

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY

# WARTSTONE

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*Stuart*

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## EDITORIAL

By John Foody

After last issue's Fimir special we are back to a more usual mix of articles, although scenarios dominate this issue.

Overall, the scenarios in this issue perhaps show a keener fantasy edge than scenarios in previous issues. *Warpstone's* scenarios have had a mix of the usual fantasy elements found in WFRP, but often leaned towards low fantasy (and I appreciate what constitutes high or low fantasy is subject to argument).

To some degree this has been a reflection of the editors' and main contributors' vision of WFRP. The Warhammer background is a rich one, but to my mind it has always been more than just Chaos, Vampires, and Orcs. Adventurers are often in conflict with such creatures, but beyond this life goes on as normal for most people. By ignoring this, the background is cheapened when WFRP is perfectly placed to bring it to life.

I feel that if every scenario features a fantastical element – and some fantasy elements are part of everyday life in the Old World – the strength of the fantasy risks becoming diluted. Instead, PCs hired to investigate a kidnapping should be considering a criminal, a personal vendetta or a hoax in addition to Chaos Cultists or a Skaven plot. The mix of the ordinary with the extraordinary is important. In this way players learn more of the world and GMs have more freedom to innovate and surprise.

A recent comment on one of the WFRP forums claimed that *Warpstone* was being too harsh on reviews of Black Industries' products and we should take it easy on them in thanks for Black Industries/Green Ronin resurrecting WFRP. It is worth making clear that there is no editorial policy on how we deal with reviews. To a degree, we are limited by the reviews that are offered to us (true for all our content, really). All we ask of reviewers is honesty, fairness and an open mind, backing up criticism (for good or ill) with reasoned argument. If you disagree with a review, please join us on *Warpstone's* forums to discuss it, or better still contribute. *Warpstone* exists for all its readers, and we'd like you to be involved.

## COMPETITION

**Empire at War** is Alfred Nuñez Jr.'s epic alternative conclusion to the even more epic *The Enemy Within* campaign for WFRP1 is now available for download. Check out page 3 for a review. Alfred has also very generously supplied *Warpstone* with a printed and signed copy of the scenario as a competition prize.

To win this very rare printed copy of *Empire at War*, e-mail the answer to the following question to [warpstone3@hotmail.com](mailto:warpstone3@hotmail.com): What was the name of the original conclusion to *The Enemy Within* campaign?

Closing date is the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2006.







## INFO



All correspondence to :

**Warpstone**  
c/o John Foody  
47 Snowden Avenue  
Hillingdon  
Middlesex  
UB10 0SD  
UK  
Email: [warpstone3@hotmail.com](mailto:warpstone3@hotmail.com)

Editors: John Foody  
Associate Editors: John Keane, Martin Oliver, Clive Oldfield, Robin Low & Steve Moss  
Proofing: Tim Eccles  
Website Editor: Steve Moss  
Cover: Eric Fessard  
Our man in the USA: Spencer Wallace

Illustrations: John Keane  Ralph Horsley  Mike Rooth  David Bezzina   
Eric Fessard  Richard Martin  Oliver Bancroft  Steve Punter   
Pawel Kloptowski  Henrik Grönberg  Olivier Bergerat 

*Additional work on Carroburg map by Pam Austen*  
*Lowebräu map by Roysten Crow*  
*\*All other art by John Keane*

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[www.warpstone.org](http://www.warpstone.org)

## SUBMISSIONS

Version 1.6 – November 2004

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 and do not hear back from us in good time, please drop us a line to remind us. Failure to reply is simply 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 Text Format) or MS Word format.

**Art Submissions:** We are always looking for artists. You must have an understanding of the "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, gods 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 could include a sample of some other work you've completed at the same time, this would be useful (but is 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 are currently not accepting fiction.

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"It depicts Middenheim well enough to give the GM an overview to which they can add their own detail."



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"My involvement with Games Workshop sprung initially from an invitation from John Blanche to visit Nottingham."



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"A world of piracy, world war and the rights of man"



## Doktor Brauer, Volume. II

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We are pleased to welcome back the good Doktor with his latest book of Fable and Fancy.

"A thankfully obsolete group calling themselves the Guardians of Purity, though they were better known as the Company of Killjoys."



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"The bell ripped free of its support, fell though the opening below it and took out two floors and the bell-ringer."



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Letting sleeping dogs lie in a scenario of betrayal, treasure and planks.

"He will greet them, then say, 'You look like people I could use.'"



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If the local council read this scenario it will be given an ASBO. Dwarfs vs Ogres in a drinking war. Drink! Feck!

"It's a grudge match between Ogres and Dwarfs: is it really worth trying to break it up?"



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32

A look at one of the primary Imperial cities, a home to craftsmen and guilds. Is based on WFRP1 background, but still relevant to WFRP2. "Carroburg is dominated by the low hill known as the Schlaefanstieg."



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A bad night's sleep at the Old Smithy Inn. Next issue we bring you the sequel: *Freddy vs. Sigmar*. "A long and terrifying scream is heard in the feasting hall."



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He shoots! He scores! An archery tournament brings some old rivalries to the surface. We feel sorry for the ducks

"He let this vision guide his arm and shot an arrow much further than was thought possible."



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The final part (of three) of our epic Marienburg scenario comes to an apocalyptic end.

"Almost all the fires have been extinguished when the fog gives way. The darkening clouds indicate that a storm will likely be arriving by evening."



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Terror in the pastures and peaks as the PCs look for the truth behind the legend.

"Her legend grew with each advancing year and some said Astrid was capable of destroying cities with a wave of her hand."



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"He could just make out the smell of onion among the other stench in the hag's graveyard mouth."



## Back Issues &amp; Subscriptions

Does what it says on the tin. All back issues are steadily going, so if you are missing some then now is the time to get them. It will also help clear the editor's shed.



