, Skaven like to keep their activities secret. Given their ability to see in the dark, Skaven are usually aware of a Catcher before he's aware of them (although his dog might smell them), and so they can quickly make themselves scarce before they are spotted. It's far more likely that a Catcher comes across evidence of Skaven activity than the Skaven themselves: a hastily abandoned base that reeks too strongly of rat to have been lived in by Goblins or human ne'er-do-wells; the corpse of a missing Catcher covered with grossly oversized rat bites; or markings like an inverted triangle made of overlapping bones scratched into the grime of the tunnel brickwork.



use slings. Within the urban Catcher community there is some debate over the merits of the sling. While the general feeling among Catchers is that a cheap projectile weapon is a handy tool to have about you (as you never know what might be lurking around the next bend in the tunnel). Others argue that the narrower side-sewers where rats like to nest are too cramped to use a sling effectively, and that rats are small and fast-moving targets and damn-near impossible to hit except when in a swarm. Proponents of the sling simply respond that those who miss the target should practice more (which can lead to a challenge or contest, with slings or fists). However, there is no such debate among country Catchers, who make much more use of the sling when dealing with vermin such as magpies or rabbits who are often relatively stationary when going about their business; likewise, a well-placed stone will quickly put a flock of seed-hungry birds to flight. Consequently, rural Catchers are often more skilled in using slings than their urban counterparts.

### Friends, Enemies and Contacts

Even though few people are overly fond of Catchers (they tend to smell, get covered in muck and are followed everywhere by small yappy dogs with nasty teeth), they are regarded as a necessity. Few people are actively hostile, and most tavern-keepers do not mind Rat Catchers as clientele, as long they do not traipse in with boots covered in fresh sewer-grime and keep their dogs from biting other customers (though inns that cater to the middle and noble classes are more restrictive). On balance, only snobs and the well-to-do take a genuine dislike to Catchers, and that is largely due to their grimy clothes and terrible odour; poorer commoners and wiser merchants hold their breath and acknowledge the value of a good Catcher.

Although much of the job is a lonely one, with only a dog for company, Catchers do tend to meet a surprising number of people in the course of their work. Most commonly these are the people who live and work in the part of the city they regularly work, especially ones who have businesses particularly at risk from rats - everything from bakeries, butchers and market traders to stables and tanners. A good Catcher can make a variety of friends and acquaintances; conversely, a bad or lazy one is rarely popular. Catcher families can become well-known locally although their reputations vary. The reliability of a Catcher's income means that some folk even try to get a son or daughter or two married into Catcher families.

Following a murder, premeditated or otherwise, it is not uncommon for the murderer to try to hide the body, and down the nearest sewer is often the most convenient place. Unsurprisingly, a Rat Catcher is often the first person to stumble across the victim. It is not at all pleasant, but after the first few it becomes part of the job. All but a minority

### Payment

In rural areas and villages, payment for killing rats is frequently in kind: a bed for the night in the barn, a bowl of homemade turnip soup, a bundle of bread and cheese, a pair of old, but sturdy boots, a new knife, three fresh eggs, having that drafty hole in the pants darned at last. In town and city, payment comes in hard cash, commonly a Silver Shilling per score of rat tails - bounty is only paid on whole scores, as this reduces the number of casual rat killers turning up and demanding payment (and less than a score of rats is considered pretty insignificant). In places where the authorities directly employ a Rat Catcher, the Catcher is expected to produce a minimum number of tails per week to justify his wage, or receive reduced payment. Bounties are normally paid directly to the Catcher by an Office or Komission within the local government. Where a Guild exists each of its members is assigned a particular area of the city and they are not permitted to catch rats outside of it (being caught doing so leads to a fine, some of which is paid to the Catcher whose allotted territory was infringed). The Rat Catcher then claims his bounty from the Guild, which reclaims the bounty from the local authorities. Of course, the Guild earns its money by paying the Catcher slightly less than the authorities pay the Guild, but in theory the Guild negotiates higher bounties, so both Guild and Catcher benefit. Additional to a standard bounty, a Silver Shilling is paid for single whole rats that are clearly mutant in nature: two or more heads or tails, human-like hands and faces are good examples. Upon a time, this bounty included Rat Kings (see **Catchers' Tales** below) but this stopped when it was found that some Catchers were deliberating knotting together the tails of a half dozen live rats to increase their value. Rock and Giant Rats offer a bounty of around five Gold Crowns each. Of course, the biggest rat bounty is that made for a dead Skaven, usually fifteen to twenty Gold Crowns; few people are knowledgeable enough to recognise the different Skaven clans, so a Rat Catcher lucky enough to kill a Clan Eshin assassin will not earn any more than he would for an ordinary ratman soldier.

of Catchers inform the authorities as soon as possible and lead them back to the body. As a result, Rat Catchers can get to know members of the local Watch and even priests of Mórr who also take a professional interest in such matters. In fact, dedicated Watchmen make a point of getting to know their local Rat Catchers, who often come across or overhear odd and interesting things in the course of their rounds.

Given that Catchers visit a lot of different places and



meet a spectrum of society, they get to hear and see an awful lot of things. They get news of comings-and-goings in the course of idle gossip with their customers, and sometimes they overhear or notice things they shouldn't (all inadvertently, of course). Often they are the source of facts, rumours, suspicions and accusations themselves. Catchers are knowledgeable regarding the layout of certain cellars and basements, and which sewer pipes lead to whose privies; they sometimes know which houses have secret rooms and passages, after tracking rat runs into them. They get to learn the routines and habits of servants

and guards. Of course, not every Catcher possesses such interesting and useful information, far from it, but PCs (or NPCs for that matter) can do worse than to brave the smell and buy the local Catcher an ale.

Catchers can easily make enemies (often because of what they learn in the course of their work). The Skaven are perhaps a little too obvious, and there is less contact between Catchers and the ratmen than Catchers' stories like to suggest, but conflict can occur when Catchers stumble across their nefarious schemes. However, Skaven rarely take it upon themselves to defend their lesser cousins (see **Tall Rats** for more on the Skaven). Nurgle and his followers have an obvious special and friendly interest in rats, and so are not impressed by Rat Catchers bashing their little skulls in. Even so, some Rat Catchers who delight in their unpleasant work and situation are ripe for Nurgle's corrupting touch.

Mundane enemies are an awful lot more common. Thieves commonly make use of the sewers as bases, temporary boltholes or secret routes between one place and another - they tend to object, violently, to anyone who discovers what they are up to. Also, more than a few Catchers have found that their specialist knowledge of sewers and basements across the city is very useful to criminals, who are as likely to use threats of or actual violence to gain information as they are to pay for it. Other intolerant sewer-dwellers include beggar communities and mutants in hiding. Although depending on individual Rat Catchers and sewer-dwellers, friendlier relationships can develop.

### Faith

Like most people, Rat Catchers look to different gods when they want help with specific problems, so there is no single god they follow. Sigmarite and Ulrican allegiances usually accord with local politics, although the hunter aspect of Ulric does invite a Catcher's respect. In rural areas in particular, worship or at least polite acknowledgement of Ulric and his brother Taal are common - Ulric is asked for success in the hunt and Taal is thanked for understanding that some of his creatures must be culled from time to time. Although Ranald is often seen as a city god, his favoured bird, the magpie, is a common pest in the countryside. To avoid incurring Ranald's displeasure, a rural Catcher traditionally offers a mug of ale to the god, pouring it on the land or in a stream near where the Catcher intends to kill magpies; alternatively a craftily purloined item of minor consequence is similarly offered. All Catchers need a bit of good luck from time to time and Ranald is a good god to ask, especially when it comes to gambling in ridding contests.

Often as a result of their upbringing a few country Catchers follow the Old Faith. They do not see their job as

### Adam 'Griffonshot' Schäfer

A few years back, the village of Grevenfeld in the city state of Middenheim was terrorised by a Griffon. Where it came from, no one knew, although the Old Folk of the village claimed that their grandparents believed the village was victimised by a Griffon long before even they had been born, a curse hinted at by the village's name. However, that was neither here nor there as far as the young folk were concerned, as this Griffon was here and now, swooping down and carrying off the goats upon which much of Grevenfeld's economy relied.

Adam Schäfer was a young travelling Rat Catcher who came to Grevenfeld looking for work and found more than he bargained for. Desperate for money, Adam was (relatively) undaunted by how the other shepherds had been ripped limb from limb, and volunteered to stand guard over the villagers' remaining herd of goats.

Despite the embellishments of the storytellers, what happened next was simple enough. One evening as the sun was setting and the sky turning a misty red, Adam's keen hearing made him throw himself to the ground, narrowly missing being caught by the Griffon's talons as the beast swept over him. Rather than immediately run, Adam stood up and loaded his sling. As the Griffon slowly turned for a second attack, he began to whirl the sling, only releasing the stone at the last possible moment. A single talon raked over Adam's head, where a hairless scar remains today, but Adam's lucky shot took out one of the Griffon's eyes. The beast crashed violently into the ground and young Adam rushed to the dazed monster and braved the thrashings of its broken wings to kill it with club and knife before it could properly recover its senses.

Adam and the village made money out of the beast, which was hurriedly bought by the Wizard and Alchemists' Guild of Middenheim. Of course, the Old Folk muttered that there was still an old curse placed on Gravenfeld and that curses are not easily robbed of their victims. Nevertheless, Adam 'Griffonshot' Schäfer made a reputation for himself as a man for whom no vermin was too large to be controlled.



being in any way hostile to nature as long as they leave enough animals alive to breed and find a use for the remains of the animals they kill (food, skin and fur, feathers - all have uses). A tiny minority of these Catchers find themselves growing closer and closer to the environment they work in and are fortunate enough to become Druids; those who progress through the Druidic Priesthood often have cat, owl, stoat, wolf or eagle as totem familiars. The twist to this, of course, is that some Druids have rat familiars, and they feel inclined to defend rats. However, this does not mean that a Catcher-turned-Druid has to cease catching, rather that they have to find novel ways of drawing rats away from where they are causing problems and leading them to new places that benefit everyone.

As mentioned in **Tools of the Trade**, a number of Catchers are beginning to carve the heads of their clubs and sticks into the shape of snakeheads. For most, this is simply following a recent fashion and explained by the fact that some snakes are hunters of rodents. However, the trend was begun by a small, very loosely organised cult of Catchers who have begun to worship a snake god. The details and aims of this god are left to GMs. It may be a new Chaos god or an old one masquerading as something else, an old god that the Lizardmen turned to after the fall of the Slann, or the arch rival of the Horned Rat.

*"It is said that in Ulricarr, which lies beyond the river Narbe; no man may kill a rat..."*

From 'The Rats of Ulricarr', by H.P. Lieberwerk

### Catchers' Tales

Spending a lot of time on one's own in dark, isolated



environments plays on the imagination. Down in the sewers, lamps flicker from foul breezes of uncertain origin and the shadows come to life. Small movements and small sounds are magnified into things more suspicious and sinister than they are. Unsurprisingly, Catcher folklore is relatively rich with strange and bizarre stories.

There are several minor anecdotes almost all Catchers have heard and tell. Catchers like to perpetuate stories of cornered rats that leap and attack the throat, but Catchers are well aware that rats are not great jumpers; still, it is a good one to tell the ignorant. Similarly, horror stories about rats up trouser legs are as common as, well, rats. One odd tale concerns the idea that blind rats (indicated by milky





### Catcher Slang

Catcher's have a rich and varied range of slang. It has some aspects of a secret language, and GMs may wish to add it as such to the Rat Catcher career profile. The following are a few examples.

**Baldrick - Bald Rick** was a Catcher who caught so many skin diseases that his hair fell out. Hence, Baldrick has become slang for a Catcher whom even other Catchers find dirty, smelly and generally unpleasant. However, Bald Rick was a damn good Catcher, so in other contexts, a Baldrick is a fiendishly cunning plan, which may confuse outsiders ("That plan stinks like a Baldrick!").

**Box of Delights** - A large rat nest or infestation that will yield a lot of rat tails and hence money. It also allows Catchers to publicly discuss places they are hired to clear out without creating a bad image ("Friedrick's Bakery's a real box of delights").

**Ferreter/Ferreting** - These terms usually refer to a thief and thieving respectively. Use of the terms allows dishonest Catchers to discuss criminal activities in public ("I's been ferreting out the backrooms at the Merchants' Guildhouse"). However, use of ferrets instead of dogs by both urban and rural Catchers may cause confusion to those outside the catching community.

**Gnasher** - A very intelligent or very vicious dog, usually both.

**Joanquollin** - A Bretonnian term for an apparent corpse that suddenly and shockingly turns out to be alive after all.

**Marienburg Street** - A badly flooded sewer or cellar.

**Ranald's Undies** - Pitch black, totally obscured, can't see a thing, a closely guarded secret ("Quick! Bring the lantern. It's like trying to see in Ranald's Undies").

**The Rat's Bollocks** - Male rats have huge testicles in relation to their body size, so this term simply means very big indeed and may also be used as a compliment ("That pie was the Rat's Bollocks!").

**Scourer** - A scourer is what happens when sudden, torrential rain results in a flash flood in the sewers. Extremely dangerous.

**Sewer Witch** - A female Rat Catcher. Rarely used publicly, as it has been known to send eavesdropping adventurers and Witch Hunters scurrying down the nearest sewer grate, causing no end of problems.

**Tall Rats** - Skaven. *Very Tall Rats* usually means very bad news.

cataracts in their eyes) are led by sighted partners, with the blind rat holding its sighted partner's tail in its mouth or the pair each holding one end of a piece of straw in their teeth. Another concerns the huge (but normal) rat who refuses to die no matter what is done to it; it survives dog bites, resists poisons (albeit with copious rat vomit and diarrhoea all over the place), evades traps and cudgels and still comes out fighting after being caught in a sack and immersed in water for half a day. However, the existence of so-called Rat Kings has actually been authenticated. Rat Kings are groups of two or more rats whose tails have somehow become knotted so that they are permanently bound together; the flesh of their tails is often fused together, suggesting 'partnerships' of long-standing, perhaps beginning in the womb. Most Catchers believe that Rat Kings are far more intelligent than normal rats, and become leaders of their simpler brethren.

A favourite Catcher song tells the somewhat bawdy story of Ratty Annie, who is supposed to have lived with a dozen rats in her voluminous undergarments and blouse purely to entice impoverished Rat Catchers into lewd behaviour. Some Rat Catchers insist that Ratty Annie was, or still is, a very real person, and remind the sceptical that rats kept in the dark with sufficient freedom of movement do not usually bite.

*Rolando the Rat* is a Tilean story that has spread northwards and is very popular. The exploits of this annoying, over-sized talking rat (*not* a Skaven, it is said, but possibly mutant) are believed to be actual events. For two years, Rolando caused havoc in granaries, cheeseries and sweetshops throughout Tilea, constantly evading and mocking the Catchers. Huge quantities of grain were ruined through his copious urination and droppings, and the joke about Tilean currant-bread spread far and wide. Rolando was never caught, and so while most Imperial Catchers like to laugh about the humiliation of their Tilean counterparts, others wonder whether only the stories have travelled northwards.

Along with the usual round of unpleasant anecdotes about bodies and body-parts found in the sewers (almost every Catcher has his own grisly story to tell, true or not), the story of the Maggoty Corpse that came to life when Anton 'Ratboy' Finchen poked it with his stick is one that puts the wind up even veteran Catchers. Another corpse tale tells of rats 'sailing' on the back of a dead man, his arms swimming as he lies face down in the deep sewer water, the rats changing his course by biting on his large ragged ears.

The spectral rats of Old Nuln are a mystery unique to that city. Accounts of the ghostly horde have gaps of years between them, sometimes as long as a generation, but there seems to be little doubt in the minds of most citizens of Nuln that the ghostly swarm is a genuine supernatural phenomenon. Old Catchers who witnessed the last swarm describe the ghost rats as being like "rats made of greenish fog, running and scabbling along, but without making a single sound. Seemed like something was scaring them from the sewers and out onto the streets". Some deaths and prolonged sicknesses have been ascribed to the spectral rats. Of course, outsiders don't believe a word of it.



# THE GIBBET OF DIEDENHOFF

A Cameo by Robin Low



The approach to the village of Diedenhoff follows a rocky path, wide enough for a large cart and not much more. It passes awkwardly over the side of a hill; to one's left rises a rocky, weed-strewn cliff and to one's right a rocky, weed-strewn cliff drops sharply down to the rushing river. At its highest point, the path widens considerably. It is here that one finds the Hanging Tree, a huge, strong and truly ancient Oak. It holds firmly to the rocky ground and some of its thick, twisting roots can be seen crawling down the cliff towards the river. In summer, pretty red and yellow flowers grow around it. One mighty branch projects halfway across the broadened path, and from it hangs a grisly sight: a rusty gibbet, its bars greasy with decaying fat, containing an eyeless, rotting corpse. The lichen-covered rope creaks as the gibbet swings slowly in the breeze, accompanied by the cries of the crows. Beyond the Hanging Tree and its companion one sees Diedenhoff for the first time, a small village of no more than twenty rustic buildings surrounded by fields fed by the river, in turn surrounded by the edges of the dark forest.

Eisen the Blacksmith is the headman of Diedenhoff. His wife, Eva, runs the nearest thing the village has to an inn, which consists of their own dining table for meals and a store building next to Eisen's smithy for sleeping - rough, but certainly warm. It is from Eisen that travellers can learn more of the body in the gibbet. It is a simple tale. Last year, a Witch-Hunter and his followers passed through the village and camped close by for a night. During that night, another traveller, a young man, almost a boy, really, snuck into the camp and stole something belonging to the Witch-Hunter. Unfortunately for the lad, he was quickly caught and subjected to the Witch-Hunter's iron-bound justice. The village was strongly advised not to remove the gibbet until the Witch-Hunter returned for it, and folk have abided by that advice. Anyone else in the village can tell the same story, although nobody is sure what the victim's name was, and his purpose in passing through Diedenhoff remains unknown.

However, anyone with medical knowledge, or especially perceptive, who examines the body in the hanging cage may notice that the hip bones projecting from the badly decaying flesh suggests that the body is that of a young woman, not a man. If given this fact, the villagers will be surprised and curious, but all agree that whoever went into the gibbet at least *looked* like a young lad. Similarly, the rustiness of the gibbet and

the thick crusting of lichen on the rope hint that the gibbet has hung there for much longer than a single year.

The truth is that the body is that of a young woman and she was put in the gibbet a full thirty years ago by a Witch-Hunter who accused her of being a witch. He was correct in his assessment, but in no way did the girl deserve such a fate. The Witch-Hunter and his followers watched her die before leaving. The villagers, fearing his return, left the gibbet in place, but planted red and yellow flowers around the tree in the girl's memory.

The witch-girl never truly died and her magic has sustained her passive, decaying form for decades. Her spirit, bound to the gibbet and the land, has become the village's protector and advisor. Every Geheimnisnacht, the villagers gather around the gibbet and perform a ceremony of remembrance for the girl and she, in turn, whispers through ragged lips to offer prophecy and advice for the year to come. Furthermore, her ghost is sometimes seen around the edge of the village, by the river, along the margin of the forest, or climbing the rocks of the hill as she did in life, a pale mystery for any who glimpse her before she drops out of sight; the villagers tell visitors that it must have been a trick of the light.

As the village's protector, the witch-girl's ghost will act against any who harm or cheat the villagers. Local Beastmen have learnt to avoid the place and those who act against the village(rs) are victimised in response.

The ghost is more than witch and protector, however. The memories and desires of a young, wilful woman remain. Part of the witch-girl still yearns as she did in life for more than a simple village existence, although she cannot travel far beyond the local area. Some younger male travellers, especially those who stay the night in Eisen and Eva's, are subject to playful, pleasant dreams, and are *extremely* reluctant to leave the village the next morning, finding all sorts of reasons to linger and explore the surrounding area. The villagers encourage those they recognise as being so touched by the ghost and, wanting to keep their protector happy, spin yarns about ancient ruins in the forest, of hidden entrances to gold-laden caves in the hills and the Troll Flower believed to have once grown in the area (all of which may be true and even be the reason for people coming to Diedenhoff to begin with).

### Involving the PCs

The ghost should not be the initial focus of the PCs' activities in Diedenhoff, but rather something that they slowly become aware of. However, it will gain importance later, probably when one of the PCs falls under the influence initially of the ghost and then also of the villagers. For this to work, the PCs should have some reason for visiting the village and staying a while. With this in mind, the previously hinted at caves of gold, ruins in the forest or the Troll Flower may have been the initial lure and focus of PCs' interest, and may even have a basis in reality (see below for details of the Troll Flower). Alternatively, the PCs and another person or group may use the village as a conveniently out-of-the-way meeting place

for illicit activities or secret discussions. Another possibility is that the PCs are asked to find a young man by the name of Reinwald Eifersucht who set out on a journey, but never reached his destination - Diedenhoff was one of the places on his route. The young man became the focus of the ghost's attentions and was persuaded to remain in the village by the village folk. PCs who attempt to persuade him to return to his loved ones are faced with an angry ghost, annoyed villagers and a reluctant Reinwald. Alternatively, the ghost may turn her attentions to one of the PCs, resulting in an angry, jealous Reinwald (and villagers who aren't sure who to side with).

### The Witch-Girl of Diedenhoff

When seen from afar, the witch-girl appears as a pale young woman, dressed in pale brown peasant garb. When encountered more directly, she can flit between that and a more traditional ghostly figure. She may move beyond her *Place of Death* at the Hanging Tree, around the village and fields of Diedenhoff, along the river and up to half a mile into the surrounding forest. Although she is Frightening, this only comes into effect when her ghostly nature is obvious. Despite being a ghost, she has a Magic Characteristic of 1 and can cast the following spells: Marshlights, Sounds, Sleep, Gust and Curse of Thorns; on a roll of 1 her spell simply fails. Apart from these details, the witch-girl is a normal ghost (*Old World Bestiary* pg. 109), but GMs can increase her Intelligence, Will Power and Fellowship.

### Lesser Troll Flower

**Availability:** Rare (-20% to Search in season). Spring. Hills and upland regions.

**Price:** 5GC in season; 20GC out of season.

**Method of Application:** Boil in water, then drink.

**Preparation Time:** 4 weeks

**Dosage:** 1 week between doses or no effect

**Test:** Administering the herb requires a successful Heal Test.

**Effects:** Ingestion of this herb gives the recipient the Troll ability of *Regeneration*; characters with no Wounds cannot attack or move until they have regenerated to Lightly Wounded. It takes 20+1D8 hours (GM should roll) for the ingested herb to spread through the body and become effective and its regenerative powers last 20+1D8 hours (GM should roll), after which it has no more effect. Lesser Troll Flower cannot cure the effects of critical hits. Clearly, there is something slightly unnatural about the effects of this herb, and it is often regarded with suspicion. Some herbalists avoid it, whilst others offer it under-the-counter. There is an additional problem: Wounds that regenerate are subject to scarring, thickening and discolouration, reminiscent of a Troll's skin. For every Wound regenerated, one point of Fellowship is lost, representing this disfiguration.

a Clive Oldfield article

# COLD WARRIORS

SPIES AND  
SPYING IN  
MARIENBURG



You Only  
Live Twice  
(if you've got  
a Fate Point)

Contains scenes of sex, violence  
and peril, as well as puns that  
some may find unsuitable.



A Clive Oldfield article with additional material from N. Arne Dam, Tim Eccles, Alfred Nuñez Jr and Simon Dennett.  
A Warpstone production. Edited and proofed by John Foody, John Keane, Martin Oliver, Steve Moss and Robin Low. Written with  
Warpstone vision. No Intellectual Property was harmed during the writing and publication of this article. Based on a game by Games Workshop and  
material from Marienburg: Sold Down the River by Anthony Ragan. Full range of merchandise available.

*"Spies are secret agents who gather information for their patrons or the highest bidder. Spies are masters of disguise who often risk their lives to work undercover in enemy territory. Some will even join subversive groups and study them for months from the inside. A spy who dares to infiltrate a Chaos coven risks far worse than death, but there are many groups in the Old World who desperately need the information such a stout soul can provide. All the nations of the Old World employ Spies, usually to monitor the military and political moves of their rivals." Spy career WFRP2 p.84*

The themes centred on spying in the Old World hold much potential for serious background development and for adding depth and realism to adventures. There could be much to be gained from studiously researching the techniques and the individuals involved in the espionage of the early renaissance of our world, as a guide to how to apply it to the Old World. Together with a serious minded verisimilitude of the actual historical political situation, this could reward a GM and players greatly. Alternatively, you can cobble together a few cold war clichés, add a James Bond pastiche or two, rip off a Michael Caine movie and throw in a few bad puns. For the purposes of this article, I will be advocating the latter.

This article will attempt to give some ideas for setting up a cold war conceit based in Marienburg. *Marienburg: Sold down the River*, a sourcebook by Anthony Ragan, would be a very useful tool to own if implementing some of the ideas herein. This sourcebook is recommended even for Second Edition players, if you can find a copy. Alternatively, the general themes could easily be transplanted to any politically vital city in the Old World, with a little work.

The Empire and Bretonnia could be said to be super powers fighting a clandestine conflict, both attempting to gain eventual control of the renegade Wasteland province, while avoiding any show of open hostility that may lead to a catastrophic war between the two states. Meanwhile, the Marienburgers will strive desperately to retain their newly won freedoms, playing one side off against the other, without provoking the sort of military necessity that is always bad for profits.

Beneath the mercantile vigour of Marienburg and the confidence of a thriving independence the hard realities of the great port's precarious political situation goes generally unfelt these days. The interference of overbearing neighbours, the insipid influence of the Elves, the pressures brought to bear by a myriad disparate trading partners, all must be balanced and a careful course plotted by the city's fathers.

The average Marienburger knows he belongs to the freest

***I tell you they are trying to get us. They're trying to force us back into the Empire. They won't rest until we're sending shiploads of taxes back to Altdorf, again. Their agents are everywhere. Be careful who you talk to. Don't trust the Reiklander scum. Don't trust the Middenlander or the Nordlander. They're all in it together.***

***Some bloke down the pub***

country in the world. No decadent aristocracy pushes the Marienburger nose to the grindstone while living idly off the profits. He is not kept silent by fear of retribution if he should criticise the wrong magistrate or priest. But he knows that other less fortunate nations are covetous of his freedoms, his wealth and his double vowels. He trusts the Directorate to do whatever it takes to protect The Wasteland from all comers. If he were asked to join the war to save his nation then he would gladly accept, as long as it did not interfere with his business opportunities.

The Empire still seethes like a wounded animal nursing its sores. The secession of the Wasteland in 2429 I.C. was the single most humiliating event in that nation's glorious history. Although some would say the military might exists to reclaim the province, despite the undoubted hazards a campaign in the wilderness around Marienburg would bring, there is no political will. Despite this, the imperial organisation, Die Graukappen, does its best to propagate pro-imperial feeling and to spread a distrust of all things Bretonnian. Its ultimate goal would be to destabilise the city to such an extent that imperial forces would be offered little resistance, or even welcomed back into the city.

The 900 year old 'Eternal Plan' of the l'Anguille dukes and the rest of Bretonnia has been to regain the city of Marienburg for itself. The current duke has dedicated himself to the cause, as did his father, and his father before him. King Charles is also inclined to support his efforts through La Chambre Noire, but the 'Lit Encore' monarch's sanction is famously fickle.

The presence of the Sea Elves in the city is also of serious concern for those preoccupied with the security of their nations. And, in turn, in their own strange way, the Sea Elves seek information, or perhaps something else, from the unsophisticated natives.

As the hub of many trading networks throughout the known world, Marienburg also hosts ambassadors, trade delegations and representatives of almost every nationality. Diplomacy, motivated by profit, generally runs smoothly and with dignity in the Paleisbuurt district, the centre of Marienburger diplomatic activity. But, never far below the surface, the more sordid practicalities must be taken care of. While those who remain ignorant of such necessity sleep soundly in their beds, those who do the dirty work are the unsung heroes; the cold warriors.

One of the perks of being a successful spy in Marienburg is the seemingly endless round of 'ambassadors' parties that are hosted by every vested interest and lobby group in the

city. It could be said that the future of the city is plotted here as much as in any meeting of the Directorate. Gentleman spies from every nation meet to watch each other and ponder what the other is plotting. Every exchanged pleasantry is a well-aimed barb. Every discussion of the weather is a perfect and barely gleaned allegory as to the state of some unmentioned conflict. A frisson of danger adds a spark to the heady atmosphere. And guests are really spoiled with the finest chocolates, from Ferrero in Tilea.