## 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	Guildier (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

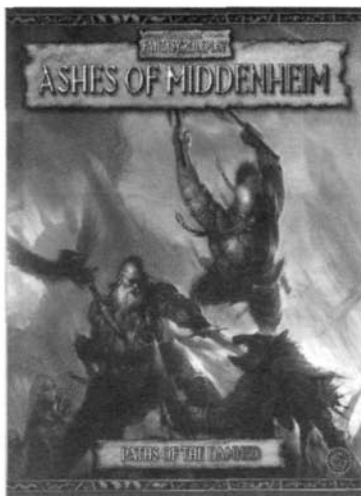
# REVIEWS

## Paths of the Damned: Ashes of Middenheim

By Graeme Davis

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by Rich Pingree



*Ashes of Middenheim* is the first fully-fledged adventure to be published for WFRP2, and the first of the three-part *Paths of the Damned* series. Keen to try out a campaign using 2nd Edition rules, my group decided to give *Ashes of Middenheim* a go. It gave me my first chance for several years to play a PC instead of being the GM. I was interested to read it afterwards as Graeme Davis has written some excellent material for WFRP1 and I

had high hopes given his track record.

In keeping with the Black Industries WFRP line, the book is hard-bound, which feels strange given its slim 96 pages. The cover art is action-packed, with the ubiquitous Troll Slayer featuring prominently; it is suggestive of the contents without giving much away. The internal art includes a few atmospheric reprints from Games Workshop's *Storm of Chaos* book and a lot of new pieces specific to this adventure. These last drawings are just horrible: they belong in a pulp-action comic and do nothing to evoke the WFRP mood. It does not help that many of the NPCs pictured look remarkably similar, making the drawings impractical as play aids as well as unsightly.

The first third of the book is taken up by a description of Middenheim. This section is fairly useful, particularly to those unfamiliar with the *Storm of Chaos*, as it describes how the city has been affected by recent events. Taken on its own it is rather too thin to be used for running complex city adventures, but it depicts Middenheim well enough to give the GM an overview to which they can add their own detail. As a companion to the information presented in the old WFRP1 book, *Middenheim: City of the White Wolf* (aka *Middenheim: City of Chaos*), it is of most interest - you can find out whether your favourite inn has been destroyed by the Chaos attack, for example! You also get maps of each district and the sewers, plus a new career, the Sewer Jack.

The adventure, *Ashes of Middenheim*, takes up the rest of the book. Beginning where *Through the Drakwald* from the WFRP2 rulebook left off, the PCs are charged with a series of tasks by various Middenheim officials, mostly revolving around retrieving a magical artefact, dealing with its malign influence and stopping others from getting it. Most of the action is city-based, but there are sections which take place in the wilderness

and underground. There is a mixture of fighting, talking and investigation but the combat encounters are strongly emphasised and assumed to be the default choice of players. It is a shame there are not more options given for characters who prefer to avoid violent confrontation.

The book has a clearly linear storyline, and players will find this fairly evident. Most of the adventure involves the PCs being told what to do by NPCs. It is arguable that lowly starting characters probably should follow the instructions of their social superiors, but here it is just a device to keep the adventure on track. We quickly became tired of a dozen watchmen turning up to force us where the adventure wanted us to go. There is a particularly egregious scene where the PCs cannot even make it across the city without being forced into an annoying encounter. Occasionally the players have a bit more freedom, but my group felt this did not occur regularly enough. Such straight-forwardness could be an asset for new GMs and players, but many will want more choices than are offered and described here. In places the text only gives the players one option. In fact, early on in the adventure, there is a point where failing a Perception test results in the end of the plot! If this happens, the GM is on their own.

Unfortunately, the central plot does not actually make any sense. The villain of the piece is a subtle, insidious follower of Khorne, something unheard of until now. His masterplan is ludicrous and illogical and would stand a much better chance of succeeding if he did not actively invite the PCs to get involved. (I am not giving too much away by using "he"- ridiculously, no women feature in this adventure at all.) The main NPCs lack detail and do not seem to have thought about anything they are doing or why they are doing it. A GM could probably hide this from the players since their characters are unlikely to find out exactly what is going on, but that is not really satisfactory and I expect more from a published adventure. By the time we had played it through, we had no idea how the different parts of the story fitted together. We had fun playing, but it is perhaps telling that the most memorable parts turned out to be where we departed from the book and concentrated on roleplaying our characters.

The scenario is split up into eight chapters and each throws up a new enemy. We get Skaven, Beastmen, Minotaurs, Skeletons, Mutants, Chaos Cultists, Daemons and so on, as if the adventure is trying to showcase as many WFRP creatures as possible. Apart from making the whole adventure feel less coherent, it is a shame to spoil so many of the Warhammer World's secrets so early in the campaign, especially as some of these enemies seem to have been added unnecessarily. There is no real reason for the Skaven to be involved, for example. Starting characters are unlikely to know they even exist, so why not leave their innocence intact a little longer?

Despite these problems, there are some good ideas in the book. The magical artefact central to the plot is a nice toy. It has a mind of its own and can wind the players up no end, for the

GM's entertainment. Another neat feature, and probably the most original part of the book, is the chapter involving a public trial. This scene breaks new ground for official WFRP adventures by allowing the players to take on roles of the NPCs involved in the trial. It is an unusual approach and not every group will find it to their taste, but it is sensibly presented as an option.

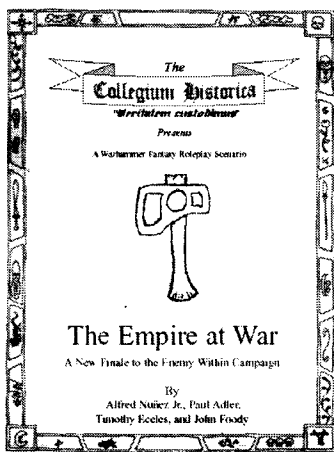
The segmentation of the adventure makes it easy to extend chapters or weave in your own subplots. We found the combat opposition to be pitched at just the right level for characters in their first careers. And I was pleased to see the fine WFRP tradition of parodying famous Germanic names is continued in the character of Professor Albrecht Zweistein.

If you are looking for an adventure that can be picked up and played as-is, *Ashes of Middenheim* is an option, but not a great one. You basically get a series of combats with a story linking them together. It should run fairly smoothly, even for new GMs, as it is clearly written and easy to follow, but it might be tricky to stop the players from feeling that the plot is on rails. It is a decent frame of an adventure but it is missing many of the meaty details which can really bring the world to life. Where are the side plots and red herrings, the rumours and news unrelated to the main storyline? If you are prepared to put in some effort yourself creating these, and perhaps rationalising the central villain's actions, then the adventure could be really enjoyable.