Although this article deals mainly with the spy vs. spy angle popular in cold war yarns, there is no reason not to use these ideas as some sort of basis for the more traditional style of WFRP adventure that involves Chaos trying to take over the world. Chaos will be no less deadly a foe just because the PCs have a network of agents and a few handy gadgets to support their efforts. The Graukappen will be just as inclined to look into the affairs of a shadowy, proscribed cult as the machinations of La Chambre Noire. In fact, it is very difficult to present a James Bond style super-villain in the WFRP context without looking to the Dark Gods for inspiration.

## ORGANISATIONS

### The Fog Walkers

The focus of The Wasteland's espionage effort is the organisation officially known as the Marienberger Inlichtingendienst, especially its sixth (zesde) division, unofficially known as the Fog Walkers. Actually, the naming of the sixth division is intentionally misleading. It is strongly doubted that any other division exists, although a fifth is rumoured. The very existence of the Fog Walkers has never been confirmed (nor denied) by the



Directorate and stories about its activities have become urban legends. Some people will put any unexplained event down to the machinations of the Fog Walkers and its rivals, but most people doubt the organisation even exists.

The Fog Walkers organisation is run by Paal Arhuis. His official role at the New Palace is Keeper of the Stadtholder's Gardens and Ponds, a medium ranking civil position which affords him the anonymity to run the Wasteland's intelligence community. Arhuis reports directly to the Staattholder, officially on matters of public parks, of which there are next to none in the city.

Some do it for love, some for lust, but most of the Fog Walker's agents do it for money. There is a vast and complicated structure of agents throughout Marienburg society, all shuffling information back and forth. It is quite clear that sometimes, perhaps most of the time, one section of the organisation has aims that conflict with another, and one loyal agent might be working directly against another, equally loyal agent.

Marienberger Inlichtingendienst is always on the lookout for agents from all levels of society and all arenas. Many of its agents do not even realise that it is Marienberger Inlichtingendienst that runs them, thinking they might just be doing illicit work for a merchant house or guild. On the other hand, a few have been convinced that they were carrying out vital acts for the defence of their nation, but were in fact simply running errands and lending a heavy hand to some gang of small time smugglers.

The headquarters of the Fog Walkers is located in Suiddock, just south of the canal. The facade of the building is an anonymous looking merchant house signed 'Universell Exportieren'. A large number of other buildings around this area are also run by the Fog Walkers, but only some; so there are a good number of legitimate businesses and residences to fill in the gaps and give the area a normal feel. The vast majority of the Fog Walker establishments are joined together via a dank, intricate network of cellars and tunnels beneath the water line.

The Fog Walkers has a large financial budget and a somewhat frivolous attitude to meeting its spending targets. Much money seems to be pumped into the research and development department which is forever coming up with strange devices, ostensibly to make the field agent's life safer. In addition, Marienberger Inlichtingendienst is famous among enemy agents for the generosity of its bribes. It is many a foreign agent's ambition for MI to attempt to bribe them when they will then be able to tell everything they know to the Marienburgers and retire to a life of luxury in the city. It is also not unknown for Fog Walker agents to run off to The Empire or elsewhere with a big sack of guilders.

Marienberger Inlichtingendienst is organised in such a way that most agents only know those below them in the hierarchy and their immediate superior. This ensures that no lowly operative can ever know enough to truly damage the organisation. It does, however have the side effect that it is difficult to co-ordinate different sections of the agency.

***Anonymous Reveller #1: I hear the Miraglianese ambassador's valet broke his leg, again.***

***Anonymous Reveller #2: Indeed, slipped on some tallow that fell from a blue candle.***

***Anonymous Reveller #1: I would imagine the Tsarina is not pleased.***

***Anonymous Reveller #2: Good Party.***

***Anonymous Reveller #1: Frightfully.***

***Two agents discussing delicate political points at an ambassador's party.***

Experienced agents are expected to see to their own affairs with a degree of autonomy. They are given free rein to recruit new agents and run their activities. Some agents specialise in a wide network of minor informants and gossips, collecting information and filtering it, passing on the pertinent bits to their superiors, while others will run only a small number of highly specialised and skilled agents such as burglars and assassins.

Within Marienberger Inlichtingendienst itself there seem to be a number of factions with conflicting loyalties. The great Houses have infiltrated the organisation utterly and it is hard to find an agent that does not owe some sort of allegiance to one of The Ten, or other institution. Far from being viewed as corruption, this is seen as a good thing by most as it serves to 'democratise' the organisation, forcing it to serve directly those who finance it. Nevertheless, it is corruption.

Indeed, it is almost as if House van de Kuypers is attempting to blatantly take over the entire institution and make it serve only that house's interests. Kuypers pours money into its own sections of the agency and is not subtle about directing the organisation towards its own interests. Many of the other houses have put their trust in Arhuis, who has no love of Jann van de Kuypers. They are beginning to see the necessity of working carefully together to resist the spread of House van de Kuypers' influence.

Arhuis is allied with Houses Fooger and den Euwe and shows his allegiance by opposing House van den Kuypers whenever practicable. He has some agents digging into the affair of Jaan van de Kuypers' inheritance, suspecting some sort of involvement by Jaan that wasn't entirely licit. One attempt on his life has already been thwarted (by dumb luck). Arhuis is careful to obfuscate his actions and location but another attempt can only be a matter of time. This is especially disconcerting as only a handful of people, other than the directors, know of his real occupation.

It is a matter of some speculation what will become of Paal himself, and his position, when it is House van de Kuypers' turn to fulfil the Stadtholder's role.

### The Silver Fist

The Silver Fist is some sort of brotherhood that meets every sixty-six days in the cellars deep below a warehouse in Goudberg. For the meetings, in order to preserve their anonymity, they wear long dark robes and intricate, silver, full-face masks. They number about thirty and almost all members are middle or high-ranking Fog Walkers. The meetings are strictly secret, on pain of death, so it is



**Marienburger Fishwife #1: 'My ol' man brought us home a two headed halibut last night, and inside it, we found a shiny Brionnese sou.'**

**Marienburger Fishwife #2: 'Aye, that'll be the Fog Walkers, alright.'**

unknown what goes on there. It has been suggested that ancient rituals are performed in order to summon courage to continue the fight against enemies of the state.

Where is my brave thing  
Who acts like a king  
Still in bed  
Golden Head  
Fly to the moon  
But come back soon  
Bretonnian Nursery Rhyme

At the end of the meetings, the members of the Silver Fist line up to meet and take instructions from the head of the organisation. This mysterious figure, robed in silver and gold offers each of his agents in turn, a gift of gold and gems in return for the loyalty they have shown over the past months. Those who are deemed disloyal meet an altogether different fate. It is not unusual that a member fails to return into the light of day at the end of one of these meetings.

### La Chambre Noire

Financed directly from the coffers of Charles de la Tete d'Or, La Chambre Noire (sometimes known as 'Les Sans Face') has a chilling reputation in the duchies of Bretonnia. Its pernicious influence is suspected everywhere, and even the conversations between friends behind locked doors in the dead of night are made in hushed tones for fear that an agent of La Chambre Noire might be listening.



Such absolute power does not stretch as far as Marienburg. A handful of agents posing as members of the ambassador's staff or the odd wine merchant are all the Chambre has to boast of in the Wasteland. Even so, it should never be underestimated. The organisation has a couple of infamous assassins that it can call on. The first resort of this overstretched department is usually the last resort, and La Chambre Noire has a reputation throughout the Old World for dealing death. Not only that, it is known for carrying out its killing in the most sadistic and callous manner.

Be clear, the Chambre is not a gentleman's club for bumbling stereotypical fops, it is run with an iron discipline and many of its personnel are dedicated and fanatical. A number of the agents are indeed bumbling stereotypical fops, but the Maestre du Marienburg knows well that misinformation can be just as valuable as information.

The Maestre du Marienburg is Guijot, Duc de Flechette-Aix. He poses as a secretary to the Bretonnian Ambassador, but in some ways he wields more power than the ambassador himself, who does live up to many of the Bretonnian

stereotypes. Guijot's emphasis, at this time, within the Eternal Plan is to stir up as much trouble as possible between the Elves of Sith Rionnasc and the common Marienburger. The Maestre is confident that within five years there will be open warfare between the two races and 'blood in the canals'.

As well as gathering what information it can, the main concern of the Chambre at this time is to simply spread as much discontent among the lower classes as possible. They have seen at first hand, on the streets of Gisoreux and Bordeleaux, the power of the mob. Though typical Marienburgers have no inclination at all to riot or overthrow their rulers, they certainly are more susceptible to the suggestions that the Elven presence in the city is most sinister and they can't trust the Reiklanders.

### Couronne and l'Anguille

Besides the Bretonnians of La Chambre Noire, there are a number working to different agendas. The rivalry between the dukes of Couronne and l'Anguille becomes ever more shrill as the two Bretonnian powers vie to be the first to liberate Marienburgers from themselves. Couronnais March Knights lead a reclamation of the Bitter Moors that creeps ever closer to Wasteland, each yard paid for with the blood of armies of slave-peasants. Meanwhile, l'Anguilloise privateers are given secret permission to harass Marienburger shipping. Both sides seem so caught up in a rivalry played out more across the chess boards of Oisillon than the streets of Marienburg, that their efforts have next to no effect on the stability of the city-state. Despite this, agents of Couronne and l'Anguille are murderous adversaries when they do meet.

### Die Graukappen

The Graukappen is the imperial agency directly responsible for the security of the Emperor and by extension his empire.



The organisation is mostly concerned with the gathering of evidence of political seditions and treasons and the putting down, through assassination or other clandestine force, of same. It reports directly to the privy office of the Emperor himself. A branch of the Graukappen



has been commissioned by the Emperor to do all it can to learn as

much of the revolutionary and illegitimate tyranny of the Directorate of Marienburg and undermine the stability of that city state so that it might rightfully return to the imperial fold.

Captain of the Marienburg office (considered its most important foreign station) of the Graukappen is the fanatical Haan van den Erlachveld. His family lost its estates and almost all its wealth in the secession. Haan has made it his

***What's worth more than a silver hand? Why, only a silver fist.***

life's ambition, as did his father before him, to do everything he can to return Marienburg to the Empire. Although under instruction from Altdorf to play his role as delicately as possible, and to avoid any unnecessary ill-will from the directorate, Haan is chomping at the bit to deal some real damage against the treacherous Marienburgers. Luckily, the long term strategy of the Graukappen has been painstakingly explained to Haan and he has declared that he is prepared to play the long game. Of course, if he does ever get an easy opportunity to deliver the Directorate a short sharp shock then he would be sorely tempted.

The Graukappen in Marienburg is mainly concerned with countering any move that La Chambre Noire makes. They watch their every movement and even the most insignificant act is scrutinised to glean some sort of implication for Bretonnia-Wasteland relations. It is not uncommon for a Graukappen agent, ordered to follow a suspected Bretonnian agent at a safe distance, to be fished out the canal a couple of days later. In the same way, the Graukappen are often given discretion as to how they throw off an annoying tail.

The Sea Elves seem to be a problem for the Graukappen. The imperials are anxious to begin some sort of dialogue, at a government level, with the aliens. While one Elf or other is happy to talk with any Graukappen, or other imperial delegation, that will buy them lunch, they show no inclination at all to bring the Elf government, or anyone of even the smallest inter-clan authority, to the table.

### The Loyal Company

An informal and very secret faction known among themselves as 'The Loyal Company' has formed over the years within the Graukappen. These loyalists, as well as being dedicated to the well being of their emperor, are more loyal to a higher authority. They are all devout Sigmarites and believe that the Graukappen should above all propogate the glory of that god.

Though a good proportion of the Graukappen have Sigmarite leanings, the Loyal Company take exception to anyone within the ranks who dares to put another deity above, or even level with Sigmar. Although field work for the Graukappen is clearly a precarious occupation, mortality among those not showing especial devotion towards Sigmar is disproportional. If someone were to ever make a study of this, they would notice that Graukappen agents of the Ulrican tradition are especially 'accident prone'.

A number of senior members of the Loyal Company consult with an officer of the Sigmarite church on a regular basis. It is a point for debate whether that officer, in turn, takes his orders directly from the Grand Theogonist. It should also be noted that the ranks of the Graukappen, and especially the Loyal Company, were swelled in the years after 2498 I.C. in



the aftermath of the exposure of the Magnaeran Heresy (WS15 p.14).

### The Schwarzmantel

Another imperial organisation operating in Marienburg is the Schwarzmantel (*Warpstone* 7). This highly secretive group was originally formed to protect the interests of Middenheim and the house of Todbringer. Under pressure from Altdorf it was supposedly disbanded years ago.

Evidence that it is still operating surfaces occasionally, especially its traditional calling card of a black cloth stuffed into the mouth of its victims. The Schwarzmantel seems to be concerned with the thwarting of Chaotic plots and cults as much as political manoeuvring and its intelligence in this field seems to be unrivalled. Even so, it would be interesting to discover how many Graukappen of the Loyal Company, who have met their deaths recently were actually known to the Schwarzmantel.

### Manniocs-Quinsh

The Moon Guardians, *Tarn Manniocs*, oversee the more clandestine elements of the security of the Elven quarter of Marienburg. They are mostly concerned with intelligence gathering and, aware of their precarious position in the minds of the common Marienburger, generally seek to avoid exposure.

When forced to act, or when following the rumoured, secret mission that brought the Elves back to the Old World, they can call upon a small number of highly skilled field agents known as *Shadows*. While the Shadows are prodigious warriors, subtlety and finesse will always be favoured methods among the Elves of Marienburg. The Manniocs-Quinsh are dealt with in detail in *Warpstone* 20.

### The Okstal

The large Dwarf community of Marienburg has long since learned to look after itself. House Fooger is the standard bearer for advancing Dwarfen interests through official channels. It also sponsors a loose organisation of business-Dwarfs prepared to stoop to illicit means in order to ensure Dwarfs do not generally suffer from the sharp practices of their Human neighbours. As far as dealing with Humans goes, the Okstal do not do much more than put the frighteners on some trader who thinks he need not honour contracts made with Dwarfs, or torching the odd warehouse in the interests of fair competition.

What has alarmed the Dwarf community, and the Okstal in particular, is the favoured, autonomous status afforded to the

*There is but one nation that lives truly by the gods.  
There is but one company that serves truly this nation.  
There is but one purpose that guides truly this company.  
There is but one god that enjoins truly this purpose.  
This I swear under Sigmar.*

*Loyal Company Oath*

Elves. The Okstal, often through Human intermediaries, do their best to keep track of the activities of every important Elf in Elftown. They also do their best to stir up ill will and misunderstanding between the skinnier races whenever possible.

As it happens, only a handful of the Okstal are competent and active at motivating a clandestine army to protect Dwarfen interests. For the most part, this semi-secret organisation is just a drinking club for reactionary Dwarfs to whinge about how it was all so much better when they were knublstubi.

### Recruitment

It might be difficult to imagine a bunch of scruffy, barely competent adventure types coming to the attention of any of the spy rings in Marienburg, but these organisations often need ignorant manpower to perform minor tasks. For Marienburger PCs, if a party has shown itself to be prepared to work beyond the letter of the law and come into contact with foreigners, then they would be likely targets for a foreign organisation. At first it would seem like they were just running errands for a private business and only gradually might it dawn on PCs that they were actually working against the interests and security of their homeland.

Marienburg is full of foreigners and it is not uncommon for non-wastelander PCs to make the city their home. If they show any sort of loyalty to their native community then it would only be a matter of time before they are requested to take on jobs for the good of their country. Peer pressure or patriotism alone might be a good enough reason for the PCs to carry out such tasks without question; a small payment could only be a bonus. If the PCs show their competence and loyalty then they might soon be asked to perform more blatant acts against their adopted home.

Marienberger Inlichtingendienst is always looking out for recruits. The way that organisation works, with agents allowed to work under their own initiative and to recruit whom they choose, means that many Marienburgers are technically members of the organisation, even though they never actually do anything in its service. The kind of service the PCs would be required to do for Marienberger

***When I was a lad we had to defend the Dwarfhold against hordes of greenskins armed with just a small axe, and then march to the other end of the hold, up hill both ways, to put down a ratmen incursion while making solemn sacrifices to the ancestor gods. And you try telling young Dwarfs that today, and they won't believe you.***

***Harok Kadrison - Throngrind of the Okstal***

Inlichtingendienst would depend very heavily on the agent that recruits them.

In addition to matters of espionage, the organisations and individuals described here can easily be used as an excellent way of bringing many other types of plot hooks to the PCs. Just because the PCs know a member of the *Chambre Noire*, for example, does not mean that everything he needs doing is directly involved with Charles' plans to unsettle Marienburger society. And very often, the plans of the master spy are so unfathomable to the average citizen, that he may look to the PCs just like any other patron down the pub trying to push a dungeon crawl the PCs' way.

Payment by MI can be generous if the PCs perform well, on the other hand, the famous Marienburg meritocracy would suggest that very often, the PCs will earn nothing at all for their troubles. Beware, for the universal punishment throughout the Old World for treason or acts of espionage is a slow and painful death.

### Double Agents

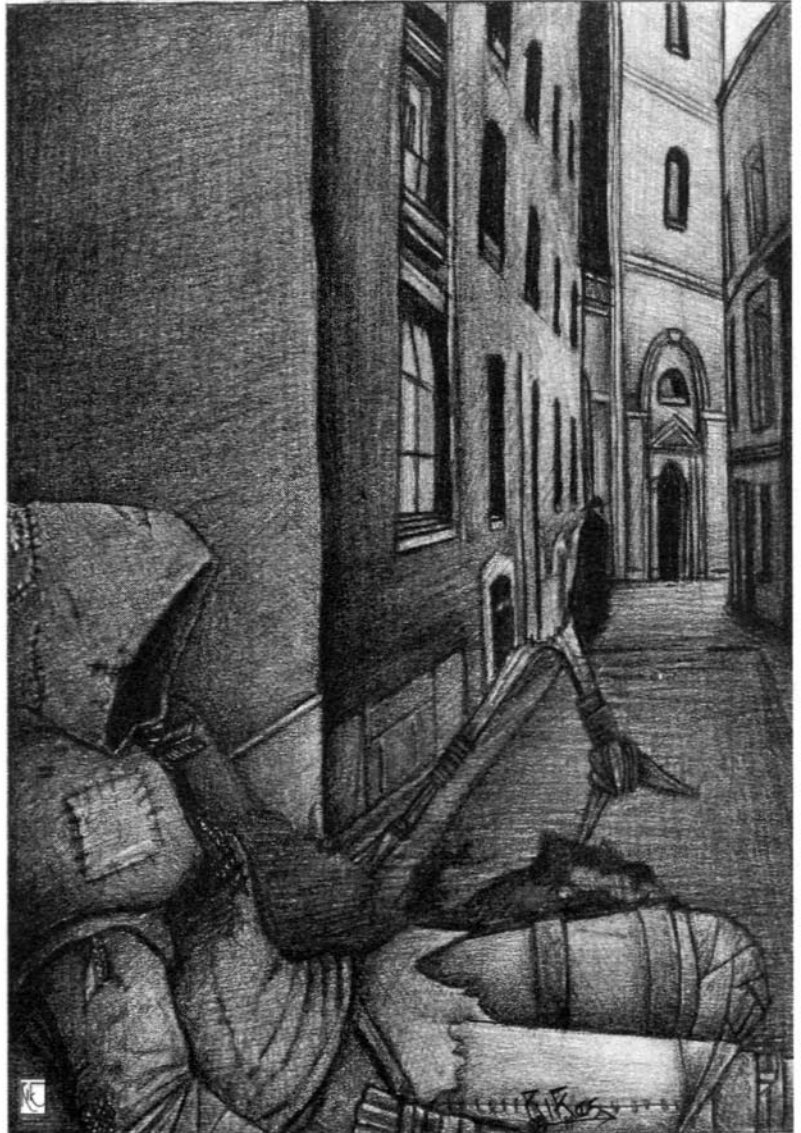
It is not unusual for known, low ranking members of one service to be approached by members of a rival group. This is to be expected, and if the agent concerned promptly reports the approach to his seniors then there can be little reproach for this. Often, though, the greater rewards used to entice enemy agents can be tempting, especially those bribes offered by Marienberger *Inlichtingendienst*, as Marienburgers are generally the masters of the well placed bribe.

A popular technique for using double agents is to leave them 'sleeping' in an organisation for a number of years until they have grown in rank and influence. At this point they are reminded of their obligation to their new organisation and can do a lot of damage to their old one. Another method used, if the agents look as if they will never amount to much, is to use them up as quickly as possible, not caring about their chances of survival. The time constraints of the average WFRP campaign would suggest that the latter method be used for PCs.

Many agents' time is taken up almost exclusively with

***Known as the Iron Graf, von Bitternach is the Emperor's chief diplomat and a member of the Council of State. According to rumours he has a whole net of spies across the Empire going by the name the Schattenaugen whose chief task is to gather "sensitive" information. It is said that the real business of the Empire is conducted in his offices in the Imperial Palace. Many emissaries from the other Imperial provinces and foreign lands spend a good portion of their day at the von Bitternach offices, the centre of Imperial diplomatic corps, pressing their respective masters' issues and concerns.***

***Fragments of a missive discovered on the corpse of a suspected Graukappen agent***



digging the dirt on their opposite numbers, searching for weaknesses and looking for leverage with which they might be turned.

### SHARK

The new semaphore machines, signal towers springing up over the countryside, look set to revolutionise the spread of information in the Old World. Although originally the use of the semaphore machines was intended primarily for the military, they have become useful for many other government departments and independent organisations. Though the network of towers is far from complete, the existing infrastructure is still more than useful for many organisations,

especially those centred on Altdorf.

The obvious natures of the towers have caused a problem with the security of imperial 'flaggenalphabet' signals. The flaggenalphabet itself is very simple and a skilled cryptographer might only take a few hours to decipher it. In any case, he would have all the time he needed in which to try, as the signals that go out from Altdorf can be viewed from virtually anywhere.

Even for bureaucratic drivel and mundane memoranda this was not satisfactory. The Imperial Signal Corps developed a relatively efficient method to encrypt these signals. The encryption procedure used is based on simple substitution techniques. Originally, the offset was broadcast as the first three signals. For example if a message begins 005 then 'a' in the signal represents an 'f' in the final message, 'b' a 'g' etc. This is not very secure at all and it soon became common knowledge throughout the Reikland that this was the type of encryption used. Even young schoolboys, the offspring of the wealthy who lived near Altdorf, would spend an afternoon on a hillside overlooking a signal tower, noting the signals and attempting to decipher it. So what if the cracked message turned out to be a requisition order for ten balls of medium grade twine or instructions to halve carrot rations, it was all about the thrill of the chase.

There was even a story doing the rounds of a village simpleton who could not read or write and could barely put a coherent sentence together, who was able to read and translate the flaggenalphabet fluently, in real time. As the code is based on alphanumeric symbols this would certainly be strange, if true.

Then an extra element was added to the code. A keyword was extracted from the alphabet and used to offset the substitution further. Cleverly the signallers did not broadcast the keyword. Three three digit numbers were now broadcast instead of the offset number. These represented a chapter, verse and word number from the Geistbuch (WS15, p.19). So now, in order to decrypt the message quickly one would need to know that this was the technique and have a copy of the Geistbuch. The Geistbuch was chosen because a copy is readily available in many imperial institutions. Bear in mind that only those creating the message and those receiving it need know this technique. Those of lower ranks and the Dwarf engineers working in the signal towers etc simply copy a nonsensical message and pass it on again; they have no need nor means to decode the message.

This system seemed to prove satisfactory and it was considered that without the knowledge that the keyword was to be found in, for example, the Geistbuch, then the code was unbreakable. Only some of the military and most of the more mundane bureaucratic departments used the Geistbuch, other departments and religious organisations used their own, sometimes very obscure, volumes.

The Graukappen however decided that this system is altogether

too unsafe for the vital and secretive purposes they use the semaphore machines for. Therefore, they commissioned a highly talented and precocious member of the Dwarf Engineers' Guild of Nuln to construct a mechanical system that would make their coded signals absolutely unbreakable. The Dwarf in question, Elmador Nigma, created a wonderful and strange machine that fulfilled the Graukappen's hopes. Unfortunately he disappeared shortly after handing his plans over and was never seen again. The Graukappen do not seem to be making any effort to find him.

Elmador's machine soon gained the nickname 'shark' from the people who used it, for its business end's similar appearance to that animal's jaws. The machine looks like a black semicircular drum. The teeth of the shark are small keys with all the digits and letters of the alphabet on. On the underside of the drum are a corresponding set of digits and letters. There is a complicated arrangement of cogs, levers and gears within the drum which means that each time a key is pressed, a different key from the second set will move. Which key that might be always changes however, and there seems to be no rhyme nor reason as to which key will cause which other key to move. If two machines are reset they will always show the same encoded message for any given script. The top keys are pressed, making the bottom keys move, for encoding. For decoding, the bottom keys are pressed, and these make the top keys move. Without another of the shark machines to decode a message, it seems that any message encoded using this system is indeed indecipherable.

The Graukappen used E. Nigma's plans to create a number of the shark machines which they kept in high security code rooms at their most important bases and gave out to only their most trusted field agents. Shark and the semaphore machines mean that information can be carried to Graukappen agents across the Reikland and beyond, quickly and safely.

### **Shark Hooks**

Though Marienburg is far from the area covered by the signal stations, the murder of an Imperial spy and the disappearance of his Shark device could easily lead to adventure in the Wasteland. The Shark can also take the role of any prized item or 'magic football' device in other adventures. The fact that it is not of magical construction or function should not necessarily limit the plot potential of the item.

If the PCs are working for the Graukappen then they are more likely to be trying to locate the machine and bring it back home. Fog Walker agents would be interested in the intelligence a stolen Shark could bring them, or they may be just as keen to sell it back to the imperials at a huge price. La Chambre Noire would have the most to gain by getting their hands on the machine. As the semaphore machines reach into the foothills of the Grey Mountains,

any invasion or defensive action against Bretonnia could be completely destroyed if the Bretonnians could read all The Empire's most secret despatches.

### Going for a Song

The Shark device has fallen into the hands of an opportunist crime boss. He has organised a clandestine auction of the machine in some deserted part of Marienburg in the dead of night. Representatives of all the major spy rings in the city have been invited. The PCs have been selected by their bosses to attend the auction. One of them should be their agency's bidding representative at the auction, the others will act as bodyguard.

The bidder could have any of a variety of instructions. He could be ordered to ensure that he wins the auction at any cost; this will be more difficult if he is actually limited as to his highest bid. The party could be there to keep an eye on whoever wins the auction and to follow them afterwards with a view to taking the shark device by force. They may have to surreptitiously plant an Attractive Ball (c.f. Attractive Balls pg. 49) inside the machine.

The party may simply be there as a battering ram to wade in, kill everyone, and take the shark device for their agency. No subtlety required.

### Wheels within Wheels

The PCs may have nothing or little to do with the intelligence community, but they may come across a single strange-looking cog with a single letter etched onto it. There is no way they can know at this stage, but this is the vital missing piece of a Shark machine that has fallen into the wrong hands. The machine is useless without this cog and the baddies have an idea that it might be the PCs that have come across this missing link.

In addition, the goodies (i.e. that intelligence agency that would be most sympathetic to the PCs) have also got word of things and are on the PCs' trail, also. There is no reason why the goodies should behave any more reasonably towards the PCs than the baddies.

### Message in a Battle

The PCs are handed an encrypted message by a fellow they trust, who promptly dies. His dying words may or may not have been 'Shark', depending on how much the PCs already know, and how difficult the solution will be to find. The message just looks like a jumble of random letters.

It is up to the PCs to work out the method by which the message has been encoded and then they will have to get their hands on a Shark machine for a few minutes. Once decrypted, the message will contain some very incriminating



evidence about one of their bosses. If the PCs decide not to go to the effort of decrypting the message themselves, and simply hand it over to their superiors, then this could have dangerous consequences for them.

Alternatively, the message could be encrypted using any of the systems mentioned above.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

### Funeral in Berghres

This adventure hook is based on the Len Deighton's Harry Palmer film, *Funeral in Berlin*, starring Michael Caine.

The party are sent to accompany a hearse and special agent Guus Flooverhaank to Fort Berghres on the Bretonnian border. They should all be disguised as members of a typical Mórrite retinue. Guus will be dressed as the priest. The PCs can be initiates, raven Templars, drivers and lay mourners as they see fit.

There should be much fun to be had posing as Mórrites on the journey. Arriving at one inn, the party will discover that the landlord is recently (about an hour ago) deceased. His

### **Damoiselle Solo**

Solo is a wise woman with a talent for divining the future through reading her playing cards. She is also very beautiful. As luck would have it, the first male PC's fortune she reads will show that she will jump into bed with him, imminently. Of course, like any conscientious medium, she will do her utmost to ensure that her prediction will come true.

wife was just about to send word to the local mourners to take undertake the 'lichwatch', the morrite ritual that protects a corpse and soul from necromantic interference. Now the party has arrived she will be happy for them to perform the solemn task. The PCs should really be aware that by pretending to make the lichwatch they are messing with powers far deeper than they can understand.

The situation in Fort Berghres is that Anton Destaigne, an important member of La Chambre Noire has made it known that he wishes to defect to Marienburg. This could be an important coup for MI and Destaigne's old adversary, Flooverhaank, has been sent to oversee the defection. Destaigne asked for Flooverhaank by name to oversee events as they have locked horns a number of times in the past. The Bretonnian authorities would be loathe to let Destaigne leave, so the plan is to smuggle him out in the coffin, paying a hefty bribe, if necessary, to ensure the coffin is not opened by the customs officers.

When the PCs arrive in town they are given a message that Destaigne will meet them that night in some out of the way cellar. The only condition he gives is that he meet Flooverhaank alone first in order to discuss terms. It is up to the PCs what they wish to do. Flooverhaank is too keen to see Destaigne come over and orders the PCs to do things exactly how Destaigne says.

If the PCs do play it by the book they will get to the meeting place and there will be a coffin waiting for them. It will be nailed shut. Whether they take the trouble to look now, or wait, when they do open the coffin the body within will be that of Flooverhaank and he really will be dead.

The whole plan is a set-up for Destaigne to get revenge on some slight Flooverhaank did him in the past. Destaigne has a good number of Chambre agents in Fort Berghres and unless the PCs intervene they will simply kill Flooverhaank and dump him in the coffin. If the PCs do intervene they will have a battle with the Chambre agents and also an opportunity to

perhaps capture or kill Destaigne and save the life of their own witless commander.

Remember that Fort Berghres is a shining example of international understanding and cooperation. Neither side will be keen for things to kick off into open warfare on the streets. Everything must be done quietly and surreptitiously. The Bretonnians will do their best to adhere to this, too.

### **The Boys from Lustria**

A dozen or so years ago, the crypt of the Chapel of Magnus in the Cathedral of Nuln was broken into. The remains of the great and pious emperor were disturbed slightly. The event was hushed up quite effectively though one or two rumours did the rounds at that time. The most sensitive Mórrite priests were consulted but they could find no sign that dark magic had been involved. The whole episode is pretty much forgotten today.

At an ambassador's party a high ranking Sigmarite priest gets drunk and begins to rant. What he says could easily be passed off as drunken nonsense, but if you listen closely his slurred diatribe makes some sort of sense. He is prophesying the return of Magnus when Sigmar will be worshipped as the only true god. It's all very bizarre stuff. 'The true heirs of Magnus were carried on *Sigmar's Rainbow*, he says.

Sigmar's Rainbow is a caravel that knows well the trade winds to Lustria. Its captain, a grizzled old dog has recently come into money and is considering retiring. He doesn't want to talk much about his last voyage; strange things happened in the jungles, many of which did not seem right. He will point insistent inquisitors in the direction of Jozef Mangle, an Imperial of Kruiersmuur.

Jozef Mangle is now old and doddery. He cannot return to his beloved Empire so lives in Marienburg where 'At least the racial stock is half as noble'. He sits in his tenement in Kruiersmuur waiting for death, dreaming of past glories and the future glories he knows will return, thanks to his labours. On his desk is a neat stack of the correspondence with the six families to whom he has entrusted his life's work. He knows he will not now live to see his crowning glory, as the six prodigies conquer the known world in the name of Sigmar, but he takes an interest in their formative years.

Mangle was behind the incident in the Chapel of Magnus. A famous Witch Hunter in his day, Mangle was fanatical and evangelical, sowing many of the seeds that would bloom into the Magnaeran Heresy. This was the reason he had to

***We must seek to undermine them at every opportunity. Our ancient enmity is continued on the streets and canals every day. We cannot trust them, and they cannot trust us. We are a different people. It is a matter of race and a matter of breeding; we will never be reconciled. Marienburgers? No, I have no quarrel with Marienburgers; I was talking about the l'Anguilloise.***

***Jean-Pierre de la Salignac, Couronnais wine merchant of Goudberg***

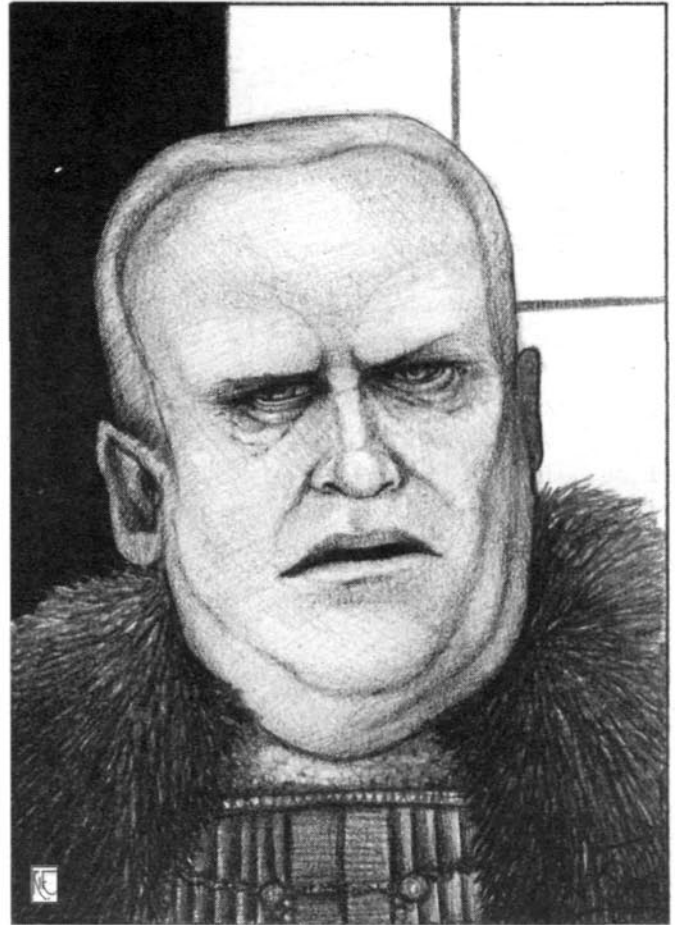
flee the Empire. He became obsessed with stories he had heard of the regeneration and re-carnation performed by strange lizard-like beings in the jungles of Lustria. Mangle was sponsored by six of the richest, devoted Sigmarite families in The Empire. With a small piece of Magnus' bone and much gold and gems, Mangle travelled to Lustria on *Sigmar's Rainbow*.

Whatever happened there, Mangle returned with six young boys, all almost identical, all with the same colouring and features of the portraits of Magnus the Pious. The boys went to the households of the six noble sponsors, to be adopted as heirs. The Loyal Company keeps a watch on the six families and will be ruthless with anyone sniffing around.

### Goudvinger

Auric Goudvinger is a wealthy merchant from an old Marienburg family. He is also as mad as a goose. He has created for himself a kind of private army and his organisation, at first glance, resembles an organised crime ring. But Goudvinger has a plan so wild and crazy that only the Lord of Change itself could have inspired it.

Goudvinger has been stockpiling warpstone for a number of years. He keeps it deep in the bowels of the city in custom-built cellars, in lead lined caskets. Goudvinger's army are currently burrowing their way into the cellars of the 'Change. When the tunnel is complete, they will poison the 'Change guards using strange devices gained from friendly Skaven.



They will then bring warpstone and black powder into the cellars that house the 'Change gold reserves.

This is the single greatest treasure in the entire Old World and Goudvinger plans to corrupt it. When the black powder is detonated, the entire gold reserves of the nation will be contaminated with the corrupting influence of warpstone, bringing unimaginable mayhem to the Wasteland and many lands beyond. What Goudvinger has to gain from the plan can only be speculated.

The Skaven have been keeping an eye on and aiding Goudvinger's operation, and so far they like what they see. They feel they can exploit the situation to their own gain whether his plan succeeds or not.

### The Spics who Loved me

Through no fault or intention of a PC field agent, he has come across some vital information. Even if he thinks long and hard he won't be able to recall exactly what it is. However, a rival organisation, more likely the Fog Walkers if the PC belongs to a different agency, has decided it must get its hands on the

### Sakato

Currently employed by Auric Goudvinger, Sakato was born in Nippon. His work as a bodyguard brought him to Marienburg and he makes a good living here. As well as his exotic appearance, his large size contributes to an imposing presence. Few would dare to see if he is as dangerous as he looks. Sakato poses as Goudvinger's valet but is really his assassin.

Sakato has a unique and spectacular skill: *Specialist Weapon: Hat*. His hat, perfectly round in the tradition of his native culture, is reinforced with a sturdy metal blade. Sakato can throw this hat as a very effective missile weapon as described below. If the hat misses its target, Sakato is permitted another roll. If he hits with the second (and there is sufficient space), this means the hat has flown full circle and returned to Sakato's hand, similar to a boomerang.

Sakato's Hat: Damage - 4; Range - 12/30; Qualities - Precise, Special (see above)

***You know why we are here. Our mission encompasses issues and motives beyond the mon-keigh comprehension. The survival of the entire Elven race may be at stake, even the entire world. The Humans can help us, even if only unwittingly, and we are their guests so tread lightly, and do not let their petty inferiority complexes get in the way of our mission.***

***An Elf - overheard, according to some bloke down the pub.***

PC and he must be well disposed towards them when they do.

The Fog Walkers (presumably) have studied the PC and tried to work out exactly what sort of collaboration ‘floats his boat’, as they say in the Reik basin. The first attempt to tweak the PC’s peccadilloes will be fairly standard but nevertheless enticing. During the encounter the agent will come out with some kind of cryptic question, such as ‘How long does the red star shine in the east?’, fully expecting the PC to know the answer. The cryptic nature of the question and the replies will mean that the PC could not guess at an acceptable answer. This will prove to be as frustrating for the PC as for the interrogator.

The second instance will show that MI have gone to even greater lengths to show their appreciation for the PC. During this encounter, again the cryptic question will be asked. The PC will only be able to disappoint, of course, and will be disappointed in return. Spaced out over a few months encounters of this nature could be used to flesh out some down time.

Eventually, because this is WFRP, an executive decision will be taken by MI to no longer continue wasting resources on the PC. One last seductive delegate will be sent to the PC, but this time it will be an assassin, and under the covers will be concealed an envenomed dagger.

### **Grudge Squad**

Ever since the Elves returned to Marienburg, they have had generally poor relations with House Fooger. It is no coincidence that this is the Dwarfen house. Although House Fooger can see the advantage of the ‘special relationship’ that the Wasteland seems to have with Ulthuan, they would rather the Elves had never returned.

There has been a history of friction between the two camps and until recently they avoided each other’s business dealings when possible. Even the Elf Riots of 2391 I.C. has, in some quarters, been put down to a Dwarfen plot, a claim that is clearly ridiculous. Often, regarding the actions of the directorate, House Fooger would have opposed any plan that they saw as originating in Sith Rionnasc.

Although warned against opening his arms to the ‘mast huggers’, Arkat Fooger made a special effort to interact with the Sea Elves, even giving them favourable trading partner status as a way of redressing the balance of all those years of distrust. This was a decision he soon lived to regret. Forging links especially with Clan Ulliogtha, House Fooger’s

innovative insurance arrangements were heavily exposed to the fortunes of that Clan.

According to Clan Ulliogtha they have recently lost two fully laden clippers on the way to Marienburg. Arkat Fooger now realises that there is no way to verify this loss and suspects the untrustworthy Elves of double dealing. Besides, the settling of the claim would make a large dent in the house’s cash flow.

Arkat Fooger has decided to move those Fog Walkers with an allegiance to House Fooger to gather as much information on Clan Ulliogtha as possible. This must of course be done with the utmost subtlety and finesse. The Elves are nothing if not sensitive to Humans sniffing about Sith Rionnasc and can put two and two together as well as any Dwarf. The PCs involved in this recce should be extra careful as it is little known that Clan Lianllach has infiltrated MI. Of course they have little love for Clan Ulliogtha, but they will have even less for the PCs.

The PCs, if they do enough digging, could come across Tecladdieth who will claim to be of Clan Ulliogtha. The Sea Elf will tell them that he was a member of the crew of the *Limadioc*, one of the clippers in question. He will tell them that they reached Lothern safely, the cargo unloaded and the ship refitted and given a new name. What the PCs do not know at this stage is that Tecladdieth is a member of Clan Lianllach under orders to stir things up and delay further any settlement House Fooger might make.

Perhaps, the PCs’ handler (possibly Georg Smeele) will be wily enough to know that not everything is as it seems. If so, he will insist that the PCs carry out some sort of surveillance on Tecladdieth before he takes their news at face value.

## **NPCs**

### **Georg Smeele**

Georg Smeele is a white haired old gent. He has good manners and will treat anyone with respect, at least until they prove they do not merit it. Smeele is loyal to Paal Arhuis, who heads the Fog Walkers; they used to be field agents together back in the old days. Smeele shows that he prides himself on the fair treatment and survival rates of those agents he recruits and controls. That is not to say it is not dangerous working for him.

Unlike many Fog Walker agents, Smeele does not care too

***Bund: I think you made your point. Thank you for the demonstration.***

***Geldig: Choose your next witticism carefully Herr Bund; it may be your last.***

***Bund: Do you expect me to talk, Geldig?***

***Geldig: No, Herr Bund. I expect you to die!***

***From a popular play by Jan Flemisch***

**Hugo Drakwald**

Hugo Drakwald is an expert glass-artist and sells the finest and most expensive glass wares from his shop in Goudberg. His skill and fame has made his products most desirable and he has grown very rich. He holds some of the wealthiest Marienburgers as patrons of his art and personal friends.

Lately he has become fascinated with space and, especially, Morrslieb. His artwork has changed recently to reflect that and countless glass Morrsliebs hang from the ceiling of his shop's display room. Hugo dreams of travelling to Morrslieb in a glass ship. Many prototype designs, in glass, for this 'space'-ship are displayed in the shop, also, and fetch high prices. There is also a strange (and said to pre date the Elves) glass screen-thing with strange markings on it, on display in the shop. It is priceless and it is rumoured that House van den Kuypers has offered one million Guilders for it.

Of course, Drakwald is quite mad and his plans will never reach fruition. No matter, the PCs will have cause to search his workshop for incriminating evidence at some point. The shop will be guarded by a number of Nipponese warriors armed with katana.

The implications for the various espionage organisations are incidental to this encounter, as the whole point is to have a big fight in a glass house and see how many thousands of Guilders worth of glassware the party can destroy. Make sure the PCs have been briefed before hand to do no damage at all to Drakwald's property.

much about physical trappings and doesn't fiddle his expenses, a practice which is virtually universal. Anyone working for Smeele should really have the clear impression that they are working for the good guys and that those who oppose them must, therefore, be the bad guys.

Smeele likes to reminisce about the old days. He can tell about when he was hiding in the kings' quarters at Oisillon for two whole weeks, eventually escaping dressed as an Arabyan dancer, and the time his group was shipwrecked and washed up in Norsca. He also genuinely believes in the Seaweed Man (a wives' tale of Marienburg that everyone has heard but nobody takes seriously), and insists he has actually seen it, if only from a distance.

Any agent running for Smeele should really grow to like him. The more cynical might consider that this is a ploy to

***You and your Marienburger capitalist imperialists have been milking Kislev dry for centuries. We are a living wall against the encroachment of unspeakable marauders and the darkest gods, sacrificing ourselves for you. But what do we get in return? We get exploited and impoverished by the fat and greedy wastrels of a distant and aloof power. I hope Marienburg and the entire Wasteland sinks beneath the Sea of Claws and you all die horrible, lingering deaths.***

***Mikhael Lugorobovski - disgruntled immigrant and Fog Walker double agent***

inspire loyalty. Certainly at the death of an agent, Smeele will seem genuinely upset and will wish to lead the mourning.

It is up to the GM, but it is possible that Smeele takes orders from either the Chambre Noire or the Graukappen, or even both. His payment is the satisfaction of his unspeakable vice (which will be at the GMs discretion, also). This moral and fairminded gent has in fact been undermining the security of his organisation and his nation for several years. He has sent many agents to death or torture. Because of his service record and demeanour, he is almost above suspicion. Certainly the PCs will have a hard time believing this, and may fight to the end trying to protect their mentor's reputation.

**Uwe 'Kaasic' Kolfurt**

Uwe poses as a cheese importer. He has hired a small section of a warehouse in Kruiersmuur and occasionally moves the cheese rounds about a bit to make it look like he is earning a living that way. His head for business is not good and he barely breaks even on the cheese that he does trade. It is mostly common Grevenfeld and some of it is getting a little too sweaty for the comfort of those merchants with whom he shares the warehouse. He has well earned the nickname 'Kaasic' from them.

Uwe trained as a priest at the Temple of Sigmar in Altdorf. It was here, after an exemplary apprenticeship that he was recruited into the Graukappen by a senior priest who could see that Uwe had the right attitude to help spread the will of Sigmar further throughout the Old World. After only six months in the organisation Uwe was invited to a private meeting of like-minded agents of the Graukappen. Everyone else at that meeting were members of The Loyal Company and though the possibility of Uwe joining them was put to him subtly he was enthused by the idea.

For Uwe the worship of Sigmar and being a citizen of the Empire have always been inextricable. But the doctrines of many of his fellows of The Loyal Company seemed to hold that the worship of the other gods was somehow unpatriotic and dangerous to the future of the Empire.

Uwe was part of a group that intercepted a young Ulrican Graukappen messenger on his way from Middenheim. After an hour or so of torture, The Loyal Company managed to force the boy to say a traditional anti-Ulrican, Sigamrite prayer through his pitiful sobs, before they finally killed him. The death was put down to beastmen, just another lad serving his country, meeting an unfortunate end in the perilous wilderness; it happens a lot.



Though Uwe voiced no dissent, it was clear that after this his enthusiasm for The Loyal Company had waned sharply. Concerned for his own life, Uwe was careful as to how much of his disgust for the group he showed, but quickly took the first foreign posting he could.

Uwe's job in Marienburg is to recruit expatriot imperial citizens into the service of the Empire, once more. Although he has a small income from Altdorf, most of the recruits are expected to serve for free. They need not do anything dangerous, simply keep their eyes and ears open and report anything of interest. Uwe is also looking to recruit some trouble shooters from the imperial community. For a small sum, they will be expected to run errands, smuggle, burgle, throw their weight around and maybe get killed, all those jobs that PCs do for free anyway.

### **Peyrot, Marquis de Villiers Fontainebleu**

Not the archetypal Bretonnian fop with a huge coif and brightly painted face, Peyrot has the wit to make allowances for his Wastelander hosts. He often only wears his smallest wigs and is conservative with the make-up. He still wears the gaudiest finery. Afterall, just because you are a spy in an enemy land does not mean you have to dress down, you know?

Though approaching forty, Peyrot keeps his good looks and youthful spark through a strict regime of over indulgence and dilligent partying. Despite the hedonism and air of incompetence, it is hard to dislike him.

Peyrot is the latest in a line of not insignificant nobles with large estates in central Bayonne. While his younger brother stayed at home to manage his lands, Peyrot went to Oisillon as his father had done, to look for more riches and a slice of the action. He schemed and colluded with the best of them there, and after a while was recruited to the Chambre Noire.

As a matter of deliberate policy, not all the members of the Chambre Noire are competent; it serves their purposes that their outer layers, so to speak, like the skin of a snake, can be sloughed when necessary.

After upsetting the wrong people at Oisillon with his brashness, it was decided that he should be sent to a far away and insignificant place. Fortunately for Peyrot, because of his wealth and standing, he managed to get appointed to a role in Marienburg, instead.

Peyrot's mission seems to be unclear. He has been sent to keep an eye on Marienburgers and foreigners alike among

Marienburg's higher and more decadent echelons. This involves much partying and networking with the more wastrel offspring of the Marienburg super-rich.

Peyrot is fully equipped to be dallying with Marienburg's rich and famous. He already has a clerk who sees to all his paperwork and picks up any paper trails that the Marquis needs to follow. The Marquis also has a bodyguard of a couple of squires, just in case. He has taken rooms at the top of a tall, turreted tenement in Paliesbuurt. This penthouse apartment gives spectacular views of the Hoogbrug and has a certain air of the chateau about it.

Peyrot has decided that he needs to employ a gang of low lifes to do some dirty work occasionally. He will probably prefer to employ locals, or at least not a load of Bretonnians, so as not to attract too much attention. He will need a gang with a mixture of skills and low morals. He will also require them to be desperate or slightly stupid. Afterall, any Marienburger caught spying against their own great city state will be swiftly and rightly hanged as a traitor.

Peyrot reports regularly to a high ranking agent of La Chambre Noire. He tells them anything they might find useful in their eternal plan to retake Marienburg itself. He is also given instructions on what sort of alliances to forge and what sort of rumours to start. To the agent's surprise, Peyrot, despite appearances and expectations, is proving to be an able and useful spy.

Peyrot should keep his men relatively well paid as he has the resources. This will also give the PCs a good enough reason for sticking around. He should not pay them well enough that they feel they could do without his patronage for any length of time, however.



### **Fiorlinaen 'Linae' Laquerulhol**

Linae is a NaShathiri of Sith Rionnasc; she is an Elf of Elfsgemeente but belongs to no clan. She is not a member of the Manniocs-Quinsh but has used her sharp wits and unusual charm to gain influence among a number of the elf clans, and brokers information with any Elf that will pay. Many of the Elves she deals with are wary of her unpredictable (yes, even for an Elf) nature and her reckless dalliances with so many Humans. They sometimes refer to her as Ailphelidol after the beautiful butterfly that inhabits the highland forests of Ulthuan, and is deadly poisonous.

Linae is a wide-eyed, gamine and wonderfully beautiful Elf. It has been rumoured by more than one that she is a secret daughter of the Everqueen. She speaks with an eastern accent having been taught Human languages by a freed slave, originally from Erengard.

This flighty little thing has an insatiable lust for all things Human. She will plunge into any relationship seemingly on a whim giving herself totally to it, until after a few weeks or so she will grow bored and disappear. She will always be party to half a dozen relationships at any time. More than one spurned Human has pursued her angrily, only to find that all is indeed fair in love and war and Linae is a master of both.

Linae will insist her partner of the moment gives her whatever she can find for them to give. If he or she is important enough it will simply be conversation, for information can be the most valuable commodity. She may insist they carry out small missions for her, such as smuggling or acting as a simple messenger or even doing away with somebody that Linae has decided must be done away with.

Linae is too headstrong, too flighty, whimsical, capricious and fanciful for her Elven colleagues. For the Humans whom

### **Francisco Barboza**

#### **The Man with the Golden Arquebus**

Barboza has a reputation as the most efficient and ruthless assassin in Marienburg. He is renowned for his accuracy with an Arquebus and it is rumoured that he has had his customised weapon constructed of gold. He is said to charge one thousand Guilders 'per bullet'.

Brought up in the circus by his Strigany father and Estalian mother, Barboza soon revealed a talent for sharp shooting. Even as a boy he was described as the finest shot in the Empire. When the circus stopped in Marienburg, many years ago, Barboza witnessed a Black Cap abusing the circus elephant. Not standing such cruelty Barboza shot the watchman dead, and disappeared into the night.

With his prodigious shooting skills, Barboza soon gained a reputation as a quick and reliable killer. For a number of years he worked for La Chambre Noire, doing their seemingly chaotic and inconsistent bidding. It became clear, though, that with his reputation he could earn a lot more money as a freelancer. Nobody from La Chambre Noire dared to attempt to convince him not to leave their organisation.

Barboza is said to affect the airs of a noble, he talks with a forced Bretonnian accent and dresses in lacy finery. Another rumour that persists about him, is that he has a strange mutation which sounds like it could be a gift from the Keeper of Secrets. Certainly the tales that are told by those who perhaps should know, tell of a voracious and sadistic sexual appetite.

she takes to heart, she comes across as a blur of intoxicating and disorientating lust and longing. And she exploits this to the full.

## **OVER THE TOP**

While not fitting squarely within the WFRP world's look and feel, it might be considered entertaining to base a couple of sessions around the full bloodied Bondesque themes of high adventure, fast women, cool gadgets and actually winning at the gambling table. The elements outlined above can easily be used together with the following, which may not fit into a more run of the grindstone WFRP campaign.

### **GADGETS**

#### **Walther P. Piquet**

Named after its Bretonnian-Wastelander designer, the Walther P. Piquet handgun is a type of repeater pistol. Repeater handguns and pistols are currently being developed in Tilea and the Empire, and are proving to be effective weapons. This version has six barrels arranged in a circular pattern which rotate with every shot, allowing each barrel to be fired. It means that the user can fire one shot per round for six rounds without having to reload. Because of the complexity of the mechanism reloading does take around five minutes at best, even in the hands of an expert. Any misfire will mean that (at least) the mechanism has jammed and no other barrels will fire. The gun will need to be stripped and reloaded from scratch.

Range - 16/50; Damage - 4; Reload - 2 Full; Qualities - Experimental, Special (see above)

#### **Hochland Long Rifle Assembly**

This small walnut-veneer case measuring some 12 x 8 x 6 inches is made to look similar to the vanity cases currently fashionable among the well-to-do of Gisoreux and Altdorf. It houses the two dozen or so meticulously crafted parts that fit together to make up a Hochland Long Rifle (*WFRP* pg 108). It should take an experienced operative some two minutes to assemble or disassemble the rifle. Those with less experience would need five minutes, at least, and an *Int* test. Those inspecting the item for the first time might require an *Int* test just to realise that the pieces do in fact make up some sort of weapon.

There are a couple of half-round brackets on top the rifle which astute observers will notice could accommodate a Scope of Night Vision.

***We have people from every nation in the world. They come and go without our knowledge. Our tax collectors don't take half what they should. We don't even know how many people live in the city. Our records are years out of date. It truly is a dog's dinner.***

### Beetles

Beetles are magical devices used for eavesdropping. They come in two parts, the beetle itself, and the earpiece. They get their name from a common motif of some of the most finely crafted of these devices. The most popular design is that of the Groenwaterkever (green water beetle) that thrives in the local marshes. The most intricately crafted use the finest gold filigree with emeralds. The Beetle is usually a broach that is pinned to a garment. The companion piece will usually be an earring for convenience. Once the Beetle is activated, by a command word, the wearer of the earpiece will be able to hear everything that goes on as if he were standing where the wearer of the beetle broach is. The Beetle is deactivated by the same command word. The command words are often etched on the reverse of the jewellery in tiny letters. The Beetle will usually not work if it is too far from the earpiece (a few hundred feet, give or take) or if other concentrations of magical energy are nearby.

### Attractive Balls

These take the form of two large brass spheres about the size of a fist and weighing about six pounds. One of the spheres is attached to a thin gold wire. They are magical and their function is simple. If one were to hold the wire very still and let the suspended sphere settle, after a minute or so the sphere will come almost to rest. There will however be a small pendulum like movement. The swinging of the sphere will indicate the direction in which the second, target sphere is to be found. This device is very useful in tracking down someone or something previously loaded with the target sphere. Its range is only a few hundred yards, depending on the presence of magical sources nearby and the billowing of the various magical winds (especially Azyr and Chamon).

It should be noted that a pendulum action, being in two directions, will give two possible answers as to the location of the target sphere. Agents should use their skill and judgement when deciding which direction to follow.

### Fireball Quill

This looks very much like any normal goose feather that has been prepared as a writing implement, but the business end, while looking like it contains the remnants of ink,



is in fact filled with pitch mixed with brimstone. The quill is, however, magical. If the command word is invoked as the quill is thrown then a fireball (as the spell) will be cast, and the quill destroyed.

### Waterproof Grandfather Clock

Developed at great expense by the finest minds of R&D, is this wonderfully crafted grandfather clock. The clock keeps almost perfect time, the dials are polished gold and the wood is inlaid with rare and colourful marquetry. But, what is special about this clock is that it is completely waterproof. It could be submerged in the filth of Doodkanaal for a year and still work perfectly. Weighing a little over sixty pounds, Marienberger Inlichtingendienst have yet to find a use among its field operatives for this.

### Scope of Night Vision

This looks identical to the standard ship's telescope that no pilot or captain would be without. The casing is the traditional polished brass. What distinguishes the scope of night vision from a normal telescope is the amber hue of the lenses. The telescope is magical and the amber lenses have been so enchanted as to make views through the telescope at night visible almost as if it were day. The image is slightly cloudy and often slightly orange, but with practice, the user can see almost as if it were day. This is in addition to the normal telescopic properties of the equipment. During the day you just cannot see a thing through this telescope, however.

### Discreet Armoured Veston

The Discreet Armoured Veston appears to be a normal, if slightly stiff vest in attractive mauve brocade. However, it contains a fine mesh of the prized Dwarfen metal, Gromril. It acts exactly as chain mail covering only the body area. It is often worn by agents expecting trouble at events where wearing armour would be thought impolite.