## The Empire at War

By Alfred Nuñez Jr

A review by Erik A. Walraven



*The Empire at War* is an impressive alternative ending to *The Enemy Within* campaign. I was fortunate enough to playtest this adventure and what follows is a brief review of that experience. The scenario is 204 pages long, with 29 more pages of maps and handouts. Written for WFRP1, it is easily converted to WFRP2's statistics and rules, as I did. The layout is solid, the text easy to read, with several

timetables to help the GM keep track of the myriad events taking place during the adventure. The maps are well done and very useful, the handouts are high quality, and sprinkled throughout the text are illustrations of varying degrees of quality.

*The Empire at War* starts with the assumption that the player characters have wintered in Kislev after completing *Something Rotten in Kislev*. While this would be the best place to have a party begin, the beginning can be modified relatively easily to allow a starting point from any far-flung corner of the Old World. The first step in the adventure is to travel from Kislev to Talagraad via boat. This section is sprinkled with a few encounters to get a flavour of the brewing tensions between Talabecland and Ostland. I truly enjoyed running this section as I had two PCs from Ostland and I took every opportunity to

antagonise them when they docked at a Talabecland settlement. These encounters are clearly designed to imbue the PCs with the sense that something terrible is on the horizon.

The next section takes the PCs from Talagraad to Bergsburg, culminating in investigations in Bergsburg. The investigations are lengthy, with considerable difficulties for parties geared to hacking first and asking questions later. GMs must understand what is going on in Bergsburg and be prepared for the many unexpected actions PCs will throw at them. This freeform section of the adventure is a truly wonderful opportunity for PCs who like in-depth investigations and freedom of action. It is important that GMs encourage their players through this section to prevent frustration from building, but it is well organised with comments, tips and timelines. There are many dead ends and false leads to confound the players. For instance, a murder of an Ulrican priest takes place that the PCs will need to be near omnipotent to stop. My players did a wonderful job of catching the murderer, but the villain came very close to slipping away. While a challenge, this is a truly fun section to run the players through.

On to Middenheim the scenario then takes the PCs to Altdorf and towards the Ostland finale. On the journey there is one heck of a fight, major events on the road to civil war among political infighting and the return of old enemies.

The Altdorf section is the most free-flowing part of *The Empire at War*, with many directions the PCs can go at this point in their investigations. It is imperative that GMs are thoroughly familiar with all of the options provided in the adventure that are open to the players. The ending of this section was very satisfying for me as it left my players sitting around in stunned shock. There is also a great NPC here that can easily be made into a memorable experience by a GM flexing a mean streak. I still get comments about the NPC over six months later.

One aspect my players and I disliked was the ending of *The Empire at War*. The conclusion has minimal foreshadowing with no chance for the PCs to do anything about it. The finale just did not make any sense to us and felt anticlimactic. If I had not been playtesting the scenario I would have rewritten the end in to something much more satisfying.

The adventure itself is complete and GMs do not have to add anything to make an enjoyable experience. This adventure can be run as part of a campaign or as a stand-alone adventure. It works very well in either setting. It has something for almost every style of player and GM out there: combat, investigations, heavy roleplaying, horror, politics, and grimness: you name it; it is in here. I personally like my game a bit more heroic and I preferred the ending of *Empire in Flames*. However, many will find this a more satisfying alternative ending than *Empire in Flames*, especially those who are going to use the political structure of WFRP2. Included is a very good epilogue that explains how the political structure in WFRP1 melds into the current WFRP2 political structure. With a bit of work one can even play *Empire in Flames* after *The Empire at War* as I did. This is a long adventure and took my group thirteen sessions (average length was ten to twelve hours) to complete.

Let me end by saying this is an excellent, well-written adventure. I cannot recommend it enough to those of you who like their scenarios grim and perilous. *The Empire at War* fits the bill very well and puts many of the commercial WFRP

products to shame. Well done and congratulations to the authors of this impressive work.

*The Empire at War* is available for free in pdf and Word formats at [www.strike-to-stun.com](http://www.strike-to-stun.com).

**Le Grimoire 20**  
**French WFRP Fanzine**  
**Reviewed by jd Lanz**

The twentieth issue of the long-standing French Warhammer fanzine, the Grimoire, is about Chaos. Its title, “The Grimoire of Chaos”, and the cover, a beautiful job of roiling, amorphous masses, leave no doubt about it. Indeed, the first half is about nothing but Chaos, except a first page that quickly deals with converting your WFRP1 characters to WFRP2. Sadly, the rest of the book remains WFRP1. While as a reviewer, I can accept that editorial imperatives do exist; as a reader, I can but regret this.

The articles on Chaos open with a healthy history piece by none other than old acquaintances Anthony Ragan and Alfred Nuñez. The longtime, lapsing WFRP fan that I am found valuable background information (in particular, that greenskins seem to be a little more likely to ally with humans than with Chaos. It is followed with a single-page story about the origin of Magnus the Pious (with the same infamous typo found in the original translation of WFRP1, that turned him into “Magnus le Pieu”, “pieu” being french for “(wooden) stake” and also slang for “bed”). Another short story follows, a debate between heretic Vereneans that retells the beginnings of Chaos as told in the history piece (sometimes word for word); I found it much less enjoyable than the first, be it because of the repetition, or because it only retold the most hazy, mythological elements, or even because the dialogue was not written or translated with the same quality.

Next, an interesting one-page pamphlet entitled “There is no Chaos” that points out how Chaos may appear to be too distant a threat for people to pay attention to it. Very useful for GMs who want to run X-Files-like stuff or who simply want to use WFRP as “fantasy Cthulhu.”

The next sections form the main part of the book, describing the four major Chaos powers, their sects and daemons. A lot of this, particularly the daemons, looks like a direct translation from the old *Realms of Chaos* books, but as these have been out of print for more than ten years, this does not hurt the section’s usefulness. Extra information is available as well, with two new daemons (including, wonder of wonders, an interesting Nurgle daemon; the usurer), a section of the same format on Malal, and depictions of places, ranging from the very interesting (a desecrated grove in the forests near the Middle Mountains) to the vaguely useful (places so far in the Realms of Chaos that I cannot imagine taking any campaign there, but still giving possible insights into the major powers).

The last section on Chaos is a collection of interesting background bits on several Chaos animals like Harpies and Jabberwocks. While well-done and full of rousing details, its usefulness is once again reduced a lot if one already has the *Old World Bestiary*.

Next, we go east to Kislev for descriptions of Erengard and Praag. Maps are provided: beautiful but with little detail and

hardly legible. The descriptions are rather summary (five pages each, including rather useless lists of important people’s names with few descriptions) and Praag’s description is rather uninspiring and confusing, despite chilling monsters that spawn out of the walls themselves! Its politics section is rather confusing to newbies: I still cannot figure out on what exactly the Tzar is supposed to rule.

Two short articles follow. One has original background on Arianka, expanding her background and astutely explaining why her coffin is in so many places. There are no stats (a good thing given that they would be useless) and somewhat clumsy writing, but the background is fine. The other article is longer and covers Hobgoblins. They do sound a lot like Mongols or Huns or whatever horse-riding eastern barbarians. They are little more than this plus WFRP-specific relations with other races. If you want to head your campaign beyond the World’s Edge mountains, this will be useful but be prepared to add a lot of material besides Hobgoblins, and to delve deeper into historical Mongol material so you can flesh out their society a bit more.

We now reach Norsca, and the best has been saved for last: quick geography, history (with a full-page chronology), detailed description of the society, with holy days and calendar, welcome dwarven settlements, information of influential characters of Olricstaad, the capital of the middle lands, details on each city and region (most of them ending with a paragraph in italics that provides good highly appreciated adventure hooks). In the final analysis, it does not feel like the horrible barbaric place depicted in the side bar from WFRP2. A short bestiary details creatures specific to Norsca, including a beautiful Norsca hare. It is supplemented with a short description of the Sea of Claws, a chart of how long it takes to travel from here to there and sea creatures, including Behemoths, Leviathans and titanic crabs - with useless statistics. In my humble opinion, the WFRP combat system is definitely not fit for battles with a city-sized monster. More background, as earlier with the Chaos beasts, would have been a better idea in my view. Finally, there is a piece on how to create a Norse PC. It includes references to careers that come from another issue and are not repeated here - I am in two minds about this. While this is nice for faithful readers, a new reader will not enjoy it. Another option might have been to publish those few careers on the website. It also includes new careers WFRP1-style; while converting a creature or NPC’s stats is a bit chancy, converting a career is like rebuilding it from the ground.

Finally, we get a conclusion to the official WFRP1 French scenario, *Pour la Gloire d’Ulric* (For Ulric’s Glory). Not having read nor played that scenario, I cannot say if it is a fitting follow-up; but I can tell that everything is duly explained so newcomers like me are still able to understand what is going on and why. As befits a scenario about Ulric and glory, not to mention one set in Norsca, it is very battle-oriented. It also has a nice tie-in to Archaon. Its only flaw would be its very short size, whereas *Pour la Gloire d’Ulric* was initially intended as the first scenario of a trilogy.

A word on the illustrations. Most are done by Russ Nicholson and (with one possible exception) live up to the high quality I expect from him. Much less expected are four whole-page pictures by Gary Chalk, the man who illustrated the Lone Wolf gamebooks of my teens. I have to say that his talent is a very

welcome addition to the Warhammer world, one I wish someone had thought (or at least made me aware) of before. Other illustrations vary from excellent (particularly on the article about Chaos daemons) to adequate (hobgoblins), with beautiful supporting illustrations of black silhouettes that, added to the rest, do lend great atmosphere. The only one I really didn't like was well-drawn, but showed a pachyderm that looked nothing like the mammoth I guess it was supposed to depict and suspiciously like a Middle Earth mûmak.

One minor gripe in conclusion. Although the spelling and syntax in *Le Grimoire* have improved, they still are a weak point (and some parts look like no one bothered to use the spell checker); this may put off readers whose mother tongue is not French (or spelling freaks such as myself).

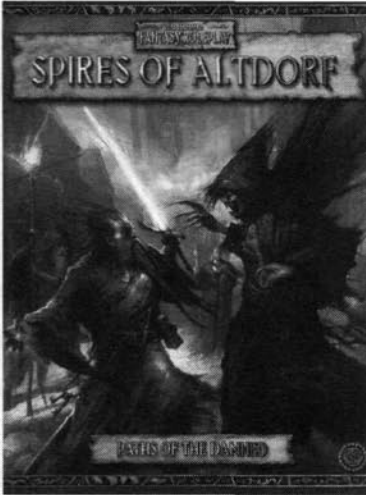
On the whole, *Le Grimoire 20: The Grimoire of Chaos* is an enjoyable read. Yet as a sourcebook, its overlap with the *Old World Bestiary* and lack of WFRP2 stats means it is of little use for newcomers. In the same way, I suspect a lot of the information will be old news to hardcore fans. For people in the middle, though, it has a lot of neat background if one is prepared to use it as a fine starting point.

## PATHS OF THE DAMNED: SPIRES OF ALTDORF

By David Chart

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by Marten de Groot



*Spires of Altdorf* is the sequel to *Ashes of Middenheim* and the second part of the *Paths of the Damned* campaign. I was looking forward to *Spires of Altdorf* as my players and I had a lot of fun playing *Ashes of Middenheim*. Middenheim turned out to be an interesting city and the adventure was fun to GM, the story building towards an action-packed climax with the players emerging as silent heroes. However I

was also a bit worried, as I had heard *Spires of Altdorf* would be very different to *Ashes of Middenheim*.

The first 36 pages of the book provide a good description of the city of Altdorf. It starts with a history, followed by descriptions of the different types of buildings in Altdorf, from the spacious walled estates to the cramped tenements, from the finest theatres to the filthiest fighting rings. Each is described in the same way with a general description followed by detail in the three sections: Fights, Socialising and Stealth. In addition some of the major buildings, like the Jade College and the Imperial Palace, are described in more detail. The book also contains illustrations of some buildings. They are black and white which I prefer as it helps illustrate that Altdorf is not the clean shiny capital of the Empire, but has overcrowded streets with people crawling in their own filth.