### Manbane Capsules

These quail's egg sized sausage-like balls contain four doses of extremely concentrated extract of Manbane. In many branches of the Fog Walkers it is compulsory for field agents on active duty to carry one capsule with them at all times. If an agent gets caught by a more unscrupulous adversary then a single hard bite on the capsule could save a brave agent

from many days excruciating torture.

### **Sleeping Pipe**

This pipe looks like the typical Marienburger smoking implement. From the Lotus dens of the Suiddock to the smoking rooms of Handelaarmarkt hostleries to important Paleisbuurt parties, everyone seems to be smoking something or other in Marienburg. This pipe, however is not to be lit, but if aimed and then blown sharply into, the device casts a fine grey powder with soporific properties over the intended victim. Remember to blow, not suck.

On a normal hit using *BS* the victim must make a save against *T* or fall into a sudden, deep sleep. The victim cannot be woken for 6D6 minutes and will be groggy when he does finally stir.

### **Geiger Wand**

Developed by Ernest Geiger of Baron Hendryk's College, this eighteen inch long rod of strange, semi-magical material has a remarkable property. In the presence of magical energy it makes a distinctive clicking sound. The stronger the magical energies nearby, the greater is the intensity of the clicking. A skilled practitioner can use the wand to home in on magical energies (especially those concentrated in special items or naturally occurring pools) in a matter of seconds.

### **Special Watercoach**

The pride and joy of the Fog Walkers' R&D department is this specially customised watercoach. It offers the perfect cover for someone wishing to stake out a canal-side scene, looking exactly like a typical Marienburg watercoach. MI can even supply the stained oilskin overcoat, knitted woollen hat and clay pipe of the stereotypical watercoachman. The customary opinionated diatribe needs to be supplied by the field operative, however.

The watercoach is a marvel of gadgetry and engineering. At the flick of a switch, explosives stored in long tubes, attached under the hull below the waterline, can be ignited. With luck, the explosion will propel the watercoach through the water several hundred yards, at speeds approaching twenty miles an hour, fast enough to outrun any vessel within the confines of the city.

Another switch releases four explosive shells from a compartment at the back of the vessel. These mines are buoyant and should float off in the watercoach's wake. When they make contact with something hard, they will explode, just like a bomb.

***I'm not saying that I'm important. I'm not saying you need to be careful. But, if you know what's good for you, you'll show me some respect. I'm not saying if you cross me you'll end up swimming with the Seaweed Man, but you do need to be careful. Do you know why? Because I work for van de Kuypers. That's right. I might not be a banker or a merchant, but ol' Jaan needs a bit more than honest craft to make the wheels of commerce run smooth, if you catch my drift. And those that get in the way; let's just say, no one gets in the way for long.***

***Some bloke down the pub***

Hidden in the bow of the boat below the gunwales is a carronade. The weapon is like a small cannon which fires a ball about two inches in diameter (treat as a blunderbuss with Damage 6).

The passenger seat of the coach is specially designed and it makes even the most hardened agent nervous to sit on it. At the pull of a lever (hidden near the coachman's seat in the stern) the passenger seat will eject. Powered by highly compressed springs, the seat can throw an average man about fifty feet in the air, landing 3d6 yards from the boat in a random direction.

Another lever will flick up a heavy metal shield behind the driver's seat, protecting him from arrows and shots aimed from behind. The name plate of the boat can be changed, simply by rotating the plate. There are three names to choose from. A number of other modifications have been made to the vessel. There is usually a set of Large Attractive Balls on board, a Scope of Night Vision and a Beetle, too.

There are a number of nooks of various sizes which make good hiding places, including a Human sized one (at a squeeze) in the bilge. There should also be a number of travel permits and import licences covering many of the waterways of the lower Reik basin. There is also a drinks cabinet with various beverages and ingredients including Erengard vodka, ice and Tilean olives.

The R&D department are currently working on a version of the watercoach that travels beneath the surface of the water, as well as on land. This project has the code name 'Lotus' after the pipe dream that was said to have inspired it.

### **Silly Buggers**

This small adventure is set up solely to create some amusement, and perhaps mayhem, around the standard cold war/cop drama wire tap plot. It is presumed that the PCs are working for Marienberger Inlichtingendienst, but equivalent adventures can easily be adapted for any of the sides.

The Fog Walkers have just captured a suspected Bretonnian agent and are interrogating him at this moment. They have managed to find out, so far, that the agent Thierry, Baron de Balzac Orangerie was supposed to meet with Peyrot, Marquis de Villiers Fontainebleu very soon at the Elven Exarch's party. Smeele has decided that MI needs to quickly find out what Peyrot has to say. According to the prisoner, Peyrot has met him once, some time ago at Oisillon. As luck would have it, the Bretonnian bears a small resemblance to one of the PCs.

*So Jack l'Anguille sailed down the Manaanspoort Sea to take away our goldy-yo  
Burnt his mouth on the Sea Slug stew and had to let it go-yo. He had to let it go-yo.*

*Guy Couronne climbed the Grey Mountains to take away our goldy-yo  
Burnt his mouth on the Sea Slug stew and had to let it go-yo. He had to let it go-yo.*

*And Hans Altdorf rowed down the Rijk to take away our goldy-yo  
Burnt his mouth on the Sea Slug stew and had to let it go-yo. He had to let it go-yo.*

*Sven Norsca crossed the Sea of Claws to take away our goldy-yo  
Burnt his mouth on the Sea Slug stew and had to let it go-yo. He had to let it go-yo.*

*Trad.*

For this reason, that PC must pose as Baron Thierry for a meeting with Peyrot.

There is no time to brief the PC in detail, but Smeele has a cunning plan so this should not matter. The chosen PC is rushed to a tailor and outfitted like the most fashion victimised Bretonnian noble (don't forget the layers of face powder, the bright red lipstick and that oh so fashionable heart shaped beauty spot). At the same time Smeele explains that he has two Beetles. The first will go on the PC so Smeele can hear everything the PC hears. The second will stay with Smeele but the earpiece will be hidden in the PC's bouffant wig, so that the PC will be able to hear everything that Smeele says. The PC should be given the command word for activating his 'Beetle' which shall be 'Penelope', say.

The party are rushed to the palace in Elfsgemeente and the PC should enter alone trying to bluff his Bretonnian noble status while Smeele and the rest of the party squat in some rose bushes by the side of the building, being careful not to be seen. As the PC enters, Smeele will describe Peyrot for him, and he should not be too hard to find.

It should be quite a test of the PC to pass himself off as a Bretonnian noble spy for any length of time. Smeele will help immensely as he can hear everything Peyrot says and will direct the PC in his responses. The GM may require that the PC uses a Bretonnian accent to perfect his disguise.

Unfortunately things do not run smoothly for long. As bad luck would have it, the group talking rather loudly near the PC and Peyrot have a mutual friend called Penelope. Being a game girl she is coming up in the conversation a lot. Everytime the Beetle picks up the word Penelope it will deactivate, making Smeele deaf to what is happening, until Penelope is mentioned once more, when the beetle will reactivate. For added amusement, there can be a long pause after the first time she is mentioned. The PC will have to say the word Penelope loudly and clearly to reactivate his Beetle. When he does so, the nearby group will presume that the PC knows her too, and will gather round for a good old chat about her. If the PC manages to coerce Peyrot away from that group and to another location in the embassy, then there may be further bad luck. One of the guests of the Exarch may be versed in some dark art, or other, and be carrying a small

amount of warpstone on her person. Whenever she gets anywhere near the Beetle (and she is one of those people who likes to wander around a lot at parties) a blast of audible feedback screams through Smeele's and the PC's earpieces. This is very painful for them. Worse, the feedback can be heard throughout the embassy. The band will stop playing and everyone will stop and stare in silence at the strange Bretonnian holding his ear and grimacing. Also, the Manniocs-Quinsh at the front of the embassy will leave their posts and

go round to the rose garden from where the strange noises are emanating.

### The Chase Scene

This could be used as the PCs take their hurried leave of the Exarch's party. As luck would have it, the PCs had taken the Special Watercoach to the party. If they can reach it before getting apprehended by Mannikins, then they will fancy their chances of getting away. The Manniocs-Quinsh patrol boats are also very fast, however (*Warpstone 20*).

This vignette should run like the chase scenes at the beginning of the Bond movies. The PCs have so many

### Doktor Nein

Once of the University of Nuln, Nein was a renowned expert on meteoroids and astronomy. Secretly, however, he became attracted to the study of warpstone. He went about this carefully and scientifically, but even his educated methods could not save him from its insidious influence.

His hands, through contact with the corrupting medium turned into jellyfish. He was able to get a surgeon colleague to remove the mutation and another made him somewhat splendidly advanced hands of gold and brass (which he conceals beneath black leather gloves). The hands function almost normally and have an effective *Strength* of 7, though they lack grip.

The whole experience has turned the doctor's mind and he is now a delusional, megalomaniac loner. He appropriated certain funds from the university and fled to the Wasteland. He now occupies Krab Island, a small abandoned island a few miles up the Manaanspoort Sea coast and has fitted out an old lighthouse there as laboratories and workshops. Here, assisted by servants whom he has 'liberated' from among the number of the Fen Loonies, he carries out the strangest and most dangerous experiments. It is even rumoured that a dragon guards the island fortress.

Doktor Nein, it is well known among the darkest of Marienburg's dark forces, is always in the market to purchase warpstone and fresh bodies. He works every hour diligently struggling for the scientific and magical answers that will bring an end to the Old World.

gadgets on board and they should find a use for most of them. As each patrol boat is shaken off (destroyed) then a new one can join the chase.

When the rockets are engaged, there should be some sort of ramp shape nearby, whereby the boat can launch into the air and slide down a street for a short time. Despite the hour, a wedding just happens to be being celebrated on that very street. The party should be wrecked and as the boat emerges from the mayhem, and slips back into the water, one of the PCs is left holding the bride's bouquet, if not the bride.

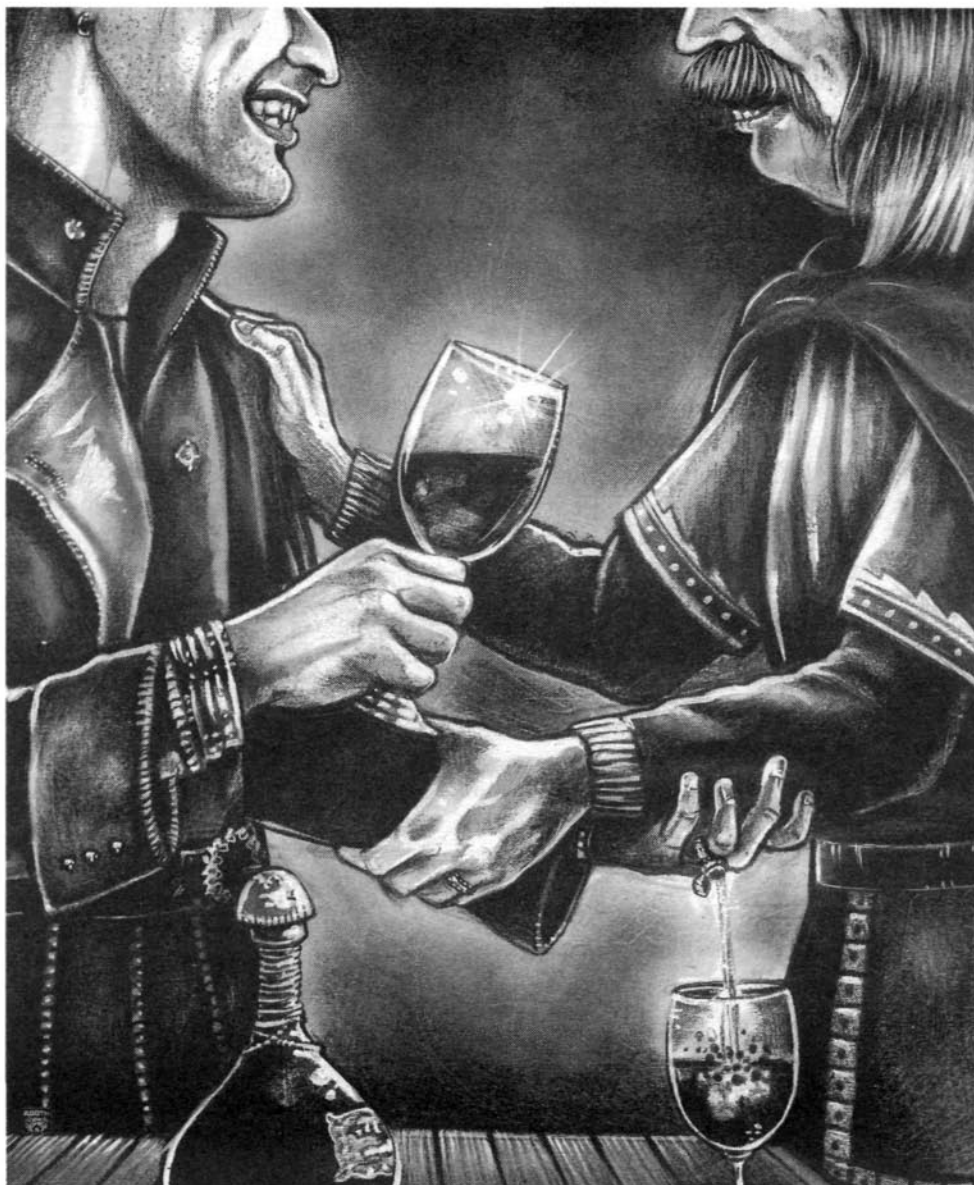
The carronade is loaded and only needs to be aimed. If it misses the target then it will be sure to cause strange, unpredictable damage. The mines can be released but in the wake of the boat will quickly float off in odd directions. The church of St. Olovald is holding a small candle lit vigil down by the water's edge. The congregation have their heads bowed in quiet reflection of the water's bounty. The barge bringing the fireworks for the Staadtholder's birthday party, next week, just happens to be passing. Jaan van den Kuypers,

fashionably late, is making his way on his beautiful white yacht towards the Exarch's party. He would never forgive those responsible for damaging his beloved *White Swan*.

In all the excitement, somebody is going to pull the ejector seat lever by mistake, of course.

Don't forget, although plate glass hasn't been invented yet, a very large and expensive example of translucent elven crystal matrix laminate, recently purchased by House Fooger to adorn their head office, is currently being transported across the city. It was decided that the easiest way to get it across the canals is to use two boats, with a flat-capped man in each one holding each end of the crystal. The gap between the two vessels measures just about the same as the width of a watercoach.

After all the excitement, if the PCs have done well to avoid their pursuers, they should crash the watercoach into the quay not fifty yards from their current abode. After they have climbed safely ashore, the boat will explode in a huge, theatrical ball of flames and smoke. The PCs can walk calmly the short distance to their rooms, shaken, but not stirred.



### Rosie Klebbshire

Rosie Klebbshire is a halfling assassin. She used to work for the Graukappen where she learned her trade but has since found other interests. The Graukappen does not know she has other paymasters, however, and consider her still loyal. Those that know her in the organisation respect her for a professional attitude and a devotion to Sigmar. Although not a member of The Loyal Company she has passed their scrutiny without a problem.

Rosie's unassuming appearance and her race makes her excellent at infiltration. Her favourite disguise is that of chambermaid with which she seems to be able to go wherever she chooses. Rosie carries a variety of concealed weapons about her person, including knuckledusters, the most cunning of which is a dagger integrated into her right boot. This dagger is usually prepared with a dose of manbane.

Don't let appearances deceive. Rosie may look like everyone's favourite aunt but she has no heart of gold. She is a cold, calculating, killing machine.

# CONSPIRACY

## A Scenario (Part Two of Three) by Alfred Nuñez Jr.

### Act Two: Upheaval

This is the second part of Conspiracy, the first of which was published last issue.

#### Act Two: A Summary

As the Skaven grow nearer, and Alfons van Rugkil gathers his forces, Marienburg enters a period of chaos and confusion. It is very likely that Klara von Teufelheim, now a Vampire, is loose in the city, hiding out in the slums of Doodkanal. If Rutger Nachtrabe survives the Crimson Claw he hunts her down but becomes another victim. The PCs are led to the area by a dream but are too late. Doktor Lucas uncovers the truth about the Vampire and will be killed.

Klara von Teufelheim will soon cross paths with Walewijn Droomer, sensing the coming violence he will bring. Meanwhile his movement is about to take its first public steps. A rally descends into planned violence and the name ORDESA rings around Marienburg. After the riot the leaders spilt up and arrange to meet later that night at an abandoned warehouse.

Meanwhile the PCs are beginning to be noticed. Elisabeth van Rugkil tries to guide them to her own ends from the shadows, aware they are being watched by the Skaven. The Ratmen kill Sergeant Kuilstier, and use his death to try and frame the PCs and ORDESA. The Watch begin to hunt down the agitators with a vengeance.

The Skaven enter the city setting fires to cause confusion and panic.

#### The Raven's Message

No matter what the PCs do next, one of

the PCs has a strange dream that very night. Should there be any followers of Mórr among the PCs, they will have the following dream (if not then randomly select a PC):

The dreamer finds himself (or herself) on a Suddock street following a man and a woman arm in arm. The couple are evidently familiar with each other. As they turn the corner, a mist rises and the dreamer is filled with a sense of foreboding. Within moments, the mist gathers itself into a distinctive nebulous mass behind the couple. The dreamer quickly seeks the weapon they surely have at their side, but it is not there. Attempting to warn the couple, the dreamer instead looks dumbfounded as the horror engulfs the blond-haired woman. Her piercing screams are quickly muffled as the mist enters through her nose and mouth. In a blink of an eye, the mist is entirely within the woman and she begins to convulse. Her lover shrieks as his mind snaps and he runs away screaming. The dreamer is transfixed as the sight of the woman's changing form entrances, as well as repulses, the dreamer. Once her transformation is complete, the taller, slimmer, black-haired woman looks towards the dreamer and smiles a grin both alluring and suggestive of something menacing. With that, she turns towards the in which the man fled and strides away with purpose. Suddenly a large raven caws from the top of a nearby building then flies over to the Westenpoort Gate near the Doodkanaal where it lands facing the dreamer. The raven then turns towards the direction of the woman who confidently strides into the filthy streets of that district. As soon as she disappears, the raven takes flight and the dreamer follows until the

bird reaches an old dilapidated building. The sign on the building shows a pig on a spit over a fire. Inside the window, the dreamer can see several sides of beef hanging from the meathooks as well as the naked body of a Human.

The dreamer wakes covered in sweat. A successful **Cool** test means they are momentarily shaken, while failure gains them 1 **Insanity Point** and a -10 **Cool** for the next 24 hours. If the PC does not recognise the man in the street, then a second successful **Cool** test reveals him as the poor fellow encountered outside the Crimson Claw.

#### On the Hunt

Depending upon what they have accomplished in the last few days, the PCs know some or all of the following:

- ◆ The ashes used in the ritual raising the killer cloud must have been of someone important to the Kháinite Cult of the Scorpion.
- ◆ Identification of the seal on the coffin could narrow the scope to establishing whose ashes were used.
- ◆ The description of the possessed and now dark-haired woman in the dream represents that long dead individual.

Sensible PCs will conclude that the identity of the mysterious woman is integral to their understanding. To this end they may go to the University or the Temple of Mórr. They may also choose to try to find out what lies near the Westenpoort Gate.

#### The University Revisited

Should the PCs go to the University before late on the night of Aubentag, they will be able to see their old acquaintance Doktor

Lucas Grafzoekener. Once he learns of the use of the stolen fetish, Lucas begins delving deeper into those circumstances. He is anxious to find out what the PCs know and will question them. After a while alone with his references on ancient Araby Lucas knows the following:

- ◆ The ancient Kháinite High Priest Al-Qantram Shalem created the fetish.
- ◆ Once ritually charged, the fetish could be used to summon a Daemon of Kháine and bring forth from the dead an important cult figure.
- ◆ Outside ancient Araby, the worship of Kháine has been centred in such places as the Border Princes, Mousillon in Bretonnia, and the Imperial province of Sylvania. In essence, areas strongly associated with the Undead.

If the PCs provide a description or drawing of the coat of arms found on the lid of the coffin at Berth 31, Lucas is unable to place it. He will arrange for someone to get heraldry books from the University Library. After some research, the person reviewing the book on *Imperial Coat of Arms during the Age of Wars* finds the answer. The coat of arms on the coffin was that of the ruling von Teufelheim family of Sylvania from the late 12th through early 13th century IC. While the book doesn't state what happened to the family, Lucas recalls that they died out when the peasants rebelled against the continuing atrocities perpetrated by Baron Adelbert von Teufelheim and his family. If the PCs want to learn about any connections between the Cult of Kháine and the von Teufelheims, Lucas suggests that they should visit the Temple of Mórr. With that, Lucas asks the PCs to keep him informed of anything they come across.

Should the PCs seek Doktor Lucas Grafzoekener after Aubentag, University officials will inform them that Grafzoekener's mutilated body was found in his office early Marktag morning. His throat had been ripped and his eyes gouged out by some unknown assailant. Moreover, no blood was found anywhere. Any request by the PCs to search Lucas' locked office will be denied unless they can convince the officials that they were working for him (a successful **Bluff** test (+10 for *Etiquette*)). Upon entering, the PCs find that nothing

seems to have been disturbed. On Lucas' desk is a large book entitled, *The Halfling Guide to Herbs and their Curative and Culinary Properties*. Allow the PCs an **Int** test to realise that this book is out of place in this office. Anyone examining the book will find a note under the chapter on garlic, near the portion of the text describing its reputed effects on the Undead. It reads (Player Handout 4):

*My friends,*

*Be warned. I have stumbled upon a secret so dark that I now fear for this city. Unfortunately, I think that I have been found out. I may not survive the next few days. Seek help from those who protect the dead. If I can, I will contact you. If this is all I can do, may the gods protect you.*

*Your friend,  
Lucas*

### The House of the Dead

At the Temple of Mórr, the PCs find it in a state of heightened alertness since the events at the Crimson Claw Cabaret. Lodewijck Raffleugel has been closeted with his books and has learned:

- ◆ The coat of arms found on the coffin bore the heraldic device of the notorious von Teufelheim family of Sylvania.
- ◆ The von Teufelheim family came to power in 1168 IC during the Imperial Age of Wars and ruled until 1232 IC.
- ◆ The patriarch of the family, Bela "the Serpent" von Teufelheim was murdered in his sleep in 1199 IC. Speculation was that his son, Manfred "the Wicked", hacked Bela forty times with an axe, but no magistrate had the nerve to arrest the homicidal fiend. Shortly after, Manfred poisoned his first wife, Etelka (who bore him five children), so he could wed his young stepmother, Beatrix.
- ◆ In 1213 IC, it was Manfred's turn to be murdered. The perpetrators were his youngest son, Adelbert, and eldest daughter, Sophia. The incestuous siblings paralysed their entire family by poisoning their supper during the Geheimnistag celebrations. Then each was sacrificed in turn to consummate Adelbert's and Sophia's unholy pact with Kháine. It was said that the couple's eldest daughter, Klara, was conceived amidst the blood and gore shed that

night. Thus began a reign of blood and terror previously unseen in The Empire.

- ◆ In 1232 IC, the peasants in Waldenhof and the surrounding countryside rose in rebellion against the von Teufelheims. Tired of that family's depredations and the rise of the Cult of Kháine, the peasants stormed the castle and slew the family. Only Klara was unaccounted for in the slaughter.
- ◆ During the summer of 1276 IC, the Order of the Raven Knights uncovered the still active Cult of Kháine in Sylvania. Attacking one night, they succeeded in killing the High Priestess Klara von Teufelheim and burned her body. Unfortunately, her followers counterattacked and, in the ensuing confusion, escaped into the night with her ashes.
- ◆ At the time of her death, Klara still looked as she did at the time of the Peasants' Revolt of 1232 IC. No doubt, her eternal youth was maintained through nefarious means. Some say she regularly bathed in the blood of virgins, while others maintain that she was made ever youthful through her service to Kháine.

Should the PCs inform Lodewijck of their dream (following the Crimson Claw incident), he will remark that clearly Mórr has chosen them to eradicate the abomination. He believes that the dream suggests that the PCs should search the nearby Doodkanaal area for the raised servant of Kháine. It's a very dangerous and run-down district where the Watch rarely patrols. The creature may have taken to that area in order to gather its wits and make murderous plans (as do all its kind).

As a starting point, Lodewijck recommends a visit to the small temple of Shallya in that district. The Shallyan clergy have good relations with the denizens there and may have heard something of importance.

If the Witch-Hunter Rutger Nachtrabe fought and survived the Crimson Claw incident, Lodewijck informs the PCs that he believes Rutger is searching the Doodkanaal area led by his vision. The sad truth of the matter is that many disappear from that area with nary a concern from the authorities. Lodewijck will admit that he cannot be certain that is



## PART TWO TIMELINE

Adv. Day	Week Day	Event	Section
4	Festag	One PC visited by a dream.	What's Next
5	Wellentag	Shallyan priestess Eveline Goedhart slaughtered in the Doodkanaal district. Shipload of mercenaries arrives.	Along the Doodkanaal
6	Aubentag	Demagogue Walewijn Droomer speaks to the assembled crowd in the Suiddock. Many Watchmen die in the ensuing riot. During late night, Doktor Lucas Grafzöckener murdered and his body mutilated.	Riot!  The University Revisited
7	Marktag	Morning riot in the Handelaarmarkt district. Watch patrols actively search for ORDESA members. Watch Sergeant Kuilstier murdered.	Search and Destroy  Entrapment
8	Backertag	PCs' place of lodging burned down. PCs encounter suspicious people on the streets. ORDESA meeting during the night on Luydenhoek. Suiddock set on fire.	Something's Burning Search and Destroy Rebels with a Cause  Where Are They?

where Rutger went, as Witch-Hunters of Mórr typically work outside the cult's clerical hierarchy. If Rutger died that Festag night, Lodewijck will implore (if necessary) the PCs to undertake the task that Mórr has set before them. As an enticement, he will offer the PCs twenty-five Guilders each (the cult is not terribly wealthy) and the gratitude of the Cult of Mórr. (No small thing if the PCs have a care for their eternal souls.)

### Along the Doodkanaal

The Doodkanaal is the worst of Marienburg's slums, named for the sluggish waterway that runs along the southern edge of the city. For the most part, the water here carries an unhealthy odour (and the occasional waterborne plague), especially since several grated openings in the base of the city wall enable water to flow from the fens beyond. Except for the Westenpoort Gate, the Black Caps only occasionally patrol the Vloedmuur along the Doodkanaal.

Murderous cutthroats prey upon the poor, even in broad daylight. Arrogant and

strutting youths travel in gangs to battle over turf in the vain attempt to prove their worth to the more worldly criminal gangs in other districts like the Suiddock. Deranged killers also seem to gravitate to the Doodkanaal. There are many hidden places in this slum for danger to lurk, made worse by the deteriorating conditions of the grates to the fens.

The "Outcasts" (as they are commonly called) are the bottom-dwellers of the Doodkanaal social order. They have created their own society governed by the strong among them. Those with less severe mutations find acceptance among the Outcasts. All generally avoid outsiders, although there are circumstances where they have been known to take advantage of a lone visitor. Only the clergy of Shallya are able to travel freely among them.

Since the incident at the Crimson Claw, a number of Outcasts have fallen prey to some horror that leaves the corpse of the victims mutilated and bloodless. The killings generally occur at night, although a few have taken place during the day (in shadowy areas such as alleys). The killings

will become less frequent in the nights that follow the Aubentag riot.

PCs entering this area will be shunned by the Outcasts. The only hope they have of talking to an Outcast (initially) is if there is a Shallyan cleric in their number (Fel-20). The PCs will have to make their way to the local chapel of Shallya. The chapel is easily recognisable, as it is the cleanest building by far. As evident by the number of Outcasts here; the doors are always open for the needy.

Most likely, the PCs will find the two Shallyan priestesses here in mourning. One of their number was savagely killed by an unknown assailant during Wellentag night. The older of the two, Sister Marie Serenite, is the only one able to contain her grief and talk to the PCs. Initially, she will be reluctant to answer any of their questions unless the PCs can convince her that their intentions in solving this crime are in line with Shallyan beliefs. This will be tricky (and doomed to failure) due to Shallyans' loathing of killing. This is even extended to the execution of murderers. Thus, any hint that the PCs intend to make the killer

pay in kind will result in the lack of co-operation of the Shallyans.

If the PCs inquire about a building with a sign of a pig on a spit with a window with meat, the Shallyans will ask if they mean the Butcher Shop. The last butcher left the Doodkanaal some years past and his shop has been deserted even since. The sign outside the building is still there, but very weatherworn. The windows have been boarded up since the shop closed. The Shallyans will provide directions so long as the PCs don't mention that they intend to kill whatever is resting there.

All is not hopeless as the Outcasts who clean the chapel see things differently. Herman Klopknie and Anna Springer see nothing wrong with bringing the murderer of their beloved Sister Eveline Goedhart to justice. Seeing that the PCs' attempts to enlist Sister Marie Serenite's aid will fail, the two slip out the door so as to engage the PCs as they depart. In their awkward manner, the two offer to lead the PCs to the place where Sister Eveline Goedhart's remains were found as well as to the old butcher shop. The pair will not ask for anything but will gladly accept anything offered.

Herman and Anna will lead the PCs through the narrow, filthy streets that make up the slum. At no point will they be threatened by any Outcast, even though the sight of two of their number leading a group of powerful outsiders is more than enough to draw a following of Outcasts. After ten or fifteen minutes, this unusual ensemble arrives at the location amid three boarded-up tenements where the slain Shallyan cleric was found. Outside the center tenement is an old placard still hanging from the building. Though the paint has worn away, the PCs can still make out a pig on a spit. Herman and Anna will inform the PCs of the following:

- ◆ Many of the slain Outcasts lived in these buildings.
- ◆ A large male outsider wearing black was poking about these buildings on Wellentag. He hasn't been seen since the early evening hours. [Only true if Rutger Nachtrabe survived the Crimson Claw incident].
- ◆ The mutilated and bloodless corpses were mainly young males.
- ◆ Many of the dark, draughty rooms are falling apart. There are many holes in

the rotten ceilings, walls, and floors.

- ◆ There are cellars in each of the three buildings. The entryways are covered by debris, leaving only crawl spaces. Since the killings began, no one dare's enter.

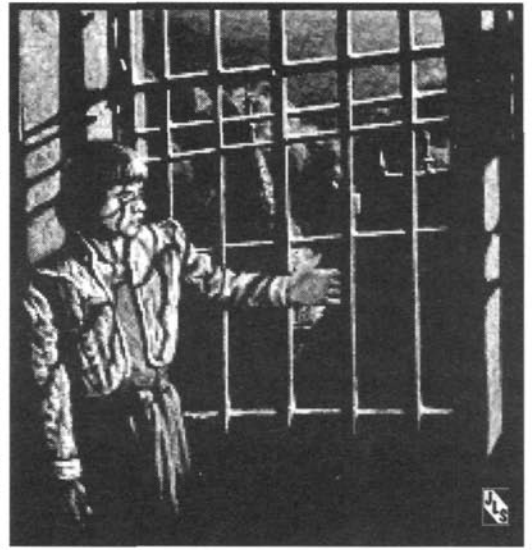
If they are offered substantial incentives (at least two Guilders), a few Outcasts (d3+1) escort the PCs to the cellar entryway in each of the three tenement buildings. Under no circumstances will they enter the cellars. PCs who try to coerce one will find themselves faced with a mob of angry Outcasts.

No matter the time of day, the PCs will need illumination when they enter the tenements. The atmosphere of the place is creepy with a feeling of foreboding. Odd noises and squeaky sounds periodically cause the PCs some nervous moments. For PCs not inclined to crawl on their hands and knees, the debris about the cellar entrances requires d6+3 man-hours to clear. Otherwise, the crawl space is large enough not to cause too many problems for even heavily armoured PCs.

The cellars of the two tenements on either side are empty of anything other than rats and debris. The cellar of the tenement in the centre is quite different with a strong smell of decay there. Bold PCs entering the cellar find a makeshift wooden crate (which looks suspiciously like a coffin), containing a layer of soil, in the far corner. Lying near the crate is a mutilated corpse. If he survived the incident at the Crimson Claw, Rutger Nachtrabe is the corpse. His body is badly ripped and torn but with no trace of blood anywhere. The PCs can find the Witch-Hunter's sword nearby. If Rutger perished at the Crimson Claw, then the remains are of an Outcast.

The coffin was a temporary abode fashioned by the vampire to provide a resting place to pass the hours of daylight. The vampire has consecrated the coffin in the name of Kháine, but a simple fire will destroy it. The PCs will have to be careful to avoid burning the building as well.

Anyone searching the room further must successfully pass an I test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to spot a partially concealed pamphlet (see Player Handout 2).



### Riot!

Try as they may, the PCs will not be able to learn about ORDESA nosing about the Suiddock. No Suiddocker they come across has ever heard of ORDESA. ORDESA moved their headquarters from the University to the Suiddock just days before word of their assembly spread. The PCs will have to go to the Aubentag gathering to get an idea of what ORDESA is about.

Should the PCs ask about ORDESA in the taverns near the University, they will not learn much unless they visit *The Pen and the Sword* tavern, a place frequented by politically active students and faculty. There, the PCs can learn that ORDESA is a small group of politically motivated students who believe that the "Marienburg experiment" has not reached its logical conclusion: namely the belief that political legitimacy can only be conferred by the citizens of the city. The leader of the group is a popular, but expelled, scholar from the University, Walewijn Droomer. Some say that he ran into problems at the University and his organisation has relocated elsewhere. ORDESA's new location is a matter of speculation.

Assuming the PCs arrive early, they will see people gathering at the Sikkeleiland end of the Draaienbrug Swing Bridge minutes before the time stated on the pamphlets. These are mostly curious locals who have come to see a show of sorts. At one end of the open area stands a platform with a podium. As the crowd grows, a number of young men and women surround

the podium. Looking about the crowd, PCs will notice a sizeable contingent of Suiddock Watch (twenty-one in all) posted on the outside fringes. Each is equipped in the manner of the Suiddock Watch: mail shirts, swords, and clubs. Closer examination reveals that every third Watchman has a crossbow.

Soon a horn sounds from the podium and a young woman introduces “the most wise and gifted philosopher of our time and man of the people, Walewijn Droomer” to the crowd of yawning on-lookers. Similarly dressed but clearly older than his ardent supporters next to him, Walewijn looks around the crowd before he begins his speech.

“Good people of Marienburg, I come before you in this hour of disorder and concern to speak to you of an idea whose time has come.”

“Throughout history, Society has dictated that the *Privileged Few* dominate the majority of the common people. Our dreams and aspirations have been put aside, crushed by the Few who believe that it is their Divine Right to live off of your sweat and hard labours. These Few live in luxury without a care in the world while you toil to survive and provide for your families. It is *they* who have their leisurely pursuits while every day you struggle to survive in this hostile world.”

On a successful **I** test, PCs looking around them will see that the charismatic Walewijn’s words are having some effect on the crowd. He has definitely caught their attention:

“Do any of *them* speak of your needs and wants? I don’t hear *them*. Do any of *them* speak for your security and your family’s well being? I still don’t hear *them*! Do any of *them* speak of these things? Not one! Nor do they care. Why? Because your voices cannot be heard over *their* merriment, *their* festivities. How do we get *them* to hear us? How do we get *their* attention so *they* will listen to you?”

Walewijn pauses to let his queries sink in. By now, the PCs notice the crowd is more restless and agitated as Walewijn’s words strike a chord within them. Some of the audience glance warily in the direction of the Watch. The demagogue pushes on:

“We must use our strongest assets: our number and collective voice. It is *we* who

should exercise the Power, not *them*! Not the *few*!

“Gather about for we will march across the Hoogbrug to bring our *voice* to *them*. We *must* demand representation! We *must* demand the right to decide our leaders! We *must* demand that our leaders be answerable to us!

“But what if *they* refuse to listen? What then? I’ll tell you. We remove *them*. By sheer numbers, *we* have the Power to dispense with *them*! By force, if *they* refuse! Even they [Walewijn gestures towards the clearly nervous Watch] cannot refuse us.

“The only thing I ask is ‘*are you with me?*’ ‘Will you join me in the *overthrow* of the *oppressors?*!’ Then, rise and come to me!”

With this, the once passive audience surges up to the podium. A number menacingly approach the Watch. All of a sudden the scene erupts into violence (thanks in part to a Wizard in Walewijn’s retinue who secretly casts a *Cause Hatred* spell on one group of townsfolk and *Cause Panic* on another in order to incite the mob to action. Sadly, the poor chap is one of the first killed in the ensuing riot). Fighting breaks out everywhere, especially along the fringes where the Watch stand. The twang of crossbows, the clash of metal on metal, and the thud of clubs hitting flesh and bone can be heard above the screams and shouting. Several individuals will take swipes at the PCs, but most avoid them. Soon, the whistles of the Watch can be heard, signalling more trouble. PCs who have their wits about them can use the chaos of the moment to get out of the area. Once the Suiddock Watch reinforcements arrive (within d6+4 rounds), there will be hell to pay. Any PC looking about will notice that several of the Watch have been killed by the unruly mob.

There is an opportunity for the PCs to ingratiate themselves with the Watch. They see two wounded Watchmen (Sergeant Matthias Scherp and Norbert Groen) beset by a group of thugs bent upon murdering them. It doesn’t matter whether the assailants are killed or driven off, any PC rescuing the two besieged men will earn the gratitude of the Suiddock Watch. This gratitude will enable the PCs to continue their activities (for the duration of the adventure) without the Watch’s

interference, unless they subsequently commit a serious crime or harm a member of the Watch. In some instances, the Watch may even offer limited assistance.

As they leave, the PCs hear the Suiddock Watch making short work of the remaining mob. Moreover, the PCs will have lost track of Walewijn Droomer. Not surprisingly, the demagogue disappeared with his accomplices soon after the crowd became a mob. Should the PCs return within an hour they will see an old beggar picking up some of the podium debris (now in pieces). Should the PCs ask the old man about his activities, the beggar looks them over and then replies, “man’s gotta find wotever ‘e can ta get a drink ‘ereabouts. Wot’s rubbish ta one is another’s gold, if ye catch me meaning o’ course. From ta looks o’ ye, ah says that we can make a deal. Fer five shillin’s, ah’ll turn over sumpthin that’ll ‘elp ye. Wot ye say?” If the PCs agree, they must give the beggar the coins first. Once done, he gives them a small booklet which he says, “Wuz dropped by one o’ ta loudmouth’s stooges.”

PCs with the Read/Write skill notice that the title of the booklet is *Completing the Marienburg Revolution* and is written by H. Markvalt (**M:SDtR**, page 99). Thumbing through its pages, the PCs learn that the author views the independence of Marienburg as the first step in the process of freeing the masses from the depravity of the nobles. The author denounces The Ten for usurping the power that rightfully belongs to the people. He also advocates the use of violent means to assert the rights of the masses if all other means are exhausted. The rest of the booklet is nothing more than a recipe for revolt. PCs will also notice that ‘Harmitage Printing’ published the booklet. PCs inquiring about such a print shop will have no success. There is, however, a 20% chance of finding someone who is familiar with Armitage Books on Luydenhoek Isle. Perhaps the print shop is related? For several Guilders, the PCs can obtain directions.

### Armitage Books

Armitage Books is located in the middle of Luydenhoek Isle. It is in a ramshackle building with a single front door and semi-opaque windows. Inside, a large number of books line the many shelves while others

are haphazardly stacked on tabletops. Anyone browsing the shop will find some of the most unusual, and obviously nonsense, books conceivable. Titles like *Theories on the Medicinal Value of Fimir Blood*, *Poetry of the Slann*, and *Tsu Ling's Guide to Karmic Equilibrium* can be found alongside such ancient texts as *Ibn Amin's Exploration of Nehekhara*, *Land of the Walking Dead* (translated circa 1000 IC), *Chronicles of the Estalian Crusade* by Esteban Nuno de Ávila (1562 IC), and *Alchemical Properties of Water and Earth* (circa 750 IC). Rummaging through the store looking for a specific book can easily take days, even weeks.

If the PCs decide to look through the books, there's a 5% cumulative chance per hour (+10 for the *Luck* skill) of finding a thin book entitled *De Las Rattas y Los Hombres: Una Estudia de la Plaga Negra* by Julio Sanchez de Barboza (circa 1200 IC). Despite the language of its title, the book is actually written in Classical. The topic deals with the Black Plague that swept across the Old World during 1111-1115 IC and has a small section that details a subterranean race of black-clad 'Ratmen'. Several "packs" are identified with their symbols, including the Hand of Death pack, which uses a hand holding a serrated knife dripping with blood.

Henri Armitage inherited the shop and his love of books from his grandfather who had to leave Bretonnia in haste amid controversy over some of his books. The fact that Couronne nobles were the ones who sent Witch-Hunters after his grandfather is not lost on Henri. Henri has these forbidden books locked in a closet in the back room. Armitage Books has one further surprise; stairs lead from the back room down to a locked cellar where Henri keeps his secret printing press. Through connections at Baron Hendryk's, Henri Armitage has become the printer of choice for budding authors and demagogues whose views are not quite in line with the ruling class of Marienburg. A rebel at heart, Henri prefers to work in the background and naively believes that he has avoided putting himself, or his shop, in jeopardy.

To this end, Henri denies any knowledge of Harmitage Printing or anyone whose work was published by such. Henri contends some enemy of his is using

something similar to his good name to mislead authorities. If his claim rings false, it's because Henri is a poor liar. Passively sympathetic to ORDESA, Henri can be threatened into providing information on the upcoming gathering of ORDESA's Inner Circle. If the PCs convince Henri that they will not expose him to the authorities, he will tell them the meeting is scheduled for 11:00 P.M. on Backertag at 10 Kleinvinger Steeg, Luydenhoek Isle.

Should the PCs arrive at Armitage Books in daylight before Marktag, they will find Jean-Paul Mainsoyeux [from **Old Man Houder's Bordering House** – *Warpstone* 23] looking for a rare book, *Les Habitudes Sexuel du Dépravé et Athlétique*. Some obscure Slaaneshi cultist, who was also known for his "prophesies", wrote the book in 18th century Parravon. Not finding the book in the shop, Jean-Paul will ask Henri about it in whispered Breton. Henri will get the book if he thinks the risk is low; otherwise he'll deny any knowledge of it. Any denial will upset Jean-Paul as he needs the book. In an increasingly louder voice, Jean-Paul insists that Henri has the book and *must* sell it to him. Torn between exposing himself by fetching the book or having Jean-Paul expose him, Henri makes some feeble excuse to leave for a moment loud enough for other patrons to hear. Moments later, Henri returns with a book and quietly completes the transaction.

The above situation provides some colour with the introduction of this red herring and provides a means to introduce some obscure publication to assist the PCs in their investigations should they not gain access to the Great Library of Verena.

Should the PCs arrive at Armitage Books on Marktag or Backertag, they will find Jolanda Rolgoers, a follower of the ORDESA leader Walewijn Droomer. Her task is to negotiate terms for the printing of a new ORDESA manifesto (which hasn't yet been written) with the nervous Henri. Jolanda's manner is clearly terse and agitated.

PCs may attempt a **Listen** test for soft noises (+10 for *Acute Hearing*, +10 for *Lip Reading*) to eavesdrop on the conversation. Should they make the connection, bold PCs may approach Jolanda in the hope of obtaining some

information. The situation is delicate, as the young woman does not know them and she is under some duress. A failed **Fel** test makes Jolanda suspicious and she will either brush them off or give them some wild story and misinformation. Success gives Jolanda the confidence to confide her "concerns" for her mentor Walewijn, especially where the Imperial harlot with the odd accent is involved. If asked, Jolanda says that the raven-haired woman met Walewijn sometime during the night after the Aubentag speech. All Jolanda knows is that the tart has not left his side since. Jolanda will accept any PC offer to kill the woman on the condition that they do not harm Walewijn. If the PCs cannot give her that assurance, Jolanda will thank them tersely and take her leave. Should they then follow her, Jolanda calls the Watch and accuses them of accosting her with the intent of robbery or something worse. In the event that the PCs promise to not harm Walewijn, Jolanda tells them details of the meeting.

### Entrapment

This event takes place during the night of either Aubentag or Marktag if the PCs are on the streets. (If the PCs are instead in their rooms at the boarding house, the note will be slipped under their door around 5pm on Marktag.) A boy in his early teens calls out to the PCs from his skiff in the nearest canal. "'Ello mates. I gots 'ere a message that I was paid to bring ya. Afore ya ask me 'oo sends the message let me says that 'e didn't show 'isself from the shadows an' 'e paid me several coins not to try an' look."

If the PCs do not reach for the note, the boy will throw it at them and leave. If the PCs want the kid to talk, they're going to have to lighten their purses a bit (say, d6+6 shillings as the starting price. If they threaten or otherwise cajole the kid, the price goes to at least 2d6+8 shillings). PCs who do not pay can say good-bye now as the Canal Rat has no intention of letting them get close enough to grab him.

Should they pay (and depending upon the amount), they learn that the sender wore a large overcoat and wide-brimmed hat. He seemed a bit hunched over and smelled. The boy reckons he was a foreigner. He made sure he stayed in the shadows when passing the message and money.



Should they inquire about the contents of the note, the Canal Rat replies, “Do I looks like one o’ them rich folk? I ‘ave no time fer readin’. Besides, the bleeding message was fer you blokes, not me.”

The note, reads as follows (Player Handout 5):

*I have information that might help you. I presume you have some for me as well. Meet me at my flat at 11:30 pm. this Marktag. 26 Zwartmistig Weg on Sikkeleiland Isle, upriver from the Draaienbrug Swing Bridge.*

*Kuilstier*

There is a possibility that the PCs will get suspicious as their only other meeting with Kuilstier was at the Barracks. They could opt not to go, but what if the message is legit?

PCs inquiring at the Barracks for

Sergeant Kuilstier will be directed to the Duty Watchman. He informs them that the Sergeant has been on an assignment for the past few days. He will not divulge the Sergeant’s home address nor confirm nor deny the validity of any address given by the PCs. The only area where the Duty Watch may co-operate is verifying the writing as being Kuilstier’s.

Any suggestions by the PCs that Kuilstier is the victim of foul play will be dismissed out of hand (the entire Barracks knows that Kuilstier’s hours are unusual). Persistent probing will become tiresome and result in the Duty Watchman giving them an ultimatum to leave immediately without another word being uttered or to be locked up for the night.

PCs scouting the area in hope of uncovering an ambush find nothing.

Checking the premises, the PCs find that Kuilstier’s flat is located on the uppermost floor of a small tenement with families occupying the flats on either side. During this whole time scouting, PCs with *Sixth Sense* will realise they are being watched but no amount of effort will pinpoint the watcher.

Should the PCs try to enter Kuilstier’s flat early, they will find the door locked (CR 10). Beyond this is a one bedroom, sparsely furnished home. The living room consists of a large chair and oil lamp on a small table by the window; another table with two chairs across the room; a large rug on the floor; and cupboards containing the usual. Inside the bedroom is a small bed, another rug, a small closet containing the Sergeant’s limited wardrobe, and a candleholder with a partially burned



candle. There will be an obvious temptation for the PCs to trash the place in pursuit of any sort of clue. Remind them that the Watch Sergeant would be most displeased when he found out that it was the PCs who were trying to spy on him. If the PCs stay and wait without taking precautions they will be spotted by neighbours who will discuss calling the Watch.

At the appointed time (or near that), the PCs arrive to find the door to Kuilstier's flat slightly ajar. Neither knocking on the door nor calling out yields any response. Entering the dimly lit room, the PCs find (the deceased) Kuilstier apparently sleeping in the chair next to the slightly opened window. Clearly, the only way they will get any response - though not one to their liking - is by trying to shake the Watch Sergeant awake. As soon as they touch him his head rolls off his body. Examining the Sergeant's head will show it was neatly severed and that there is no trace of blood on his clothing or within view. PCs concluding that Kuilstier was killed elsewhere and returned to his flat for a purpose are correct.

Searching the premises they can find a trapdoor under the bed. No hinges on the topside indicate that the door opens downward (the fact it's closed means that there is no access from Kuilstier's flat). Making their way downstairs, the PCs quickly find the flat underneath Kuilstier's. The door is locked. Upon entering the room, the PCs find it covered in blood. A tub of congealing blood lies in the middle of the room resulting in the need for a **T** test (failure means losing one's last meal). On the far wall, the letters "O...R...D...E...S...A" are spelt out in blood. PCs searching the room find bits of coarse hair (mostly brown, though some splotched with black or white) throughout and have a 20% chance of detecting a rather musky odour beyond the stench of blood. Anyone with a career as a Game Keeper, Hunter, Poacher, Rat Catcher or Trapper will recognise the hair as actually tufts of fur on a successful **Int**+10 test. Those with a career as an Alchemist, Physician, Physician's Assistant, or Torturer need to pass an **Int** test to realise the quantity of blood in this room exceeds that of one man.

In the event that the PCs did not

extinguish the light in Kuilstier's flat, someone in the tenement across the street shouts, "Murderers!" PCs should realise that the last thing they need is for the Watch to find them with Kuilstier's corpse, even if they are working for the Watch. They are outsiders to the Watch, after all. If they decide to flee, they hear the whistle of the Watch sound from the street, as they reach the foot of the stairs. The exit towards the back alley is the only one that'll allow the PCs to escape without being seen.

### Something's Burning

Wherever the PCs hole-up after the Aubtag riot, they will receive a rude awakening in the middle of the night. Someone has decided to burn down the building where they are residing.

If any of the PCs are actively on watch during the night - e.g. constantly looking out the window - allow them an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*, +10 for *Night Vision*, +10 for *Sixth Sense*). If the PC succeeds, he will notice hunched figures in heavy cloaks moving in the shadows outside their window. These are Skaven Gutter Runners. They have been given the task of burning down the PCs' lodging. Unbeknownst to the PCs, Reiner Derschakal has decided that their earlier interaction with Thijs Boekarts has marked them as a group that should be removed just to be safe. After all, what are a few more dead people in Suiddock going to matter? Implicating ORDESA in this action serves the purpose of making the radical group even more feared, thereby advancing the anarchy van Rugkil seeks.

PCs who throw open a window and shout at the Skaven will succeed in driving them off before any harm can come. The Skaven do not want to be recognised at this stage and will scamper away without looking at whomever is screaming at them.

If the PC on watch fails to see the Skaven, allow that PC an **I** test to smell smoke coming from the hallway some time after the ratmen have left. Initial success means they will have twelve rounds to awaken their fellows and sound an alarm before the raging fire reaches them. Test each round until success is achieved (cumulative +5 modifier to **I** per round). Each round of failure gives the PCs less time to escape unscathed. Once the fire reaches their room, the building will be totally destroyed

in another fifteen rounds. There is only a small chance that the building can be saved if the alarm is sounded within the first two rounds.

GMs should add a few **I** tests to give the PCs a sense of urgency. Putting on armour will consume time otherwise used to make an escape. Of course, carrying armour creates encumbrance and thereby reduces speed.

Other occupants could possibly be trapped and may be in need of rescue. Such situations may provide moments of anxiety and grim humour if they are lodging at the bordering house. The artiste and Slaaneshi cultist, Jean-Paul Mainsoyeux, could well be wearing some night-time attire that most men would find unseemly, shrieking for help while clutching the book he obtained from Henri Armitage. GMs could also allow PCs an **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) to notice that Jean-Paul has the small left breast of a woman.

Another incident that a GM could use is having Ernst appear at the top of the flaming stairway, boldly shouting encouragement to any would-be rescuers. The fact that the middle of his trousers are soaking wet would be a good indication of how fearful of impending death the Imperial émigré truly is.

Once outside, the PCs will see a number of locals helping put out the fire. For each PC joining this fire brigade, add 2% to the base chance of 10% to save the boarding house from total destruction (even though it will still sustain serious damage). PCs looking about notice that there is still smoke coming from nearby parts of the Suiddock due to a number of places are burning throughout the district. PCs searching the nearby area must pass an **I**+20 test. Those successful will find a couple of empty containers (which held lamp oil) and flint and steel hidden among some garbage in a nearby alley. Inscribed on a nearby wall are the letters "O...R...D...E...S...A."

PCs may decide to question the other residents of the boarding house. Of these, only Ingrid Houder has heard something. As she didn't think much of it at the time, she will not recall anything without some coaxing (stern questioning will frighten her into silence). Ingrid awoke to the sounds of rats sniffing and scratching outside her bedroom. Since they are frequent in the

Suiddock and she was still sleepy, Ingrid didn't give it much thought. With that, she rolled over and fell asleep until the shouting alerted her to the fire. Now she thinks the rats were trying to escape the fire.

Should the damage to their lodgings be such that the PCs are compelled to move, the existing situation in the Suiddock renders the task of finding a place to stay very expensive. There are few inns with a vacancy unless the PCs offer a substantial sum of money.

### Search and Destroy

With several of its men killed during the Aubentag riots, the Suiddock Watch has taken a more aggressive stance towards any public agitation and the large assembly of civilians. In addition, the number of patrols have increased with several earmarked to search for and arrest members of ORDESA. Their goal is simple: the eradication of the organisation. This mission is further fuelled by the discovery of the body of Watch Sergeant Kuilstier and the evidence found in the flat beneath his own.

The Aubentag riot has had a secondary effect on the city. The "Firebrand of Suiddock" (a nickname given to Walewijn Droomer by other underground dissenters and their pamphlets) has caused great concern among the ruling class: chiefly, Droomer's demonstrated ability to whip up the masses into an uncontrollable mob. This, coupled with his radical message of sweeping away the current social structure and allowing the commoners to choose their leaders, has caused the Burgerhof to act. It has called upon the Black Caps in other districts to support the Suiddock Watch and is offering rewards for information leading to his capture.

If the PCs befriended the Watch, they are invited to join the search and destroy mission. If the PCs had not found a way to ally themselves with the Watch, they can expect to be harassed - or even arrested on suspicion.

Suiddockers have also reacted to the changed environment. Many are openly wearing pieces of armour (mail shirt here, leggings there) when they venture from the safety of their homes. Foot traffic has clearly diminished with hostilities directed towards outsiders and, behind their backs

at least, the Watch. To make matters worse, a number of agitators have tried to follow Droomer's lead. Some of these have had the misfortune of being caught by the Watch.

If the PCs will attempt to talk to some townfolk about news or rumours then all tests must be made with a base -15 modifier to **Fel**, unless it's someone with whom the PCs were previously acquainted.

◆ "I tell you they found the body of an agitator floating in the canal only an hour after the Black Caps caught him posting ORDESA pamphlets. Serves the scum right, I say."

◆ "Did you hear about that riot that took place in Handelaarmarkt on Marktag morning? They say someone named Droomer incited the crowd."

◆ "Times are changin'. Did you hear mercenaries have been hired to assist the Black Caps? If only I was younger..."

◆ "Things are getting worse, let me tell you. The Black Caps have taken to bullying citizens minding their own business. Things can't continue this way."

◆ "Karl told me that rewards of one-hundred Guilders for the leaders of the rioting have been posted. I'm of a mind to get my father's sword and look for the lowlifes. I could use the money."

◆ "Lissen carefully, mate. Dere's a truce between Da League and da Bretonnian and Tilean gangs. Too many gang members have died on each side. Now's not da time ta go it alone."

◆ "Any fool caught sympathising with the agitators risks getting worked over by the Black Caps."

◆ "Times like this make for strange bedfellows. I hear that enforcers from The League have joined the Black Caps' search for ORDESA agitators."

◆ "Watch yer step. The gangs are now killing innocent people."

◆ "They have no regard for the common folk. Town criers are saying the Great Merchant Families are hiring mercenaries in the event that the rioting spreads. More likely they want to save their own hides."

◆ "Did you hear that a couple of members of the Burgerhof have been killed in Paleisbuurt? Things are bad there, murderers are still at large."

◆ "I'm not surprised about the rumours that

Rijkskamer members are barricading their mansions. You'd think someone was coming after them."

◆ "I was on the docks when a shipload of mercenaries arrived Marktag morning bound for one of the merchant houses."

◆ "Don't let the stories fool you. I have it on good authority that ORDESA agitators are muscling in on The League's territory and rackets."

◆ "I'm going home to pack up my wife and kids and get out of here. I heard that ORDESA is employing assassins to bump off their opponents. I'm not going to stick around for that and I suggest that you consider doing the same."

The Watch's version of search and destroy starts with questioning people on the streets about unusual activities. Gatherings of several individuals are prime targets. Any suspicious group is rounded up and taken to the Ward Barracks for questioning. As expected, most people don't know much, or even if they do, aren't willing to talk without persuasion. Watchmen will force themselves into homes and roust any occupant whom they deem an ORDESA sympathiser. PCs helping the Watch meet with the same suspicion, loathing, and lack of co-operation usually reserved for the Black Caps. Reactions will vary between fear and outright hostility.