Unfortunately the book does not contain a big map with lots of buildings on it. There is an overview map covering half a page, which provides the locations of thirteen buildings. (*Ashes of Middenheim* has 44 buildings and a two-page map.) If you like detailed maps, the one in *Spires of Altdorf* is a bit disappointing and just too small for players to use. On the other hand it gives the GM more freedom to place buildings where he wants. The last part of Altdorf's description gives 40 possible events divided into four categories: Local Colour, Adventure Initiations, Combat Obstacles and Chance Meetings. This section provides a lot of inspiration for GMs and can lead to adventures separate from the campaign.

The main part of the book contains the scenario. What surprised me on first reading was that instead of one linear plotline, as with *Ashes of Middenheim*, there are three less linear plots which intertwine at various points. Personally I prefer the former as it is easier to GM, but also easier for PCs to understand. Fortunately the book has some well written and logical guidelines on which order events should take place. These will help GMs to create some linearity and make the campaign more dramatic. However, the author does not provide alternative methods or a general overview of the chronological order of events. The atmosphere in general is similar to *Ashes of Middenheim*, especially with PCs feeling they are unable to trust anyone.

One of the plotlines requires the PCs to engage in a lot of social interaction with some of Altdorf's high-standing citizens. The book provides additional rules for this by stating when a NPC is willing to give certain information or help to the PCs. These rules are easy to understand and use, and can be applied to other scenarios as well. You can either choose to play out the scenes or describe them to your players depending on dice rolls. One good point is that the book has a full-page diagram displaying the relationships among the NPCs, which provides a better overview of how they regard one another.

The other two plotlines are more investigation and combat-based. In chapter four, *Shadow of Fire*, the PCs' rooms get turned upside down by a hireling looking for "Oh, spiked swords, people with tentacles, three-eyes skulls, odd runes, that sort of thing". The third plot, *Bad Blood*, works the best. It is atmospheric, leaving PCs fearing danger around every corner.

The book also contains two new careers (Lamplighter and Newsheet Vendor), six magic items and three new rituals. The items and rituals are (or can be) used in the campaign, however I cannot see my PCs using them. All bar one ritual requires either a willing human sacrifice or eight candles made from human body-fat. However the descriptions of the items and rituals are well written and will help GMs to describe them more colourfully.

Summing things up I think *Spires of Altdorf* is a good book. Even if you do not run the campaign, you still have the city itself and plenty of ideas for adventures. If you run the campaign there is enough help to guide you through it, even though it is very different to *Ashes of Middenheim*. The story is good and provides some interesting dilemmas I have not encountered elsewhere. I will conclude my review with the words of Siegfried Johanson: "When one is tired of Altdorf, one is tired of life".

# IAN MILLER

## The Warpstone Interview Questions by John Foody

In my opinion, Ian Miller was the artist who really brought WFRP to life. The Death on the Reik cover remains the standout piece of WFRP art. It would be fair to say that Ian's work polarises opinion, with many just finding it weird.

Warpstone was lucky to have an Ian Miller illustration on the cover (#22) and he has also generously allowed us to reproduce some of his work here.

Ian completed the interview shortly after recovering from a scorpion sting. Ah! The life of an international artist.

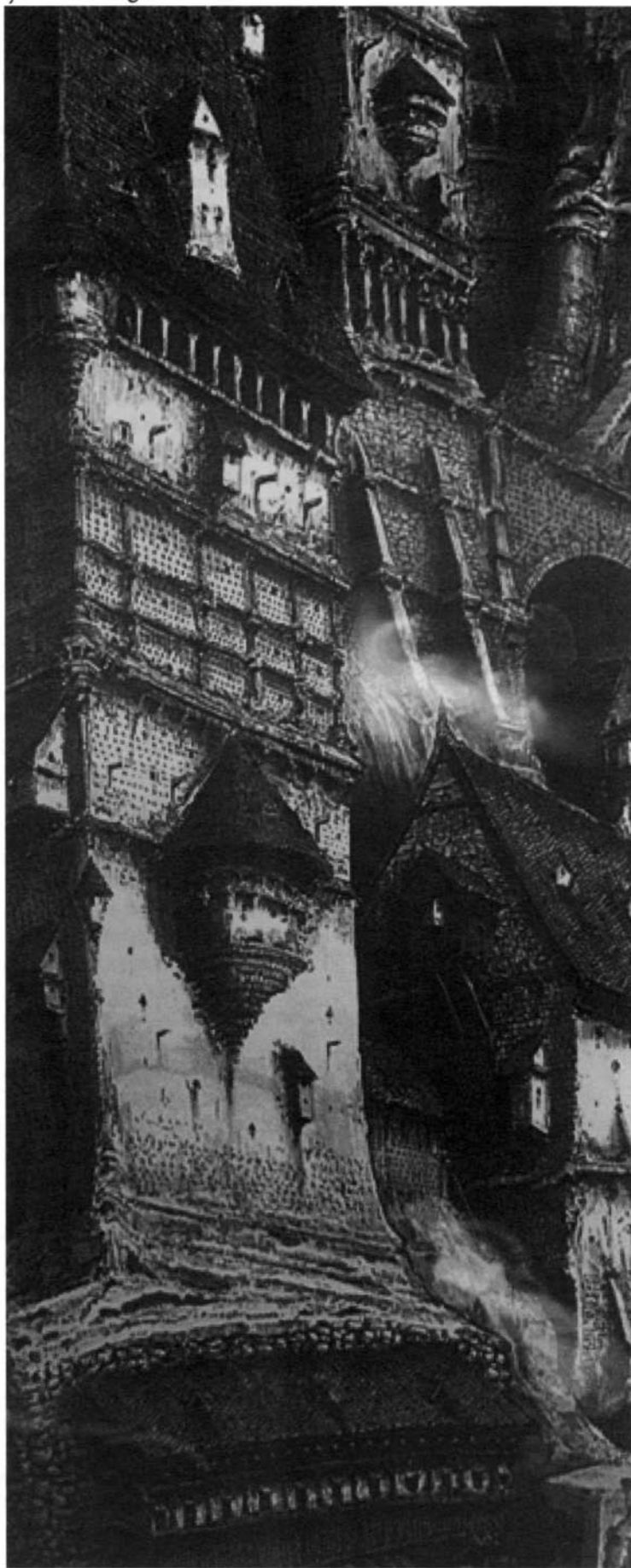
**Could you give us some background? How did you become an artist? What were your influences? Why fantasy? How did you become involved with Games Workshop?**

I loved drawing as a child and my mother went out of her way to encourage it. Her involvement with the theatre and motion picture industry, meant I got to see a lot of films very early on, a good many of which she had worked on.