Whether they're acting as agents of the Watch or on their own, the next encounter takes place early on Backertag evening. In a narrow side alley, one of the PCs notices several people arguing with obvious emotion and overhears one of them uttering the names "ORDESA" and "Droomer". The PCs have 1D3 rounds to act before the people in the alley become aware of them and flee. Letting them escape, though attractive to the cowardly, will deny the PCs an opportunity to learn critical information about ORDESA.

Should the PCs give chase use the rules (*Warpstone* 23 page 32) to determine how the action turns out. Captured individuals will not freely talk without some persuasion. Those who met in the alley are:

**Karel Hardnekkig (M 5, I 40):** Student radical, hard-line supporter, and lieutenant of Walewijn Droomer. Karel is willing to be a martyr for the cause, but only if others

learn from his example. He is more than able to hold firm, even if tortured, in front of potential followers. If isolated, Karel will be (comparatively) easy to persuade to talk. This is mainly due to his concern that his death will be meaningless without an audience. He knows that Walewijn's main thrust is to use the masses to overthrow and execute the current leaders of Marienburg. More uprisings are planned with the next one likely to be in front of the Stadholder's Mansion.

He knows that a dark-haired beauty named Klara has joined the movement with some of her own followers. She's Imperial, but he is not sure from which province (he suspects Sudenland). There's a meeting later tonight on Luydenhoek Isle (he needs a bit more persuasion to reveal the address of 10 Kleinvinger Steeg or the 11:00 P.M. start time).

**Gustaaf Wafeler (M 3, I 41):** Student from the University who tends to join movements as a means of finding acceptance. Basically a wimp looking for someone to lead him and define his life. Any suggestion of violence (e.g. torture) will reduce Gustaaf into a whiner pleading for mercy. He thinks Droomer has some strong points in giving power to the people, but doesn't really believe Walewijn intends violence. However, he hasn't been to any meetings, but is looking forward to being invited. Gustaaf thought he heard Karel say that there was one tonight. (He was too taken by Yvette to pay attention.) He believes the Watch started the rioting.

Gustaaf did see a beautiful woman leaving the Aubentag riot with Walewijn but he will only offer this bit of information if directly asked about the dark-haired woman.

**Carlos Rodriguez Guzman Santana (M 4, I 47):** Thug from the Estalian gang, Los Muchachos Grandes who is posing (rather poorly) as someone interested in the movement. The fact is Carlos likes the looting potential and the violence. He does not really give a hoot about the group's ideals and will sell them out for money. He will not fold to threats or torture (unless the latter is heavily applied) as to do so is not in keeping with Carlos' macho image of himself.

Carlos says there are many lovely ladies

in the group (such as a certain black-haired Imperial beauty as well as a lovely Bretonnian señorita with whom he was talking) who are in need of a man. He knows the next meeting is sometime tonight on Kleinvinger Steeg in Luydenhoek.

**Yvette Remuiste (M 4, I 54):** A Bretonnian spy from Gisoreux masquerading as a radical University student (though not as radical as Karel). Yvette fancies herself as a seductress who can sweet talk any male in the group to avoid any physical unpleasantness the PCs might contemplate. Failing that, she will bargain any information she has on ORDESA for leniency (or a healthy bribe).

Yvette knows that Walewijn Droomer is a radical who plans to use commoners to overthrow and exterminate the upper class. He plans to set himself up as the leader of the commoners (and hence, de facto ruler of Marienburg). She has seen that the glue that holds ORDESA is Droomer. No one else in the group has the charisma, will, and vision to succeed him.

There are a fair number of murderers, thugs, and other opportunists (unlike herself, naturally) swelling the ranks and a raven-haired woman (from some Imperial province) and her entourage joined Walewijn's inner circle last Aubentag evening. She thinks that an influential merchant is funding ORDESA.

ORDESA's leaders (Inner Circle) will next meet tonight at 10 Kleinvinger Steeg on Luydenhoek Isle. The meeting is scheduled for 11:00 P.M.

In most cases, the above individuals will exchange information for their lives (the only exception is Karel who wants to be a martyr with an audience). If the PCs found the flat beneath Watch Sergeant Kuilstier's, they'll probably want to question them about his murder. None of the four above know of the murder though Karel and Carlos would both express their approval. Only Karel and Yvette know with certainty that ORDESA never planned on killing the Watch Sergeant. There was nothing to gain by such a deed.

PCs may wish to interrogate any captive member of ORDESA about the burning of various buildings in the Suiddock (including their boarding house). Again, only Karel and Yvette know for certain that

setting fire to buildings in the Suiddock was not part of any plan. If asked who would perpetrate such an action, neither really knows. Karel will blame the upper class merchant families while Yvette speculates that it is Imperial agents.

### **Rebels with a Cause**

Anyone on Luydenhoek Isle can direct the PCs to the southwestern waterfront. 10 Kleinvinger Steeg is a small warehouse that has been closed for a number of years. The large double doors in the front and the windows (10ft above the ground) are boarded up, leaving the back door as the only entry point (locked, CR 15).

During daylight hours, there is activity on the waterfront and surrounding warehouses. The PCs will notice that the Stevedores are, unusually, armed with hand weapons. Approaching them can best be accomplished if they avoid using whatever authority they believe they have. If the PCs foolishly put forth such authority, then the 2d6+8 Stevedores in the immediate vicinity ignore the pompous fools or a fight will break out with a further d10+4 Stevedores joining from nearby within d6+2 rounds. Defeating the Stevedores (wounding or killing a quarter) will drive them off and whatever information they have.

If the PCs successfully avoid confrontation, the Stevedores will yield some or all of the following information on a successful **Fel** test. They know that no one has used 10 Kleinvinger Steeg in the last five years after the previous owner, Herr Bruinwater, died from consumption. No one knows who owns it now. Several uptown brats were asking about the warehouse some days ago but haven't been seen since.

The area surrounding 10 Kleinvinger Steeg is deserted. Thirty minutes before the meeting is to begin, several armed students arrive to check the warehouse and immediate vicinity. This is the ORDESA vanguard whose role is to ensure that the location is secured for their meeting. The degree to which they're concerned is predicated upon who (if anyone) the PCs captured earlier. Should the vanguard find that the location is compromised, they will flee in order to bring word to Walewijn Droomer. Luckily, ORDESA's vanguard is not experienced. As students, their thoroughness in searching an area leaves



much to be desired. Unless they're totally inept, the hiding PCs should escape detection. Once satisfied, the vanguard moves to the back of the warehouse, and forces open the door.

Any PC successfully passing an **Int** test will realise that there is a reasonable possibility that ORDESA will view the vanguard's death as being a chance encounter in the deadly streets of the Suiddock. Robbing the bodies will further this perception. At this point, a couple of Klara von Teufelheim's followers will be sent forward to check out the warehouse. Should the vanguard flee, the PCs can easily follow them to the ORDESA Inner Circle.

Minutes before the commencement of the meeting, the rest of ORDESA arrive in several small groups. Some of the other, important members of ORDESA arrive on their own or with another person. The first large group to arrive is Walewijn Droomer with an entourage of five. About five minutes later, another group arrives led by a tall, slender, black-haired woman, surrounded by five people. The PC who had the dream will recognise her.

Even if Helana Koel survived the incident at the Crimson Claw, she will not appear here as Klara has removed this competitor from the world of the living. Such is the gratitude of Kháinite.

The PCs may use either opportunity to launch a surprise attack. The five protecting the scholar will launch a frontal counterattack against the PCs so that Walewijn can escape to the warehouse (if Yvette was not captured by the PCs, she'll use the fight as a cover for her retreat). Unless the battle ends quickly, Klara von Teufelheim's group will hear the noise and move quickly to battle the attackers. The vampiric High Priestess of Kháine's attack will be magical and directed at a PC Wizard or Cleric. At no time will the Watch appear, they have other problems going on at the moment.

If the PCs launch their attack at the second group, Walewijn and his company will be out of earshot of the fighting.

Should the battle go against ORDESA, Klara will use the confusion to slip away. Under no circumstances will the Priestess endanger herself to save ORDESA. They have served their purpose as unwitting

pawns. In the event that it is the PCs who are disadvantaged, they may well flee into the night. Klara will mark them for future reckoning. At this time, ORDESA declines to chase down the routed PCs.

If the PCs wait until the meeting is well under way to launch an attack, they'll have to figure out how to sneak into the warehouse without being seen or heard. Normally, two guards at the door would be enough for Walewijn. If either Karel or Yvette were captured earlier, one of Klara's entourage will augment the normal detail. Also, the entire group will be alert to possible attacks.

Any PC searching the outside windows discovers on a successful **I** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*) that a window in the back - and furthest from the door - is not as well boarded up as the others. A PC with *Scale Sheer Surface* skill will find enough handholds to easily reach these high windows. Further checking at the window reveals that the roof of an interior office is just beneath the window and removing the two boards will require little skill and a lot of luck (the PC must make a **Dex**+10 test to remove each of the boards silently). Once both are removed, entry through the window can be achieved. Each PC that tries to enter must first make a **Dex** test to reach the window (automatic if they have the *Scale Sheer Surface* skill) followed by a successful **I** test (+10 for *Contortionist*, *Escapology* skills) to get into the warehouse silently and unseen. Failure on either test results in some noise (depending upon the degree of failure), which will likely alert those within (base 60% chance plus any modifier).

Should the PCs alert the group within, ORDESA leaps to the attack. If the PCs successfully infiltrate the warehouse, they will observe the following from Walewijn:

"Word on the street is that we, ORDESA, are being blamed for the murder of the Watch Sergeant... what's his name?"

Walewijn turns towards the woman who introduced him to the crowd at the Aubentag rally. She answers, "Kuilstier." Walewijn continues:

"...Kuilstier. We are also blamed for the fires that raged across the Suiddock early this morning. I'm not sure who framed us. Nor do I care. Why? For the simple reason that these acts put fear into the Ruling

Class. They are now cowering behind the walls of their estates. We could not have hoped for anything better. We must now accelerate our timetable.

"Irina will go to the Ostmuur district and gather her team to make a pre-dawn attack on several of the grand estates in Goudberg. Keep away from the van Rugkil estate at this time. Not only have additional mercenaries recently arrived there, but also I have other plans for that House.

"Stefan, you will return to the University and your charges. Lead them to the Stadtholder's Palace at dawn and surround it. I'll be there in the morning to rally support from the People to ensure no

### Withering Hand of Kháine

Spell Level: Third Divine (Kháine)

Magic Points: 15

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Ingredients: Skeletal Hand

This spell allows a Cleric of Kháine the ability to siphon the life force of a target by simply touching them with the skeletal hand. The Kháinite Cleric rolls to hit as normal, ignoring unarmed combat modifiers. Any hit automatically causes d6 wounds (irrespective of Toughness and non-magical armour) to the victim each round and gives the Cleric an equal number of Magic Points (not to exceed their maximum).

This spell takes effect immediately and will continue to wound the victim each round so long as the Cleric of Kháine maintains physical contact with the victim. Either wounding the Cleric or otherwise breaking their hold may break contact. The corpses of victims who have their entire life force siphoned by this spell are left as skin and bones. All muscle and other tissues dissolve and the victim's face takes on a reddish hue leaving the appearance of a grimacing red skull. Anyone (outside the priesthood of Kháine) witnessing the death of the victim must make a **CI** test or gain 1 Insanity Point.

Only Witch-Hunters and Clerics of Mórr are allowed a **WP**-10 test to resist the power of this spell.

interference from the Watch. Not that I expect much as they'll be too busy dealing with the fire and panic caused.

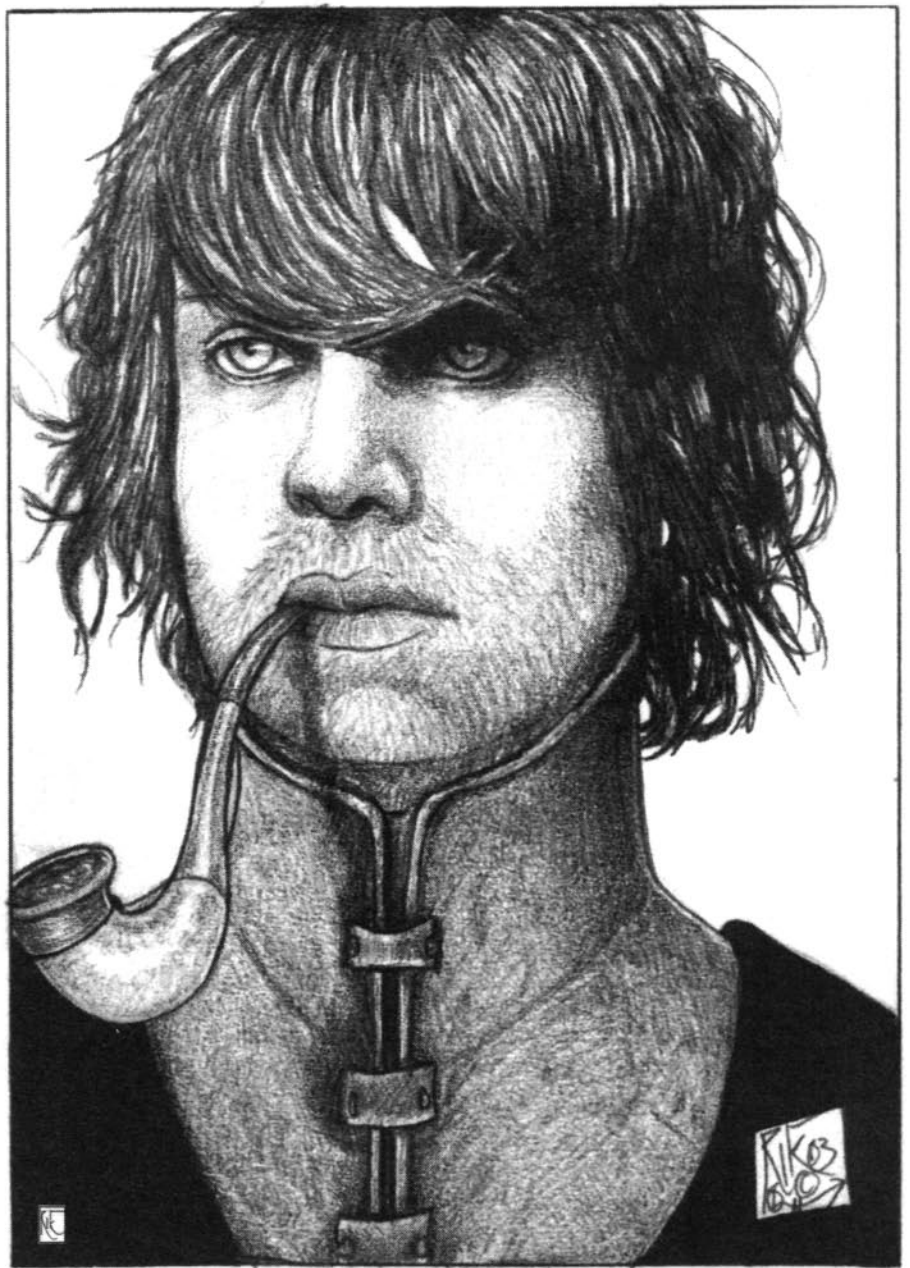
"Jolanda and Karel, you'll gather our Suiddocker followers and set additional fires throughout the district. Remember, there are others with us who will wait for the fires to signal them to fulfil their roles. [GMs Note: If Karel did not escape the PCs earlier, then Walewijn will name Yvette instead. If neither is available, then he names Vladimir.]

"Klara and her people will act as my escort. They are capable of handling the unexpected. Once we accomplish our initial tasks, the rest will fall into place. The People will see the Ruling Class for what they are: cowardly leeches that hide behind walls when they are faced with what the People have to deal with in their daily lives. Immediately upon consolidating power, we will rid ourselves of these parasites. The streets of Marienburg will run red with their blood as we purge their ilk from this city. Only then will we, who are the true representative of the People, take over the government. This is our destiny, even if all who oppose me must be put to the sword!"

By now the PCs should realise the true goals of ORDESA and, in particular, Walewijn Droomer. In addition, the PCs should realise that this is the opportunity to deal ORDESA a fatal blow. Attacking during or immediately after the speech will gain the PCs automatic surprise. If the fighting goes against them or Walewijn is killed, the remaining members will attempt to escape. If Klara is slain, her entourage will flee, leaving ORDESA to its fate.

PCs who decide to avoid combat and reach the Watch to alert them to ORDESA's plans will be met with scepticism and suspicion. How did they come by that information? Can the PCs lead the Watch to the would-be rebels? Why didn't the PCs try to bring one of the leaders in for questioning? Surely they could have captured one of them when the group dispersed? Perhaps they should be prepared to produce some evidence the next time they wish the overworked Watch to react to their wild stories.

If the PCs leave the area and did not bother to alert the Watch, ORDESA's plan proceeds, resulting in property damage, deaths, injuries, and a violent suppression



of the rebels after a day of rioting and mayhem. Investigations may soon follow and someone may have noticed PCs lurking about when ORDESA had their meeting. Perhaps the PCs were on the fringes of the seditious organisation?

Another possibility is that the PCs do attack and are driven off. They could simply run away or they could then resort to laying an ambush to waylay certain ORDESA members. This approach will have some initial success if the PCs launch their attack near the warehouse. If not, they may well miss the different route that ORDESA members take (each their own).

If the PCs ambush Walewijn, all

members of ORDESA and the cultists will come to his aid. At this point, Klara will watch to see where this fight goes before committing herself.

Searching Walewijn (dead or alive), the PCs will find a note in his pocket, which states (Player Handout 6):

*Droomer,*

*We have much to discuss about your future role in the new Marienburg. Before further funds become available, meet me at the White Shoal Café on Hightower Isle near the foot of the Hoogbrug Bridge at 7:00 P.M. this Bezahltag. Please come alone.*

*AvR*

### Where Are They?

Upon completion of the combat, the PCs may well wonder where the Watch are. Surely, someone would have heard all the noise of the fight and called them, but there are none to be seen. Instead, the PCs will see Suiddock in flames. Shouts and screams can be heard across the Bruynwater Kanaal with a number of silhouetted figures running in panic. Looking in other directions reveals other portions of Luydenhoek and Stoessel Isles are also alight.

Characters with *Sixth Sense* will suddenly realise that something close by is watching and moving towards them. Other PCs must pass a **Listen** test for soft noise (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) in order to avoid surprise. The PCs have inadvertently placed themselves in the escape route of three Skaven Gutter Runners. With blades swinging, the Skaven rush the PCs in the hopes of scaring - if not killing - them. ORDESA captives use the opportunity afforded by the Skaven attack to flee into the night. The Skaven do not intend to get drawn into a prolonged battle.

### Walewijn Droomer

**Demagogue, ex-Student, ex-Scholar, ex-Agitator**

**Height:** 6 ft 0 in

**Weight:** 180 lbs.

**Hair:** Brown

**Eyes:** Pale Blue

**Age:** 36

**Alignment:** Neutral with Evil tendencies (None)

**Trait:** Charismatic eyes

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	43	45	4	4	10	68	1	40	67	65	53	54	73

**Skills:** Arcane Language - Magick, Astronomy, Cartography, History, Identify Plant, Linguistics, Luck, Magical Sense, Numismatics, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Breton, Reikspiel, and Tilean), Secret Language-Classical, Sixth Sense, Speak Additional Languages (Breton and Tilean)

**Possessions:** Mail Shirt under tunic, Sword, Pamphlets, Purse (12 Gu, 14/7).

Once Walewijn was a man with a mission to learn all he could of the Classical Old World. Many were the days he could be

### Clan Eshin Skaven Gutter Runners

**Alignment:** Chaos (Horned Rat)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
5	48	40	3	4	10	55
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
2	39	34	34	28	39	24

**Skills:** Concealment Urban, Follow Trail, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Specialist Weapon-Lasso, Specialist Weapon-Net, Specialist Weapon-Throwing Knife, Strike Mighty Blow

**Possessions:** Leather Jack, Sword with serrated edge (+1 W) coated with poison (+d3 additional W unless **Poison** test successful), Garrote, 4 Throwing Knives, Dark Clothing

Clan Eshin Gutter Runners scout far ahead of Skaven hordes, seeking the enemy, ensuring the element of surprise, and stirring the rat packs of cities into action. They are also used to spread fear and create havoc to cover Skaven slaving raids. These have the smell of oil about them.



found in the libraries of the University and Temple of Verena. Time after time, however, Walewijn had to suspend his scholarly pursuit to teach basic Old World history courses to fulfil whatever obligations the University deemed necessary. One day Haam Markvalt (**M:SDtR**, page 99) gave Walewijn an old text describing an experiment by an ancient city-state near Tilea with a concept called democracy (demokratia in the classical tongue). Intrigued, Walewijn shared this knowledge with his class. As expected, the University was less than pleased that Walewijn introduced such a revolutionary idea to impressionable students. Sensing that his life's mission was to see this concept become a reality, Walewijn refused to stop. The University then expelled him along with several of his most ardent supporters. Walewijn left, threatening that

“the world, as you know it, will come down on your heads!” With his group, Walewijn formed the Orde Democratisch Samenleving (ORDESA) and began to lay plans to make his dream a reality in Marienburg. He is more than willing to sacrifice others to achieve his goals. This willingness has become more pronounced since Klara von Teufelheim joined the Inner Circle. In some way, Walewijn is drawn to her as if they were kindred spirits. Little does he know her true nature.

### Irina Dopppezunge

**Demagogue, ex-Student, ex-Agitator**

**Height:** 5 ft 6 in

**Weight:** 135 lbs.

**Hair:** Light Brown

**Eyes:** Green

**Age:** 30

**Alignment:** Neutral with anarchist tendencies (None)

**Trait:** Cool demeanour

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Inf	Cl	WP	Fel
4	42	38	3	4	10	53	1	34	64	43	50	55	70

**Skills:** Arcane Language-Magick, Blather, Cartography, History, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Secret Language-Classical, Sixth Sense, Specialist Weapon-Incendiaries

**Insanities:** Pyromania

**Possessions:** Leather Jack, Sword, Tinderbox, 4 Incendiaries, Purse (15/19)  
An Imperial demagogue sentenced to death for inciting violent riots in Talabheim and firebombing several buildings, Irina fled to Marienburg fifteen months ago. At first, she kept a low profile in order to remain unnoticed by bounty hunters and Imperial agents. Unfortunately, Irina's anarchist leanings forced her to search for a cause worthy of her talents. Eventually, she heard and saw an opportunity to strike back against the oppressive ruling class. It didn't take Irina long to find Walewijn and join his cause; not that she thinks he'll succeed. Irina enjoys anarchy and believes Walewijn's movement will provide her with the means to enjoy herself.

### Klara von Teufelheim

**Vampiric Cleric-Lvl 3, ex-Initiate**

**Height:** 5 ft 8 in

**Weight:** 130 lbs.

**Hair:** Black

**Eyes:** Dark Brown

**Age:** 1300 years, appears to be early 20s

**Alignment:** Evil (Kháine)

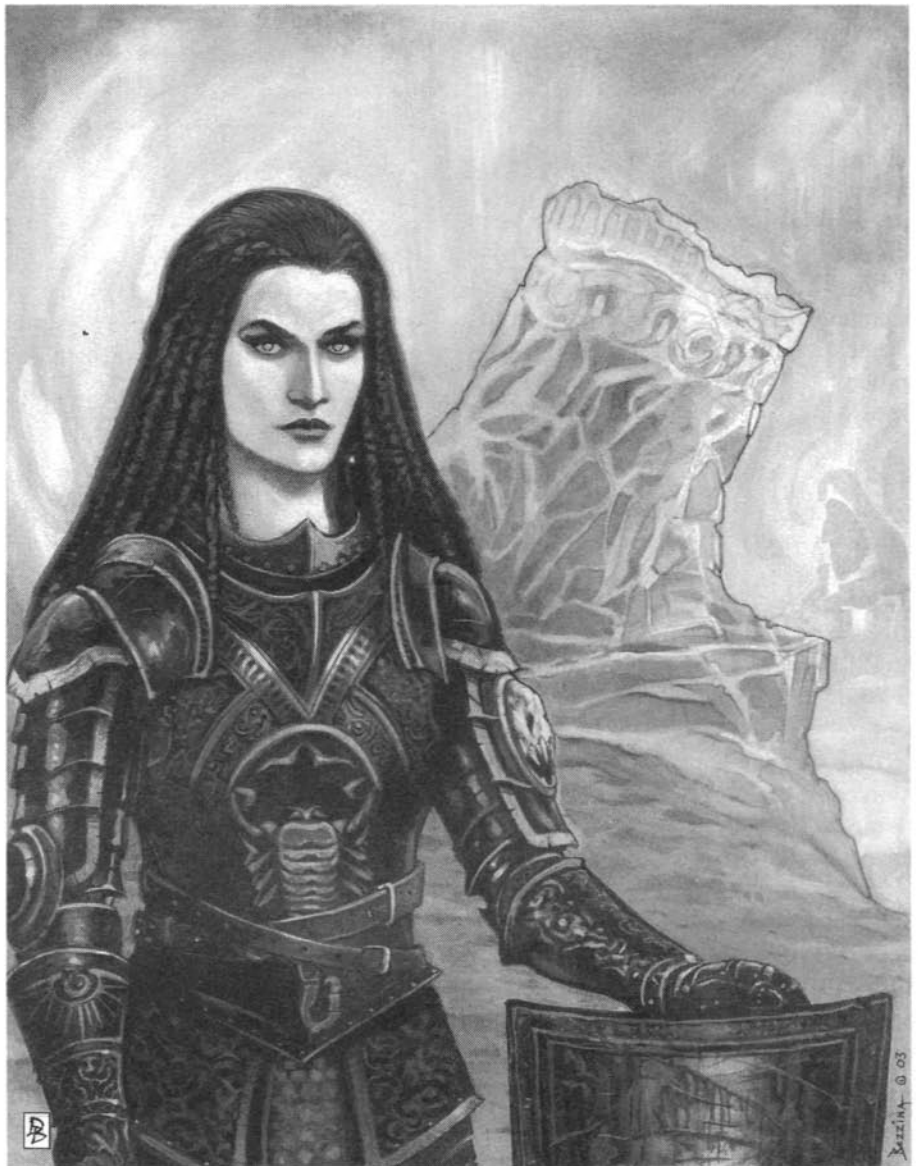
**Trait:** Very white skin, penetrating eyes

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Inf	Cl	WP	Fel
5	63	61	5	6	21	67	4	57	62	66	63	68	66

**Skills:** Arcane Languages - Magick/Daemonic Magick/Necromantic Magick, Cast Spells-Clerical 1-2-3, Daemonic 1-2, Petty, Frenzied Attack, Hypnotise, Identify Undead, Magic Awareness, Magical Sense, Manufacture Scrolls, Meditate, Public Speaking, Read/Write (archaic versions of Arabian, Breton, Reikspiel, and Tilean), Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Seduction, Sixth Sense, Speak Additional Language (archaic words and speech patterns of Arabyan, Breton, and Tilean), Theology

**Magic Points:** 48

**Spells:** Petty: Gift of Tongues, Magic Alarm, Magic Flame, Reinforce Door



**1st Level:** (Battle) Fire Ball, Steal Mind; (Daemonic) Bind Daemon, Summon Guardian; (Necromancy) Hand of Death, Summon Skeletons

**2nd Level:** (Battle) Aura of Protection, Lightning Bolt; (Daemonic) Stop Daemonic Instability, Summon Lesser Daemons of Kháine; (Necromancy) Control Undead, Hand of Dust, Stop Instability

**3rd Level:** (Battle) Animate Sword; (Necromancy) Life in Death, Raise Dead, Summon Skeleton Horde

**Disabilities:** Animal Aversion (Stage 2)

**Insanities:** Hatred (Followers of Mórr), Phobia (Dwarfs)

**Possessions:** Black Dress with Red and Yellow Trim, Sword, Staff (Carved from Human Bone).

**Special Rules:** Klara may control friendly Undead within 24 yards in the same way as a Necromancer. Her gaze can have a hypnotic effect: this ability costs 2 Magic Points to use, but if the victim fails a WP test he or she will become the Vampire's slave, even clearing away garlic and other protections so she can feed. Each time Klara feeds, the victim is allowed a further WP test to throw off the compulsions. She can only control one person in this way at any time and must be within 4 yards of the victim.

As a Vampire of Kháine she does not need to expend 10 Magic Points in order to survive. This is because she is powered by Kháine's hatred for all things living. Klara may recover Magic Points by meditation or draining the life force from

living Humanoid creatures. Each Wound or Strength loss on the victim's part gives her 1 Magic Point (she cannot exceed her MP total). Klara can use Magic Points to change from one form to another as well as casting spells. Each change costs 2 Magic Points and takes a full round to complete. She may travel abroad on cloudy days, but is unable to use her vampiric abilities until nightfall. In physical form, if slain by normal weapons, she will be instantly turned ethereal and lose all remaining Magic Points. She will then reform in her coffin where she must stay for three nights. At that time, she can resume her activities. She will be in a weakened state until she is able to refresh herself by either drinking blood or using the Withering Hand of Kháine spell (page 63).

Conceived by incestuous parents on Geheimnstag amid the bloody sacrifice of the other von Teufelheims, Klara was destined to be an instrument of Kháine. Understandably, her childhood was far from normal. Killing and bloodletting were so routine that it became second nature to Klara and was her only joy. At sixteen Klara became a High Priestess of Kháine, succeeding her mother. Sensing the rebellious mood of the peasantry in 1232 IC, she relocated the Temple of Kháine from the castle to a hidden cave in the nearby mountains. It was during this process that the peasantry put an end to the von Teufelheims and their reign of terror. Although now secured in her mountain base, Klara was always concerned that Dwarf scouts would uncover her. In 1276 IC, the Dwarfs tired of her depredations on their Human neighbours and led a band of Mórr Witch-Hunters to her mountain base. Despite the power of Kháine she wielded, Klara was killed by her foes and her body burnt. Before her collected ashes could be further sanctified, Klara's fanatical followers counterattacked and captured them.

Klara has returned to the world to further Kháine's plans of murder and revenge. To this end, Klara plans to spread terror and murder throughout the city. One method is the redirection of ORDESA from a passionate, political movement to a more violent and bloody one. The task is made easier by Walewijn's petty hatreds, which Klara has been able to enhance (especially after she seduced him).

Player Handout 5

*I have information that might help you. I presume you have some for me as well. Meet me at my flat at 11:30 pm. this Marktag. 26 Zwartmistig Weg on Sikkeleiland Isle, upriver from the Draaijenbrug Swing Bridge.*

*Kuilstier*

Player Handout 6

*Droomer,  
We have much to discuss about your future role in the new Marienburg. Before further funds become available, meet me at the White Shoal Café on Hightower Isle near the foot of the Hoogbrug Bridge at 7:00 P.M. this Bezahltag. Please come alone.*

*AvR*

Player Handout 4

*My friends,*

*Be warned. I have stumbled upon a secret so dark that I now fear for this city. Unfortunately, I think that I have been found out. I may not survive the next few days. Seek help from those who protect the dead. If I can, I will contact you. If this is all I can do, may the gods protect you.*

*Your friend,  
Lucas*

# ON THE ROAD

## Three Encounters by Roysten Crow

### The Champ

When the PCs stop at a coaching inn en route to Middenheim, they find a small gathering in the courtyard. The coachmen and some of the passengers are betting on a fight between a burly bare-chested man with a huge bushy beard, and the judicial champion of a fat merchant.

A tall, reedy man is orchestrating the bout. He immediately moves in on any tough looking party members and introduce himself as Mathius. He explains that he represents the mighty Gregor; raised by Norscan raiders in the deepest depths of Kislev, the veteran of a hundred prize fights, the most feared knuckles in Altdorf, the man who once took on a minotaur in Middenheim bare handed and still defeated it. For a measly crown, they can have a go at the champ, and perhaps win the purse of twenty crowns been weighing Mathius down.

Gregor is mute and fights to win. He easily defeats the judicial champion and then stands like a flexed statue of muscle until it is clear there are no more takers. If a party member wins the unarmed fight, they gain the purse and an offer to join the little troupe as they ply this event up and down the road.

They give the owner of the coaching inn a few crowns to soothe any sense of concern at a possible accidental homicide. But generally, the fact that the bouts make the customers happy and consequently more eager to drink and eat after a nice show is more than enough for the landlord.

### Gregor

**Career:** Protagonist (ex Bodyguard)

**Race:** Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	22	55	50	26	20	34	27
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	17	5	5	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (The Empire), Dodge Blow+10%, Heal, Intimidate+10%, Perception, Ride, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Disarm, Hardy, Menacing, Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying), Specialist Weapon Group (Throwing), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun, Very Resilient, Very Strong, Wrestling

**Armour:** None

**Armour Rules:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Sword (when not in a bout)

**Equipment:** Breeches, Heavy Boots, Massive fur coat and hat.

### Mathias

As Gambler (WFRP pg.234), except his equipment is; Good quality clothing, 3 x rings (worth 4, 10, 12 gc), Knife, Purse 20 gc, Purse 42 gc 7/6.

### The Deluded Charlatan

'Honest' Max has been selling 'Doctor Balfour's Elixir of Many Wonders' up and down the roads of the Empire for years. He has recently taken to adding flower petals into the brew to give it a nicer scent and colour. Although the plants he has chosen are completely mundane, Max believes that he has stumbled upon a miracle combination. This occurred when he recently fell and landed on his bag. A bottle broke and the glass cut him very deeply. To his amazement, the elixir-soaked wound closed before his eyes. On his travels he now has his customers watch as he asks them for a blade. He hacks a vegetable or two in half with it, stabs at some wood to show that it is not a fake, then raises it in one hand with a bottle of Elixir in the other.

*'The roads of the Empire, its streets, its alleys, its homes, all are places where terror can strike. Mutants, monsters, villains, cutthroats, and daemons haunt our every step. But what can you do? Trust your sword arm, live in fear, hope that the clerics of Shallya will sew you back together with their magic? Until today, death was a nightmare to fear. But now, thanks to my Elixir of Wonder, death is but a dream. Watch, good people. Watch, and be amazed!'*

He proceeds to drag the blade along his arm. Blood flows. The very blatant wound causes people to gasp. A woman

faints. He then sprinkles the potion on it and shows it off as the vicious gash closes again.

There are no more demos. If anyone wants to see it work, they will have to buy it and then use it as they see fit. It is far too valuable to waste frivolously, and he will not reveal anything about the recipe. His only explanation is that he came across a rare and fabulous herb that he uses, and he now intends to corner the market.

Could this be true? Of course not. Unknown to Max, he has developed a mutation of rapid regeneration. At the end of any round, he recovers all lost wounds. He believes this to be because of the Elixir.

He will be at a coaching inn where people will readily pay the 20 gc per bottle. Because of this exorbitant price, few people squander the concoction on test runs to confirm its power. They have seen it work, and that's good enough for them.

If it is used in his presence and does not work, he will be genuinely shocked and wonder why they are unaffected by the process. No other customers will test theirs, just in case the character has a fluke immunity. Max will readily refund their money, because if the character cannot benefit from his discovery, they have already lost out on the most potent curing agent in the Old World. Losing crowns on top of that is too much for Max to tolerate.

**The Feathered Fiend**

Siegfried Fleischer is a roadwarden in these parts. However, things have been tough lately. His wife is having her third child, he has an infirm mother-in-law to take care of, and his daily stresses have caused him to take a mistress who unfortunately likes the finer things in life. Siegfried has been driven to use his knowledge of where his fellow roadwardens are stationed to commit highway robbery when he is not on duty.

Siegfried practised a great deal with his pistols and is now a decent shot. After pillaging several areas in various different outfits and guises, he developed a singular persona and now sticks with it.

The ease with which he has succeeded and the amount of booty he has been gathering has all gone to his head. He is brash and extravagant. He only takes the best from his victims, tries to avoid killing, and always tries to charm any women before galloping off. He has very definitely become infatuated with this lifestyle.

His trademark is to pluck one of the peacock feathers from his hat and leave it with those he strikes. In his capacity as a roadwarden, he has hampered the investigation, offered false leads, and exaggerated his exploits during his 'search' for the highwayman. Consequently, most coachmen are terrified of the

deadliest shot and blade ever to plague the roads of the Empire and will stop and surrender rather than fight such a lethal and merciless adversary.

The inability of the local forces to do anything about 'the Feathered Fiend' has brought a 50 gc bounty upon Siegfried's head.

Either the PCs are confronted by him, whereupon he removes purses and then leaves a feather and gallops off or a coach thunders past and a few minutes later they hear a pistol shot. Siegfried can either still be conducting the hold up, or have already fled. If he meets serious resistance, he will flee the scene with a laugh and merry quip about how they should spend their precious purses on strong drinks, good food, and bad women, as next time he might decide to have their heads instead.

If he escapes, there will be a large group of roadwardens at the next inn who will vividly curse the highwayman because they had only just left that area a few hours ago. They will ask about what happened, seek a description or anything that sticks out in the minds of the witnesses and head back to see if they can pick up his trail.

They can also pay the bounty if the party have captured the Fiend, and of course, take the credit themselves when they reach the capital. If this is the case, the party hear a rumour a few weeks later that concerns the roadwardens who managed to capture the Feathered Fiend and all the prestige and benefits being afforded them for their bravery and skill.

**The Feathered Fiend / Siegfried Fleischer**

**Career:** Highwayman (ex Roadwarden)

**Race:** Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
40	55	36	24	55	39	45	40
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	12	3	2	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Animal Care, Charm, Common Knowledge (The Empire)+20%, Drive, Follow Trail, Gossip+10%, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Ride+10%, Search, Silent Move, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Ambidextrous, Coolheaded, Etiquette, Mighty Shot, Night Vision, Rapid Reload, Sharpshooter, Specialist Weapon Group (Gunpowder), Trick Riding

**Armour etc:** Roadwarden (WFRP2 p50) or Highwayman (WFRP2 p72) depending on which role he is in

# A TASTE OF BOOT LEATHER

Street Fighting in WFRP by Mark Parr

## Street Fighting

*"You learned how to brawl in the gutters. You can make unarmed attacks with a +10% bonus to Weapon Skill. Furthermore, you gain +1 bonus on damage rolls with unarmed attacks."*

*WFRP pg. 101*

With this, the WFRP rules blithely dispense with a subject loaded with possibilities and role-play potential. What is the nature of unarmed combat in the Old World? How is it learned? What role does Wrestling play in the Empire? And are there differing styles of unarmed, traditional combat in the Old World?

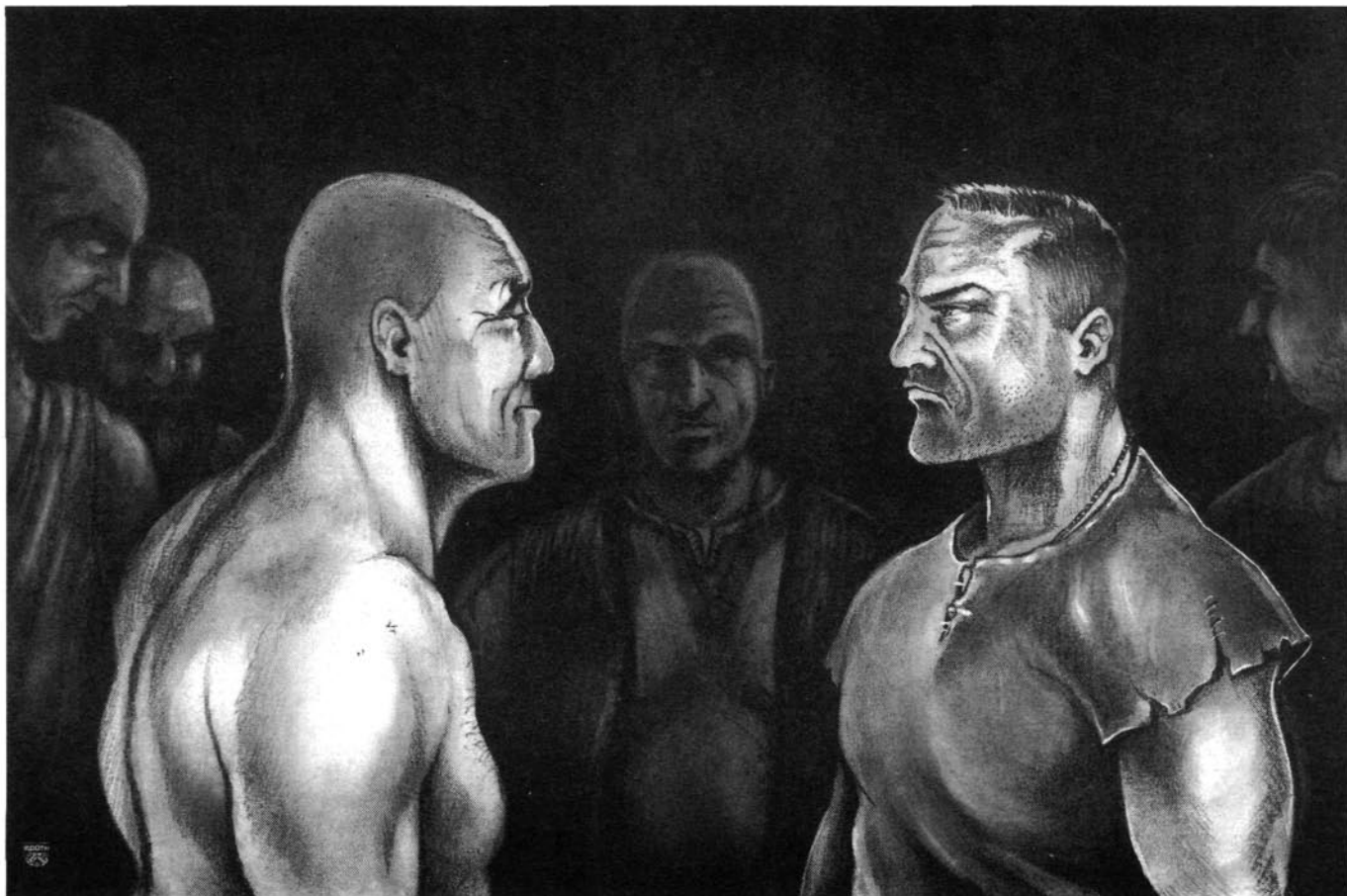
## Historical background

*Cum la bocha la terra ti faro basaré, O in la chiaue de soto ti faro intrare.*

*[I will play you to rest with your mouth on the ground, or I will distress you from below a wrench on the inside.]*

-Fiore dei Liberi, 1409, describing a technique known as the Boar's Tooth

The skills of grappling and wrestling have a long legacy in Europe. In the early 1500's, many soldiers, scholars, priests, and nobles wrote that wrestling was important in preparing





aristocratic youth for military service. Detailed descriptions of unarmed combat techniques can be found in many medieval fencing manuals, such as Fiore dei Liberi's *Flos Duellatorum* ('Flower of Battle'), or the *Talhoffer Fechtbuch*. English knightly tournaments as late as 1507 allowed combatants "To Wrestle all maner of wayes" or to fight "with Gripe, or otherwise". The Italian master Pietro Monte declared in the 1480's that wrestling was the "foundation of all fighting", armed or unarmed. Albrecht Durer's 1512 *fechtbuch* contains more material on wrestling than on swordplay, yet the relationship between them is noticeable. The oldest known fencing text, the late 13<sup>th</sup> century treatise MS I.33, even states, "For when one will not 'ede to the other, but they press one against the other and rush close, there is almost no use for arms, especially long ones, but grappling begins, where each seeks to throw down the other or cast him on the ground, and to harm and overcome him with many other means."

And there were regional and national differences in approach to unarmed combat. There are some that remain reasonably well-known, such as Cornish-Breton wrestling or the French Savate, but there are rare and unusual styles as well: *Glima*, a Viking art similar to Sumo, the *mostre* boxing matches of Renaissance Venice, and *Purring*, a particularly violent Welsh dueling style. They are not entirely lost to us, there are historical accounts and

manuscripts, certainly, but also techniques preserved in traditional folk dance (the dirk dance of Scotland is an example of close-quarter kicking regimens, for instance) and groups of enthusiasts are even now striving to re-create these arts.

That some Renaissance masters and courtiers did frown on these close-fighting actions is true. The view that a sword should alone be sufficient for defense is actually a reasonable one. It is perfectly reasonable that two gentlemen would prefer to have an honourable quarrel settled by sword skill, rather than risk scuffling in the dirt and getting bashed in the face (of which there are several accounts). But just as with schools of modern martial arts now, there were theories of fighting back then that were more ideal than reality. There were also styles that felt no cause to address certain possibilities that would be more or less unlikely to be employed by the parties in a formal aristocratic duel.

The lower classes practised their own forms of the martial arts, perhaps more sport-like than the upper classes. Interestingly, in the literature one can find remarks about commoners beating knights in wrestling, although this is sometimes used just as metaphor.

There have been many articles with descriptions of rules for various real world eastern martial arts with doubtful equivalents in WFRP. This present one is instead concerned with simple street fighting and wrestling as the more skilful might use in the Empire, Bretonnia and other nations, loosely based on the rich historical traditions of the west and adapted to the Old World. There is, obviously, no need to include such styles in your campaign, but they offer many avenues for individual GMs to develop. Optional rules, if they are desired, are included at the end of this article for your consideration.

### Generally

There are typically three instances when unarmed combat is called for, each of which can make use of these under-utilised skills. First and most obviously is unarmed combat as an act of desperation. The character may be attacked without having a weapon to hand or has been disarmed. This is the most common as used by GMs in the game and, in a society as frequently violent as the Old World is, it is entirely logical. Secondly, unarmed combat is an escalation of a heated argument coming to blows, a step below that of drawn daggers and swords. And third, there are forms of unarmed duels that occur in some regions of the Old World. These are not the duels of nobles and the upper classes, generally, but are instead the duels of the peasantry. Let us examine each in turn.

### Being caught out

Some cities are known to take a somewhat dim view of those walking about fully armed, and it is common practise to tie down ("peace bind") one's sword to its scabbard when attending a noble's court. In these cases, and many others, characters may be attacked in the street either without a weapon or not able to arm themselves in time to respond. Or they may simply not wish to draw the attention of the watch. But they are never completely

### Resources

For those with interest in the subject of historical fighting styles, there are many resources available online:

#### Medieval Wrestling

[www.thehaca.com/spotlight/unarmedcombat.htm](http://www.thehaca.com/spotlight/unarmedcombat.htm)

This site has splendid scans from an authentic manual of the period.

#### Fechtbooks

[www.thehaca.com/manuals.htm](http://www.thehaca.com/manuals.htm)

Includes many online fechtbooks, free for downloading and handing out to players, if you wish.

#### Western Martial Arts

[www.aemma.org](http://www.aemma.org)

Another great source.

#### Kicks in Swordplay

[www.thehaca.com/essays/kicks.htm](http://www.thehaca.com/essays/kicks.htm)

The main essay section is excellent and contains many articles that may give the individual GM more food for thought.

#### Wrestling, as it was practised in Britain.

[www.geocities.com/cinaet/walker.html](http://www.geocities.com/cinaet/walker.html)

#### The Viking art of Glima.

[ejmas.com/jwma/articles/2000/jwmaart\\_kautz\\_0100.htm](http://ejmas.com/jwma/articles/2000/jwmaart_kautz_0100.htm)

#### Canary Islands Stick Fighting

[ejmas.com/jwma/articles/2000/jwmaart\\_wolf\\_0500.html](http://ejmas.com/jwma/articles/2000/jwmaart_wolf_0500.html)

The inspiration for the above-mentioned herders' style of Tilea and Estalia.

at the mercy of their attackers, even those armed and armoured. The *Street Fighting* and *Wrestling* talents are naturally helpful and covered adequately in the rule book, but what of those who are not so skilled?

The solution, beyond dodging or fleeing, is to think tactically. What is around you? In a city like Middenheim there may easily be walls to shove a person headlong into, or even over, so that they fall to their death or injury. A tavern is a clichéd but obvious spot for a dust-up, so recourse to smashed tankards or tossing head-down into a privy is to be expected. Many taverns have darts or skittles and it is possible to use these if needed. And one should never forget to use a stool or small chair to hold back a knife-wielding attacker. These are generally covered under the entry for *Improvised Weapons*, as found in the *Combat* section of the rules.

The countryside is much harder to accommodate and is subject to perhaps too many variables to list here. In these cases, the character is much more likely to be surrounded and disarmed, and this is frequently the expected time for negotiation.

### Coming to Blows

Arguments can get heated without swords yet being drawn, and this fact is all-too-frequently overlooked in most role-playing games in favour of the more dramatic and deadly armed combat. This is most unfortunate because firstly, it is not realistic or even required in many cases and secondly, drawn weapons tend to bring unneeded attention from the authorities. Herein lies an opportunity for role-play and the revelation of unique cultural aspects.

Differing regions of the Empire tend to start fights in slightly different ways. For instance, in Bretonnia and the Riekländ a fight typically starts with knocking the hat off the offender or slapping a glove across his face. In the Averland and Southern Empire areas, a fight typically ensues after a shoving match. In the Central and Eastern Empire, in areas like Talabecland, Ostermark, and Ostland, name calling and posturing initiate a fight, whilst in the cold environs of the North a fight will begin with a simple punch to the chest or face without preliminary.

From here, fights tend to occur in relation to the regional flavour of their unarmed combat. A brief survey:

The people of Marienburg are noted for their skilful use of grips, throws, trips, and lunges in addition to the usual fists and feet, a style that came about from shipboard combat. Grips are simple restraints while throws are typically performed over the hip and into the water or onto the ground. Trips are self-explanatory and lunges are the preferred methods of entry, whether to the side or from the front.



The Reikland area, especially in Altdorf and Nuln, tends to adhere to a more classical wrestling. This has as much to do with tradition in the region as it does with the popularity of exhibitions performed for the nobility and at circuses. Likewise, the upper classes of Bretonnia have adopted the form as their own, adding in various regional techniques.

The Averland and Stirland areas, close by The Moot and Dwarfholds, have a long tradition of foot fighting in often-crouched positions. Interestingly, the footwork of these areas is quite sweeping and evasive, but capable of taking on more than one opponent, if necessary. While an exponent facing a shorter opponent would be mostly striking to the head and throat, versus taller ones the style tends to exploit the vulnerable underbelly and succeeds in sweeping behind to attack the kidneys or kick out the knees. This style of fighting is both unusual and prized by aficionados of rough-and-tumble combat, as it is complementary to the use of hand weapons such as swords and axes.

The Northern Empire, often cold and icy, generally prefers stand up boxing as a rule, the use of feet being regulated to very low kicks used to either block an incoming kick before it gains full speed or quick stinging blows to the shins. Footwork is stable and efficient, used for quick sharp turns to evade and redirect an incoming blow.

The Glima (Norscan: 'fast moves') is a semi-ritualised form of fighting that dominates Norsca and Albion. In this, the opponents square off and grip each other by the belt (eastern Norsca) or the belt and shoulder (Albion and western Norsca). The Glima is typically a sport, the object being to force the other off-balance and win by a throw, or a series of throws, outside of a marked area which is in turn based on horse corrals. In unarmed combat, a person skilled at Glima might perform a throw accompanied by following stomps or locks applied to the arms, which may break bones or simply restrain them.

Another unusual fighting style of note is practised in the hills of Estalia and Tilea by the goat and shepherders there. Having a need to rapidly follow their charges over broken land, the herders have used their long, flexible poles to vault up and down slopes, often landing quite accurately where they will. They have spirited contests to see who in the village can vault the farthest or for the longest series and who is most daring as to where they land, leaping upon the roofs of cottages and the like. They also can make use of this for a tremendous, silent first blow from hiding that is often capable of unhorsing a fully armed knight, thereafter using the pole normally as a stave. Unless a character is from these areas, it is very unlikely they will ever be able to learn it.

**Non-Human unarmed combat**

The above forms are the most common for Humans in the Old World, but the various races have their own, frequently as a result of their peculiar societies and racial makeup.

Elfs, as can be readily imagined, utilise a more refined combative repertoire than their human counterparts. The main differences lie in the attention they pay to responding at touch to an attacker, meaning that they develop reflexive, automatic responses through dedicated practice in sporting games. An Elf's high Initiative score reflects this.

Dwarfs are no-nonsense, often dirty fighters, focusing on such tactics as gripping and pulling the groin, poking out eyes, head butts, biting, and crushing knees with hammerfists. A well-placed



elbow smash can have the average Human vomiting and prone to further attacks. Oddly, these are considered fair moves for the matches held amongst the Dwarfs; the only unfair move is pulling at the opponent's beard, which is often met with a severe beating.

Halflings, weak individually, are

given to attacking in groups when obliged to do so- and are surprisingly effective at it. While it is difficult for an individual Halfling to grapple most other opponents, it is possible for two or more to add their skills to do so. It is recommended that each additional Halfling (up to six) add in half of their scores for determining results. Such co-ordinated attacks should apply only to those Halflings who are skilled in unarmed combat, however. Other than this, a Halfling generally relies on dodging and flying tackles to the knees.

**Duelling Unarmed**

The copper miners of Ubersreik have a novel and painful way of fighting known as 'purring,' or shin kicking, a style that

*'At two o'clock the men appeared, wearing Miner's Shoes toed with copper, having submitted their feet for inspection to show that there were no protruding nails, and Johann gave the word to purr. Bertoldt advanced cautiously and appeared to forget about the shoulder holding until his second reminded him of it. He took hold with apparent unwillingness, and then began the most brutal and savage contest that two men could engage in. For fully five minutes they sparred with their feet in a manner that was simply wonderful. Blows were countered and returned with the same skill and rapidity as shown by men fighting with their fists. Not once in that time did either man more than touch his opponent's skin. Then Heinrich, taking a firmer hold on his opponent's collar, lifted his left foot and, after keeping it poised for a moment, made a straight toe kick for his opponent's right knee. Bertoldt deftly avoided the blow by spraddling his legs far apart, and with almost inconceivable quickness brought his left foot around and caught Heinrich on the outside of the right calf. The flesh was laid open almost to the bone, and the blood spurted out in streams.*

*Heinrich never uttered a word. At the same instant that his own leg was cut he gave Bertoldt what is known as the sole scrape. Beginning at the instep and ending just below the knee pan, Bertoldt's left shin was scraped almost clear of skin. Both men were evidently in pain, and angry. They kicked and countered a dozen times again without doing any damage. Then Bertoldt, by some mishap, lost his hold on his opponent's shoulder. In attempting to grasp it again he lifted his eyes for a moment, and before he could recover himself the calves of both of his legs were laid open by a double-foot kick. In return for this he succeeded in delivering a terrific kick on Heinrich's knee, causing him to drop to the ground like a log, pulling the other kicker on top of him. The seconds rushed forward and separated the men and took them to their corners to bind up their wounds. The first go occupied sixteen minutes. When the call of purr came again the purrers hobbled to the center and took another hold. They were, indeed, a pitiable looking affair. Heinrich's legs, although bound in dressings, were bleeding freely, and the exposed places looked like beefsteak. His opponent's shins had both been scraped clean of the flesh, and the blood was oozing out from between the strips of plaster. Without any preliminary sparring Bertoldt made a vicious straight kick at this opponent's lame knee, bringing him to grass again before he had time to think.'*

originated in the Grey Mountains. One 'purr' that occurred in 2504 IC was reported in the *Die Urlichter*, a popular gentleman's gazette published in Altdorf (see sidebar above).

As can be seen from this account, unarmed duels frequently follow the same rules as armed duels, with seconds and referees attending. These types of duels occur mainly among the lower classes, and while a Duellist would not shy from such a challenge, there is no glory for them in winning one, but there is a significant loss of reputation if one is lost. This puts the Duellist in an

## Optional Rules

It should be remembered that there are essential differences between the talents: *Street Fighting* represents the quick and dirty fighting of the masses and *Wrestling* is a profession in the Empire, an art largely given over to performance. It makes sense that *Street Fighting* can take on regional flavours, while *Wrestling* proper is more stylised and formal in execution. A perfect solution may be to introduce regional styles of fighting.

A simple method of including rules for regional fighting styles for characters to obtain them when they take the *Street Fighting* skill a second time. While the advantages are often minor, this is offset by the degree of choice available to the player. Gained in the normal way by expending 100 xp, the character may learn *one* of the following:

**Averland-Stirland style footwork:** Having learned the complex and rare kicking styles of the South, the character now has an arsenal of unarmed techniques useful when surrounded, although they are not so very good to use on ice or ship decks! The player may choose his facing when surrounded, engaging the foe of his choice, at the beginning of his round. If unarmoured and wielding one hand weapon, he may kick for one additional attack to the same opponent at -20 To Hit.

**Glima:** No known texts exist for this unusual style, developed for festivals and competitions in the icy lands of Norsca and misty Albion. The player reduces his WS penalty for grapple to -10, and gains +10 to Strength tests when maintaining a hold.

**Northern Empire Boxing:** A no-nonsense boxing style common to the grim and cold cities of the North, they are often good at slipping from blows and keeping to their feet, especially in Middenheim, where a throw can result in being pitched over the nearest wall. The opponent suffers an additional -10 to WS if trying to grapple the character. Strikes, however, proceed as normal.

**The Marienburg style:** A traditional art among sea-going Ship's Mates and Sea Captains, it is uncertain whether it derived from the Sea Elves or came about from the simple necessity of dealing with rowdy crew. The style allows a player an additional +5 to WS when unarmed and reduces his own grappling penalty to -10, if the Wrestling skill is not known already.