I got to see behind the scenes, saw how the magic was worked and acquired box loads of theatrical cast offs. Phantasmagoric was a byword in our house. Everything was possible. You just needed to locate the right wardrobe, find the right rug and you were away. I used to fly when I was awake then, and chew gum made with Everglades swamp water. Now I only fly in my dreams and know for sure somebody was pulling my leg about the chewing gum and headless cows near Crewe.

With regard to influences, everything influenced me in the beginning. All the switches were on receive. Visual overload was the norm. I dabbled and experimented with a wide range of materials and techniques searching for a means of expression best suited to my needs and through this empirical process, slowly acquired the awareness, discipline, mechanical skills and creative focus to establish some manner of artistic identity for myself.

It might be of interest to state here, that I have a far wider remit as an image maker and Fantasy imagery, for which I am perhaps best known, is just one aspect of that ongoing process.





When you ask ‘Why Fantasy?’ all I can say in response is: it is a well appointed pool I’ve always felt comfortable swimming about in and for which my upbringing aptly prepared me.

My involvement with Games Workshop sprung initially from an invitation from John Blanche to visit Nottingham and have a look around the studios there. I met Bryan Ansell the great motivator behind Games Workshop at the time and things just sort of kicked off from there. One drawing lead to another until one day I found myself on the payroll and a full time participant in the ‘mythos.’ I then rose to the dizzy heights of commissioning editor of Games Workshop books with offices in Brighton, only to fall from grace a year or so later never to be employed by them again. A sad and instructive tale best left for another time.

**Did you enjoy working on Warhammer? Did you like the background?**

I enjoyed working on the Warhammer pictures immensely. They were halcyon days for me when I think back. Bryan gave me a great deal of freedom and it all worked out very well. I felt comfortable with the subject matter and everybody seemed pleased with the results. Yes, for the most part I liked the backgrounds.

**1952- London / Manchester train**

I saw a Headless cow,  
In a field near Rugby.  
I was amazed.

I told everybody’

They just smiled and said,  
‘Of course you did’

Bastards!

They told me Bubble Gum  
was made with swamp water  
from the Everglades,

I believed them’

Bastards!

An older boy took us on a tour  
of Chiswick Park,  
Pointing out old paper bags  
and bits of yellowed newspaper.  
He told us,

*Purvurts had spunked off in them, behind the bushes.*

I believed him.

Bastard!

They told me God didn’t exist,  
But they’d tried that one on, with Father Christmas.

Bastards!

**Did you change your style for Warhammer? Did your style (and others) change Warhammer?**

I did not change my style for the Warhammer images. It was already in place. Extended perhaps but not changed. I would like to think my Warhammer imagery made a positive contribution to the project. As to changing Warhammer that must be left to debate and the providence of others.

**What is your favourite Warhammer picture?**

My favourite image is the Khorne Temple.

**You have worked in a number of established fantasy backgrounds: Warhammer, Middle Earth etc. Do you have a favourite? Does the amount of material available and quality of a background make any difference to your approach?**

I have no particular favourite. Any opportunity, which allows me the freedom to draw and provides a working environment in which I can give full vent to my interpretative skills is always a favourite.

Information is the pre-requisite of any successful illustration job. Quality is gainsaid and not negotiable. Detail equals time, time equals money. The more I’m paid, the longer I can spend on any given image. It’s a brazen but simple equation.

**Do you ever feel restricted by the fantasy genre? Have you ever felt looked down on for being a fantasy artist?**

I’ve never felt in any way restricted by the fantasy genre, nor have I ever felt looked down upon. That some people choose to marginalise, and negate Fantasy driven imagery is all part of the course. Good luck to them all.

**Your work has been described as grotesque or disturbing. Do you agree? Is this deliberate?**

Despite a predilection for the grotesque, I still do not think that I ever consciously set out to frighten or disturb people with my imagery and in truth am sometimes surprised by the adverse reaction of some viewers. Even those images I would term ‘light and frivolous’ have been labelled menacing and creepy by some people. Others have no problem with my work so I carry on regardless, which is the way it should be I think.

**Your website shows a number of examples of your writing, both poetry and prose. Do you feel limited by art? Do you enjoy writing as much? What plans do you have for your writing?**

I have never felt limited by the art / creative process; frustrated yes, but never limited. The possibilities are infinite, how could you feel limited. The writing is a natural extension of my image making. I do not find it an easy process but then most things worth a jot fall into that category. I have been working on a project called the Broken Diary for several years now. This is an ongoing project searching for an ending. I have written a piece for the theatre called the ‘Shingle Dance’ which I’m



# FRAGMENTS

## BRIEF REVIEWS AND NEWS

### On-Line Magazines

*Signs & Portents*, Moongoose's in-house magazine, has gone through some major changes. Still monthly and now divided in to two separate publications – *Wargamer & Roleplayer* – it is now only published on-line and can be download from Moongoose's website.

*White Dwarf* is now on-line. This weekly newsletter, *White Dwarf Online*, is a descendant of the *Inquisitor Newsletter* and promises all the latest news and articles from Games Workshop. Subscribe at the GW website.

### TimCon

The fifth TimCon is taking place on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd September 2006. This WFRP mini-convention is organised by Tim Eccles and is taking place over two days for the first time. For more details check out the TimCon site at [www.shadow-warriors.co.uk/TimConV.htm](http://www.shadow-warriors.co.uk/TimConV.htm)

### Black Industries

The big Black Industries news is the announcement that the Warhammer 40K RPG, one of the most eagerly awaited RPGs ever, is on its way. Release dates have been given for the first core book, *Dark Heresy*, and a campaign book, *Purge the Unclean* (March and April 2007 respectively).