**Purring:** Having first learned the ways of duelling among the lowly peasantry, even a Duellist may purr without fear of loss of social standing. This skill allows the character to use foot weapons, such as Copper-topped Miner's Shoes or spurs, without penalty.

Only in exceptional circumstances should a character be able to learn more than one style.

awkward situation, one in which it is entirely acceptable to nominate a replacement of equal social standing to the challenger or to force the combat into other, deadlier, forms. Nonetheless, if the Duellist is obligated to fight in these matches, all attendant local rules apply.

### **New Item: Copper-topped Miner's Shoes**

Cost: 14 gc in a mining town, considerably more elsewhere.  
Encumbrance: 12, cannot be worn while riding.

Description: A very rare item in most cities and towns, copper-topped shoes are common goods in the mining towns of The Empire. They are short, hard leather boots, held fast by 2 or 3 buckles. They have heavy copper shanks, tips that encase the toes, and hobnailed soles. Over time, Copper-topped Miner's shoes tend to become worn and the nails used to build them will protrude, shortly after which the leather tears and the soles fall apart, making them useless for general wear. Repairs are generally impossible, so typically the metal elements are incorporated into a new pair.

Across the Grey Mountains in Bretonnia, the use of such shoes is regarded as uncouth and unfair. They do have a similar style of duel, but the opponents are barefoot and the principal aim is to break the joints of the opponent, targeting the knees, ankles, and arch, primarily. It is entirely fair to claw the arms and chest with one's hands, however.

Rules-wise, they are treated similarly to knuckle-dusters, thus halving all penalties in unarmed combat. If nails protrude, they cause an additional +1 damage for that combat only.

### **Fechtbooks and Fechtshules**

With the appearance of printed books in the Old World, it was inevitable that there would appear manuals to describe various techniques for unarmed fighting. Such are called *fechtbuchs*, the most common being Talhoffer's *Manual of Wrastlynges*, produced in the Empire and available (albeit rarely) for 50 gc. It is an illustrated manual and a character can read it, gaining an insight into street fighting if 100 xp are expended.

The nature of what is learned from a *fechtbuch* is variable, however, depending on the character's experiences with unarmed combat and the effort spent in learning from a reliable one.

A character with no *Street Fighting* or *Wrestling* skill can learn but little from simply reading a *fechtbuch*. With the expending of 100 xp, the character gains solely a +10% *Fellowship* modifier when speaking to someone more learned on the subject, at the fighting pits for instance. A failure indicates that the learned other has decided the character has a shallow grasp of knowledge and results in a -20% test for the future, as he or she resents speaking further with the dimwit. Other than this, it is impossible to learn to fight from only reading a *fechtbuch*.

If a character wishes to learn the techniques within a *fechtbuch*, in addition to expending 100 xp as noted above, he will require

the assistance of another person who also has 100 xp to expend on the process. The two must then systematically practice the entire contents, resulting in both learning either the *Wrestling* or *Street Fighting* talent, but never both.

If the GM allows it, a character who already has the Street fighting or Wrestling skill can also gain from a given text, but it requires extensive experimentation with the techniques with at least one other student of equal or surpassing skill. If the characters both expend 100 xp in pursuit of the knowledge contained therein, further bonuses in unarmed combat may be gained. The rules for such gains are left for the individual GM to expand upon, but for simplicity they should follow from the regional differences as discussed.

Other than this, Charlatans frequently make use of fechtbuchs to establish small and doubtful *fechtshules* (see below) based on particular texts. With varied degrees of understanding, a Charlatan operating such a school will offer training based on the illustrations until a student is killed, then they move on, changing names in the process.



Unreliable fechtbuchs do exist. The techniques revealed in them are sometimes deliberately altered to protect the real techniques, or are simply the misunderstood reports of non-fighters. Such manuals actually *reduce* the combatant's chances of success in unarmed combats, frequently giving -10% To Hit or -1 to Damage. The most notorious of these is Doktor Kleinspiel's *Peerless Fisticufferie*, which is largely given over to unworkable, but

plausible, theoretical approaches to kicking, footwork and speed development in punching. It is surprisingly popular and commonly available in The Empire for a mere 5 gc.

There are fechtshules located in some of the larger towns and cities in The Empire, often run by retired fighters and catering to Bodyguards, Entertainers, and other persons who require advanced skills in Wrestling and unarmed combat. The quality varies tremendously as they are not currently organised into guilds and the fortunes of any given school turns downwards after a public loss. Some fechtshules concentrate on teaching entertaining but non-lethal routines similar to plays, while others are little more than fighting pits replete with betting and attendant barber-surgeons to assist the losers. Attendance at a fechtshule is often a good and relatively safe means to learn the basic Street Fighting or Wrestling skills, which are gained in the normal way.

### The Fly-by-Knight.

Per Lager, a Charlatan from Middenland posing as a noble, has for several years run a series of fechtshules in the Carroburg area, largely basing his teaching on an obscure text known as *The Pfeildorf Codex*, reputed to be an early exposition of the Southern Empire style of fighting. Unfortunately, the text is entirely mistaken and unreliable (but worth 175 gc to the right collector).

A merchant's son attended Per's latest school and studied very hard for the last nine months, at which time he entered an annual festival in Carroburg, posting 25 gc to enter against a pot to win all; possible winnings of hundreds. Naturally, he was beaten savagely, coming in dead last. Per Lager ran off the next day.

The merchant's son asks that you find the fugitive Lager and return him to Carroburg. He is utterly convinced that with another year's training he will win! It may be possible for the merchant's son to accompany them as well, seeing as how he has trained so very hard to fight.

### The Masked Devil

A wrestling champion has been invited to attend the Grand Duke at his manor, giving an exposition of his talents. The word on the street is that the wrestler is past his prime but pays well for persons who will put on a good show and allow themselves to be defeated. Sounds like easy money...

But there is a problem: the wrestling champion does not pull punches and is not quite past his prime.

This scenario, while very simple, is a good way to try out rules without getting bogged down by them. The Masked Devil could use any of the styles you deem fit, and could possibly become a teacher if you wish.

### Playing for the Prize

A town crier in Middenheim announces that Jean-Pierre Lausanne, a Bretonnian, will arrive to establish a new fechtshule. For one day only he offers to fight all challengers for his right to do, and if he loses he will leave the city. Betting is rife and so tempers are heated in preparation for the big day, with resentment boiling over at the arrogance of 'the furriner', who has yet to be seen. Over thirty fighters have signed up, so the story goes. Surely Jean-Pierre can't win? Or is there something else going on?

Indeed there is! He is a thoroughly rotten Slaanesh cultist who gains pleasure from both betting and pain, takes drugs that enhance his strength, and he cheats.

In this scenario, there is much latitude for expansion. Rogues might get involved on either side, running bets or helping the Bretonnian (or Imperials) cheat. Racketeers may enforce collections, warriors may fight, and bodyguards may end up protecting Jean-Pierre for a time. Finding out more about this strange fighting cult may be an adventure in itself!

# AMONG THE LOWEST OF THE DEAD

A Short Story by James Tait

Detlef looked different today. A bird had left its mess on his head, and his fixed grimace seemed more intense than usual. By his side Theodoric had escaped the bird's attentions, and there was something of a smugness to the set of his tooth-filled mouth. I bowed slightly, almost imperceptibly, to each of them in my usual fashion, before passing beneath the gargoyle pair and entering the library.

"Good morning Ludo," Marte greeted me with her customary cheer, "Have you heard the news? They say another student has disappeared."

"Well, you know my opinion on that matter. There are plenty of perfectly mundane reasons for a student to vanish - I see no need to assume foul play."

"Oh, you are far too sensible for your own good! Some of the theories people are talking about in the taverns are really quite fascinating."

"I'm sure they are," I smiled broadly. Marte's enthusiasm for rumour-mongering was almost legendary among the members of the faculty. "Of course, I have always felt that we could do with a few less students around the place. I know that my work would benefit from fewer interruptions."

"I see. Well, If that's the way you feel I'll not delay you any longer." Marte's bright grin disarmed her words, and so we parted amicably, she to the lecture hall, I to my books.

I passed through a hive of inter-connected rooms in the cavernous library of the University of Nuln. I reached my destination; though I walked a route well known to me, always there were other passageways, other rooms where I had never ventured. Sometimes I glanced down a dim, unlit corridor, to look upon books buried beneath the dust of ages. I looked, but I went no further.

My own studies relate to the chronology of the kingdom of Bretonnia, more specifically the town of Parravon, a field in which I have acquired some little renown. That morning I was pouring over an account of the sacking of the town by the notorious fiend Drachenfels, the Great Enchanter, when I came across something peculiar. I had just discovered some important detail in the account that had not appeared in the others I had read, and was looking back over my notes. My eyes ran into a scrawled note in the margin - the writing was mine but the words I did not recognise. In a hurried, ugly hand I had written the following: *I was sick - sick unto death with that long agony.*

That was all, and it puzzled me that I had no memory of having written it. Nor was there any indication of why I had thought that worth noting. Still, the words were not really out of place within the context - they could have been those of a victim of the Great Enchanter. Possibly I had come across the quotation somewhere,

and simply neglected to include the reference. Certainly it was not the most disturbing thing I had read in the accounts; many vile tortures had been visited upon the citizens of Parravon in those terrible days.

It was dark when I set out for home, and pouring with rain. Though I proceeded with all haste to my small apartment above the pawnbroker's, I was quite soaked by the time I reached it. Perhaps I had developed a mild fever as a result, for that night I suffered from terrible nightmares. I did not recollect what they had involved, yet when I awoke I was struck by the sensation that there was someone in the room, watching me. After an eternity I managed to light a candle, and found to my relief that I was alone. Nevertheless, my nerves were quite shattered by the experience. I spent the remaining portion of the night awake accompanied by a book and a decanter of brandy.

◆ When I arrived at the library next morning, I found that the rain had washed the bird excrement from Detlef's head. I decided he looked pleased, though of course his expression was the same as always. If someone were to ask me why I had named a grotesque and weathered carving after a noted playwright, I do not believe I could answer them convincingly - it just looked to me like a 'Detlef'. I *could* explain why I had chosen the name Theodoric for his counterpart however; there was something about the gargoyle's mean, bestial expression that reminded me rather pointedly of my father. It was my father who had saddled me with my deeply unfashionable name, Ludovicus, and this served well enough as my own little revenge upon him.

I did not run into Marte that morning. Instead, as I was settling myself down at my customary table a student approached me, a young man with a thin beard and an earnest, worried expression. "Doktor Necker, may I speak with you please?"

I sighed, resigning myself to the wasted time. "Sit down, sit down," I gestured impatiently at the chair opposite mine, "What can I do for you?"

He took the seat and sat in silence, obviously unsure how to begin. After a moment or two he found his courage and spoke. "Doktor Necker, I expect that you have heard of the disappearances."

"Yes, of course. I believe a student or two has vanished. Really, I am sure there is nothing to be concerned about. Some students find it difficult to adjust to life at the University, and-" To my great annoyance, he interrupted me.

"Please Doktor, you must listen to me. More than a couple of students are missing - at least five have vanished in the last few weeks alone. Among them my own brother, Eduard"

He paused there, apparently on the brink of tears. That name struck some chord within me, as though I had heard it recently in some unpleasant context. Could it have been in my nightmares of the night before?

“Eduard,” his voice broke as he said the name, “went missing three days ago. He was seen for the last time entering the library after dark - he never came out again. I know my brother, Doktor Necker, and I know that he would never willingly cause me so much worry. Something has happened to him. I fear that he is dead.”

“Come now, I’m sure there is no need to assume the worst just yet. Your brother may have had debts you were unaware of, and saw the need to disappear for a while to avoid them. Maybe he has begun to indulge too heavily in Weirdroot.” I smiled in a way I hoped would be reassuring, “Or perhaps he met a girl whose company he finds more appealing than study.”

“No, no, it could not be any of those things. I am very close to Eduard, and he would never go away for so long without telling me. But there is more. For the last two nights I have had terrible nightmares - I dreamt that I saw Eduard entombed alive beneath the city, unable to escape.” His eyes were wide, his expression wild. I was becoming deeply uneasy.

“I see. I think the best course would be for you to report this to the watch.”

“But I have! They tell me that they will find my brother, but they have found no trace of the others so how can I leave this in their hands?”

“Really my dear fellow, I sympathise but you must trust to the proper authorities. I do not see how I can help you.”

He opened his mouth to speak, and then shut it again. There was a moment of uncomfortable silence before he spoke once more, his voice flat and dull. “There was a reason I came to you Doktor. I saw you in my nightmares as well.”

With that he stood and left, while I could only sit and stare after him aghast.

As I walked home that evening, I felt that I was followed. If I turned, using some pretext so as to appear unaware of my pursuer, I saw nothing. Nevertheless someone, or worse, *something*, shadowed me to my home. Once inside I locked the door and, with some considerable effort, slid the chest of drawers in front of it. Breathing heavily I sat down and struggled to calm my pounding heart. I lit a pipe, drawing deeply on the rich smoke, and poured a glass of brandy. Slowly, I began to feel myself again. Such foolishness! I stood, removing my coat, but as I went to hang it up I saw a piece of paper protruding from the pocket. My heart skipped as I retrieved it and read: *You are in great danger. Do not go to the library tomorrow.*

The note fell from my hand; I swayed and almost fell. Collapsing clumsily into my chair, I drained the brandy and

poured another. At first I think I took the note seriously, resolving to stay at home tomorrow, but as the night passed I became more and more certain that it was but some student prank. Perhaps the young man who had spoken to me that day was responsible; I would certainly have harsh words with him tomorrow. Eventually I slipped exhausted into sleep, but I did not move the chest of drawers from across the door until morning.

◆ I stood before the library door in the pleasant morning sun looking up at the gargoyles. Did I imagine it, or did Detlef look afraid? His features were as immobile as ever, yet there was apprehension in his stone eyes, tension in his bared teeth. As I turned my attention to Theodoric, a shiver



ran down my spine; his face seemed to me a mask of evil glee, of murderous delight. He meant to kill Detlef, there could be no doubt. No sooner had the thought occurred to me than I had dismissed it as insane. These were but statues, lifeless workings of stone - they could neither kill nor be killed. My mind had been disordered by too little sleep and too much brandy; that was all. Perhaps reading so many accounts of horrors in the course of my work had left me unduly suggestible. Oh well, I had almost completed my study of the sacking of Parravon. Moving on to more pleasant matters would soon restore my ordinary disposition.

As I entered the library, Marte was leaving. Her smile froze on her face as she exclaimed, “Ludo, you look terrible!”

“Why thank you Marte,” I replied dryly, “You are looking well yourself.”

“You look as though you have not slept in days!”

“I... haven’t. Not properly. Marte, has anyone been looking for me today? A student perhaps?”

“Not as far as I know. Listen Ludo, there has been another disappearance.”

“Another already?” I tried to sound surprised.

“I’m afraid so. From what I’ve heard, he’s the brother of one of the others! Quite a coincidence, you could say...”

There was something about her expression that sickened me. At first I could not figure out what it was but then it struck me. She looked just as hungry as Theodoric. I muttered some excuse and hurried away, trying not to look back as she stood and stared after me.

All day I stayed away from other people as much as was possible, yet still I felt watched. Once, when I removed a book from its shelf I swear that for a fleeting instant an eye looked back at me from the other side. I dropped the book, and ran around the bookcase - there was no one in sight. Then, as the day faded into evening, I glimpsed a movement at the periphery of my vision. When I turned my head I saw for an instant the edge of a cloak or other loose garment disappear around a corner. I pursued, through rooms and passageways unknown to me, always chasing the smallest shadow of evidence that I followed a real being and

not an imagining. The chase ended in a low, cramped room piled with decrepit tomes; there was heavy dust here, but a trail had been cleared to a small door on the other side. This room had recently seen much unaccustomed activity. The doorway hung ajar, and without knowing why I crossed the room and flung it open. Stairs led down into the dark. In a strange, half-felt way this place seemed familiar - I had no direct memories to associate with it, no clear emotions, yet I was sure I had been here before, perhaps even many times. For a moment I was ready to descend, but instead I shut the door and returned, through the convoluted passageways, to my seat.

I carried on with my work as best I could, but my anxiety and paranoia made it increasingly difficult to concentrate. Eventually I gave up, and left long before I usually would. I went to the nearby Stolen Quill tavern, hoping that a good meal and a drink or two would calm my spirits. It was not to be; the attention of the patrons was fixed upon the student disappearances, and I could not bear to hear anymore. Instead I went home.

I don't know how long it took for me to find sleep that night, but when at last it came it was to bring no rest. In my dream I walked alone through dark catacombs beneath the city, where untold numbers of rats chewed upon human remains. For a long time I staggered onward, until at last I fell into a great pit filled with corpses, a pit like those where the victims of virulent plagues are interred. Struggling, screaming, I sank though rotting flesh until I was surrounded on all sides with corruption and foulness. Then a corpse turned its head to me and spoke my name, and I fled the nightmare to return to my sweat-soaked and tangled bed. Yet even then, in the cold hours before dawn, I heard still the rattle of my name leaving those ruined lips.



◆ When the sun had arisen I left the house without knowing where I was going. At first I believed myself to be heading for the temple, but my feet had led me unbidden back to the library.

Detlef was gone, leaving only a patch of rough stone above the door where once he had hung. I did not wonder at his fate, for it was perfectly obvious that Theodoric had eaten him. There was a terrible avidity in the gaze those blank eyes dealt me, as of a wild beast studying its prey, and though the gargoyle remained quite motionless I greatly feared to pass under him. For a long time I stood and stared, wondering if Theodoric's tongue had always hung from that side of his mouth and if he had grown a little larger after his meal. At length I became convinced that I was in greater danger standing where I was, so I darted though the library doorway, careful to keep as far as possible from the gargoyle with my father's face.

I hid in the library all that day, too afraid to leave. In my mind's eye, I saw Theodoric detached from the wall and fitted with a

body, a vast, nightmare thing with claws like scythes. Wings rose from its hunched shoulders, and it cried out for my blood with my father's voice. No matter how hard my reason told me that it could not be so, I was unable to believe it. My mind was besieged by horrors, so that in the end it was inevitable that I should succumb to them. Then suddenly I perceived the solution to my plight - the stairway I had discovered the previous day. It was possible - no, certain, that it connected to the cellars. Since the cellars of the various university buildings were all interconnected, I would be able to escape the library that way and thus avoid my fate.

The stairway was a narrow spiral, unlit and uncomfortably cramped. I gave no thought to that, but plunged down with my small lantern held before me. As I descended, I heard a sound coming from the library above me. A deep, heavy breathing, interspersed with a snorting and grunting as from an animal. Terror clutched my heart, forcing me to race down the steps with dangerous haste. Behind, I could hear a scraping from the top of the stair, the sound of something large trying to squeeze through a narrow opening. In my haste I stumbled and fell. I was fortunate indeed that I had already come to the base of the stairway, so my fall was brief and resulted only in a bruised knee and jolted wrist. Less fortunately, my lantern had fallen from my grip and was extinguished, leaving me in darkness.

I fumbled around and at length discovered the lantern resting against a wall. To my dismay it was broken. The noise from the stairway had grown louder, so that it was almost upon me, but no sooner had I begun to despair that my fate was sealed, than I perceived a faint glow in the distance ahead of me. Heedless of the risk, believing anything better than to face what pursued me, I plunged onward through the stygian corridor toward that pale light. As my eyes grew more accustomed to the darkness I saw that there were many doorways and passages leading off from the main corridor. All were utterly black, so I ran past them without pausing. To my terror-filled mind years passed, but in truth I think I ran for only moments before I reached the source of the light, within a small room at the passageway's end.

The light came from a pair of glass or crystal spheres that stood upon tall metal supports - I could see no flame within them; instead they glowed with a pallid, internal light of their own. They flanked a stone slab in the centre of the room, waist high and as long as a man. My stomach lurched when I saw the dark stains on the slab, and on the thin channels cut into it. Blood. Blood had been shed here and it had flowed along those channels into waiting containers. I wrenched my gaze away from the horrid sight, and looked towards the edges of the room, where the glow from the spheres did not quite reach. I saw a small, closed door opposite the open one I had come in by, but it was soon forgotten.



There were dark, irregular shapes arranged around the walls, slumped on the floor like large sacks. The air was heavy with the sickly odour of decay, and I was not anxious to investigate further. The blind terror that had led me to this place had faded - no longer did I believe myself pursued by a monster, nor hear its voice at my back. A new clarity had come to my mind. I had been drawn to this place, my mind influenced, tricked by some dark sorcery. I turned, ready to flee back the way I had come. But my path was blocked.

I recognised his face at once, shadowed though it was in darkness. It was the young student who had spoken to me, warned me, two days ago. He was quite dead; his head tilted awkwardly back, his throat cut and gaping hideously wide. I cried out, stepping backward. All along the walls, there was motion in what I had taken for sacks. Each arose with slow awkwardness to stand in a silent perimeter around me. There were men and women, dead and yet not dead, perhaps a dozen in total. Some were whole, and could have been mistaken for living were it not for their bloodless skin and terrible, blank gaze. Others had been mutilated almost beyond recognition, carved with knives into grotesque, gargoyle-like shapes. Others still were simply rotten, eaten away by worms and vermin. The dead student reached for me with a ponderous hand, and in my panic I slipped and hit my head against the stone slab.

◆ I awoke. My head hurt appallingly. I knew immediately where I was; it was inevitable. I lay upon the stone slab, and I could not move - some dread chill was upon my body, sapping my strength and leaving me helpless. There was a face looking down on me, hairless and pallid as a corpse, yet his blood pulsed visibly beneath his taught skin. Having seen that I was awake, he turned and left my field of vision. A moment later I heard the wet rasping of a blade being sharpened.



My heartbeat seemed deafeningly loud as I lay there, straining to move even a little. I knew that some spell was upon me, that it dampened my muscles and made them betray me. It was surely hopeless then, but even so I continued to try - a testament to the human impulse to survive at any cost. Somewhere in the corner of the room the blade was almost ready to use. I paused in my efforts, and focused every part of my will to one purpose: to move my right hand. Nothing happened at first, but gradually, as though unseen ice that coated it had begun to melt, I felt life and motion returning to my body. Not a moment too soon, for the sharpening had ceased and I heard the shuffling step of my captor approaching. My arm lashed out wildly, catching the metal support of the nearest light sphere, sending it crashing to the ground. It shattered in a radiant detonation, and I heard my captor's knife clatter to the ground as

he cried out and shielded his eyes.

The brightness had overwhelmed my own vision also, but the spell that held me had lost its grip; I sprang from the slab and fled in the direction of the doorway. Fortune was with me, for the door lay open and my way was clear. I hurtled through the darkness with my eyes still registering glorious light. Somehow I found the stairway and climbed back to the library above. It was very late, and the library was as dark as the cellars had been; even so I found my way with little trouble.

At last I reached the main door - though it was locked I knew where the key was kept - and stepped out into moonlight. Above the door, Theodoric stared ahead with his fixed, stone gaze. He was dead to me now. No longer did I see any malice, any animation at all in that carved face. Nevertheless, I had not imagined Detlef's disappearance; it appeared that someone had chiselled the gargoyle from the wall and disposed of it somehow. For what reason, I could not fathom.

Rather abruptly I remembered the horrors I had just escaped from, and set out to report them to the proper authorities. The Temple of Sigmar lay close by, and seemed better equipped than the watch to handle evil sorcery, so it was to them that I went. I poured out my story to the night-duty priest, then to his superior, then finally to a captain of the Order of the Fiery Heart. They thanked me for coming forward, and I was taken to rest in a small but comfortable room. I waited there, with a glass of brandy and a light meal, whilst a troop of knights searched the library cellars.

◆ I think I slept, for I found myself being shaken into awareness. The captain was there, with two knights who dragged me roughly to my feet and out of the room. They turned aside my protests and cries for explanation, taking me to a cell beneath the temple. The cellars had been searched and the bodies found; however, no sign of the necromantic wizard could be seen. Instead, there was evidence only of my presence.

They interrogated me for hours. I do not know how long. I feel that I no longer know my own mind; I do not know if the events truly unfurled as I remember them, or the way they suggest. They say that the evidence against me is overwhelming; that I am a necromancer and a murderer. They say that I have been seen roaming the library late at night, that I have been observed talking with the victims. They say that some of the corpses were mutilated to resemble the gargoyles above the library door; and that one of those gargoyles, which had gone missing from the wall, had been found in my apartment. They say that I am guilty of betraying the Lord Sigmar, and selling my soul to darkness. They say that I will burn tomorrow. I do not doubt, with that at least, they are correct.

# DEEP DOWN

## A new invention for suicidal characters by Peter Rutkowski

*Come see, come see, dear fellow citizens! A great spectacle this afternoon at the Rabenburger docks! The famous, the brilliant, the one and only Imperial ingenious maximus Leonardo da Miragliano will demonstrate his newest invention! Man walks under water! No mutation, no magic! All science! Admittance free!*

The Tilean engineer, artist and inventor Leonardo da Miragliano, currently in The Emperor's service, has come up with a nifty contraption for ship repairs under water. He calls it a "scubato apparatus", derived from the Tilean word "scubare:" to dive. It appears an oddly straight-shaped barrel with a small glass window in the side, a metal top linked to a chain on a windlass and an open bottom. And this is supposed to let man walk under water?

Granted, Leonardo's design is not what the Imperial hoy polloy have come to expect from refined Tilea. But it is actually a functioning underwater breathing device. The barrel covers a man from head to hip. The occupant faces the inlet window and his arms from the elbows down reach out underneath the barrel, so that he might hammer a metal patch on the outside hull of a riverboat. Inside the barrel an adjustable telescopic support reaches down from the lid to rest on the worker's shoulders. Leather belts fastened to the lower rim of the barrel are tightened around the occupant's legs so that he cannot slip by accident. All joints of the contraption have been made airtight with tar.

A chain links the *scubato* to a windlass on land for extraction since it is too heavy for the occupant to lift out of the water all by himself. Fitted to the chain is an elastic "gummo" tube made of a substance imported from Lustria, at one end stuck into the barrel top and at the other end stuck into a cylindrical pump. Two men handle the windlass, another man pumps air into the *scubato*.

Leonardo has also come up with a small ingenious device necessary for prolonged survival in his contraption. A one-way valve lets air escape into the water. Leonardo assumed that air used by human lungs is heavier than fresh air (brilliantly deduced when he was living in some Bretonnian dungheap of a town, where those who could afford it built their houses higher up, escaping the stink and squalor of the street). Thus the diver literally keeps a clear head.

Also attached to the Scubato is a thin chain with a handle for the diver which leads to a bell on the quayside from where the operation is monitored. The bell is used for communication: fast extraction, normal raising (job

finished), more air, less air, more chain. For all these, Leonardo has devised a set of ringing codes, gleaned from the art of bell-ringing practised on feast days in Sigmarite temples. The diver has to learn these by heart and the men on the quay are also bell-literate and can react to these commands.

Leonardo intended his contraption to be used for smaller repairs on a ship's hull beneath the water-line. Putting a damaged ship into a dry-dock is a relatively costly and lengthy affair. The Tilean's invention only needs four dockyard workers or sailors and is a movable device that relegates dry dock to major repair jobs. The initial opposition of dockyard owners has been overcome by showing the cost-effectiveness of the *scubato* and offering it exclusively to dockyard guilds. Now, major ports like Altdorf, Marienburg and Nuln all have such devices at their disposal and use them widely for riverboat repair.

PCs will see the *scubato* apparatus in use when travelling along the great waterways of The Empire. They can get the history and rudimentary technical explanations from any quayside tavern. But if ever anyone might think of using such a device for whatever reason, caution is called for. There are no copyright laws in the Old World, so other engineers and charlatans unashamedly copy Leonardo's many designs all over The Empire. Unfortunately, greed mostly prevails over technical expertise and so these self-styled 'inventors' tend to either forget something or they overlook it while copying. In the case of the *scubato* this will be most often the used-air-valve resulting in an unpleasant if unseen end for the hapless diver. Also the plagiarists will try to keep production costs as low as possible. Tar? Bah, that's for weaklings. Tight fittings? Oh, they will be pretty tight, alright...

Hopefully, the PCs will have enough sense to leave the *scubato* alone. They still might get involved with it for a cameo adventure being asked to hunt down some shady 'inventor' responsible for a malfunctioning apparatus. Or Leonardo gets accused of murder because a Charlatan sold his shoddy version under the Tilean's good name and the PCs get hired by the engineer or his noble patrons to clear him of the charge.

Historical Note: Various scubato apparatuses really existed, albeit naturally not under this name, nor was Leonardo da Vinci ever involved. The contraption presented here (with modifications) was invented by Guglielmo di Lorena in 1535 and seems to have worked.

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