*Children of the Horned Rat*, *Barony of the Damned: An adventure in Mousillon* and *Knights of the Grail: A Guide to Bretonnia* are now on the shop shelves. Next up is the scenario, *Terror in Talabheim*. This is followed by *Tome of Corruption* in September 2006, which Black Industries has described as an "expansive volume reveals all the secrets of Chaos, exploring it in lavish detail." This is followed by the *WFRP Companion* "a toolbox to enhance your game and spawn countless new adventures". The book contains overviews of Sartosa, the City of Pirates, and Tobar, City of Fools as well as expansion of the *Old World Bestiary* including old favourites the Bog Octopus and Bloodsedge. For 2007, *Lure of the Lich Lord* (scenario in the Border Princes) is due in February, and *Night's Dark Masters* (vampire sourcebook) is due in May.

### Other Stuff...

Graeme Davis has been busy, working on the Computer RPG *Call of Cthulhu: Dark Corners of the Earth* and publishing his first novel *Blood and Honour: The War-Torn, Book 4*.

### Warhammer 4000

No missing zero. Rather *Warhammer 4000 A Savage Frontier of Perilous Adventure*. Steve Darlington, one of the authors of the Skaven sourcebook, has advanced the WFRP timeline into "a world of piracy, world war and the rights of man." Check out the work in progress at [www.steved.org/rp\\_rules\\_wb4k.html](http://www.steved.org/rp_rules_wb4k.html).

### Fimir Support

We have expanded the support for last issue's Fimir article. Now available on the *Warpstone* website you can find:

Fimir for WFRP1 - Supporting material and stats for WFRP1

Fimir for WFB6 - Fimir army list for WFB6

Legion 6 – Our irregular fanzine contains a few things that we couldn't fit in the main article.

Nightmare Clutches - A fearsome letter to support Issue 25.

Fimir Art – After the general disappointment on the poor reproductions of the art in last issue, we have produced a PDF containing all the Fimir art which does it justice.

Also last issue we credited the Fimir for WFRP2 PDF on the Black Industries site to Andrew Law. Apologies to T.S. Luikart who was the author of this article. Andrew Law was responsible for the layout and art.

hoping will one day be performed. Things look promising on this front at the moment, so fingers crossed.

### What contemporary artists' work do you admire?

I'm off to see the Joseph Beuys exhibition at the Tate Modern next week. I love his stuff, as I do the work of the photographer-filmmaker Robert Frank. They are big names in a long list too huge to mention here. Everyday I see work which impresses me and makes me want to work harder. You only have to look around you and it is all there for the taking, pasted on a wall, moving past you on the pavement, secreted in the angle of a wall, seen through a train window.

### Do you enjoy film work?

I love film work and have just completed a tour of work in Texas for DNA Studios, working on a new animated feature called *Ant Bully*. The people and studio were first class and I would love to do more film work.

### What of your current and future projects should we look out for?

I am working on images for a new gaming company in Seattle at the moment called 'Hidden City Games.' Aside from that I'm waiting for the phone and email to ring and ping.

Ian Miller Websites

[ianmiller.org](http://ianmiller.org)

[eddydwarf.com](http://eddydwarf.com)

# Excerpts from Doktor Brauer's Book of Fable and Fancy

Volume Two  
(Nuln College Press)

Background from the Jack Yeovil Books, by Jody Macgregor

Doktor Brauer of Nuln's exhaustive, though idiosyncratic, study of fable and anything that catches his fancy continues. This second volume, published in Nuln years after the first (*Warpstone* 17), focuses in part on the city of Altdorf and its inhabitants.

This time around my sources are mostly the Jack Yeovil books, which are among the best of the Warhammer novels. Page numbers refer to the current Black Library editions of *Drachenfels* (D), *Genevieve Undead* (GU), *Beasts in Velvet* (BiV), *Silver Nails* (SN) and William King's *Trollslayer* (T).

**Albrecht the Wise:** Emperor who was visited by the apparition of a hideous Daemon in the uniform of the Imperial Guard. Albrecht's hair turned white before he was thirty. (D129)

**Altdorf Fog:** Every few months a thick fog rises from the Reik to cover Altdorf's filth for several days. The militia light a special fogfire in Konigsplatz, but the thick mist remains impenetrable. Emperor Matthias IV went out in disguise during an Altdorf Fog to move among his people and secretly learn what they thought of him, but never returned. There are many other stories of loss and mistaken identity associated with it, including the play "A Farce in the Fog". (BiV85/86/123/124)

**Anatomy of Society:** The revolutionist Brustellin's book that painted the aristocracy as "a bone-sapping cancer" and saw him expelled from Altdorf University. (BiV81)

**Consistency:** "A foolish consistency is the Snotling of small minds," as the Halfling philosopher Balfin Waldo Dibbly-Custard wrote.

**Democracy:** The form of government practiced in Marienburg, which amounts to rule by the mob. It was tried, without success, in several of the Tilean City States and revolutionists occasionally call for it within the Empire. (BiV72)

**Dvorjetski, Vladislav:** Kislevite poet, lover of the *Vampire Tsarina*. Many of his poems concerned their love. (D181)

**Dwarf Superstitions:** A superstitious lot, the elder race reputedly carry brass pennies and stones bearing the mark of Grungni for luck and drown black cats at birth. (D30/67)

**Festival of Ulric, the:** A celebration of the autumn equinox held in a different Imperial city each year. Military generals meet to plan next season's campaigning, which traditionally begins at Mitterfruhl. (SN9)

**Find The Empress:** Card game probably dating back to the age of Three Emperors, played mostly by tricksters and thieves. (D41)

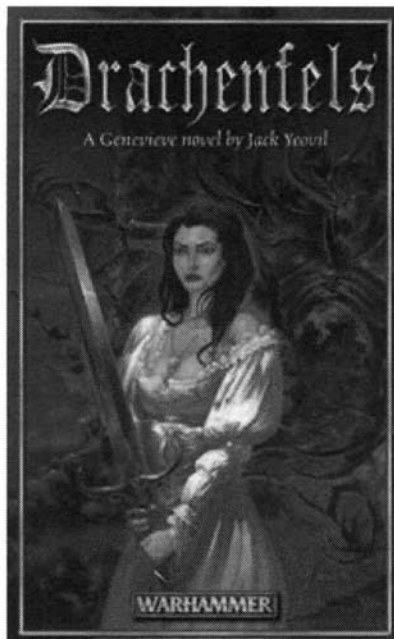
**Fish, the:** One of Altdorf's waterfront gangs, so named because they collect boats' cargo that "rolls overboard" and because they dispose of their victims' bodies in the river. Their war chiefs are said to be identified by the tattoos of fish on their cheeks. They have ties to the Yefimovite revolutionists and through them the outlawed Artisan's Guild and the Kislevite Underground. (BiV12/31/37, SN280) See also *Hooks, the*.

**Flying Inn:** A travelling revel that is held in a different building every night. Flying Inns offer illegal entertainments such as opiates, doxies, and pit fights. (SN11)

**Green Velvet:** The material of nobility. Courtiers are always clad in cloaks of green velvet when in the presence of the Emperor and green velvet carpets are rolled out for the Emperor's arrival wherever he travels. (BiV9/211)

**Hooks, the:** One of Altdorf's waterfront gangs, rivals of the *Fish*. The members are dockworkers and their victims can be seen hanging by hooks from the wharf. (SN280)

**Inkies, the:** Originally an insulting term used by members of the *League of Karl Franz* to describe those less-privileged Altdorf University students who actually study for their degrees, so called because of the ink stains that invariably



adorn their fingers. The Inkies eventually formed a fraternity of their own, which blitzes the League each year in the university debates. (BiV82/83)

**League of Karl Franz, the:** Altdorf's oldest student fraternity (renamed with each new emperor), the league only admit the sons of nobility. Members wear a "leaguer's jacket" earned by passing a series of secret tests like the Screaming Daisy Exercise and the Nine Pints Test. The stories of their binges, such as their yearly Imminence of Winter wine-drinking contest and the parties thrown in the Dwarf tunnels under the city, are legendary. The stories of their brawls with the *Hooks*, *Fish*, and *Inkies* are also renowned. (GU 228, BiV132/170, *White Dwarf* #303)

**Moral Crusade:** A thankfully obsolete group calling themselves the Guardians of Purity, though they were better known as the Company of Killjoys. Their acolytes followed the Seven Edicts of Purity and campaigned against alcohol and licentiousness, enjoying short-lived popularity. They closed down the *Beloved of Verena* (see Volume One) and destroyed the Order of Ranald's legendary wine cellars in Sudenland. (SN7/8/10)

**Ostland's Vote:** The deciding vote in any group decision is traditionally called "Ostland's Vote" because of all the electorships only Ostland has been on the side of the chosen Emperor in every election. (D17).

**Ottokar:** Haughty tyrant brought low by his love for the goddess Myrmidia. Subject of the play "The Loves of Ottokar and Myrmidia" by esteemed playwright Jacopo Tarradasch, who claims divine inspiration helped him write Ottokar's dying soliloquy. (D90)

**Pattern-killers:** Colourfully named mass murderers who plague the city of Altdorf more than any other. It is claimed that Chaotic influence drives these men to their mad deeds, but it is just as likely some baleful vapour peculiar to that filthy city. Famous pattern-killers include the Beast, the Slasher, the Reikerbahn Butcher, the Ripper and the Warhawk. (SN155)

**Principal Beings:** Theoretical creatures sought after by powerful wizards, they are described as beings of pure energy who exist in a sphere beyond time and space. (D16)

**Pure-gatherers:** Beggars who make a living scavenging excrement in the street for sale to tanners. (D36)

**Scholar's Ruin:** The fumes of longbane, known to be mildly euphoric and addictive. Longbane is a slow-burning wood, capable of lasting an entire year in some cases. (GU62/64)

**Sleeprose:** A flower whose petals, when ground and mixed with liquid, make a powerful inducer of drowsiness. (SN273)

**Street of a Hundred Taverns, the:** Street in the docklands of Altdorf, heartily recommended to all who must visit that overcrowded and overrated city. (D124)

**Street Sentencing:** Less-reputable watchmen deliver a "street sentence" - a clubbing - when the cells are full, or they feel like it. (BiV48)

**Tilean Boot, the:** Torture device in the form of a metal shoe. It is tightened around the foot until the bones are crushed or the prisoner confesses. Also the name of a Nuln tavern where fine Tilean wine is served. (D59)

**Trickster's Day:** Priests of Ranald celebrate this day on different dates in different regions, according to local custom. On Trickster's Day they reward the devout with gifts, while punishing others with tricks. The larcenous tricks often supply the gifts. (BiV37)

**Unicorns:** Creatures with so much magic in them that it prolongs their life unnaturally. When a male unicorn dies, Morr catches up with him and rapidly putrefies his body. (GU213)

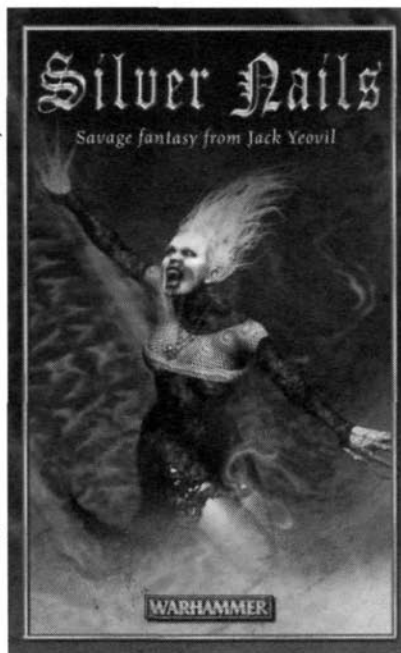
**Vampire Tsarina:** The Tsarina Kattarin of Kislev lengthened her reign by centuries after becoming one of the undead. She was eventually slain by a conspiracy of her frustrated heirs, led by the Tsarevich Pavel. Rumours exist to this day, of a secret society following his vampire-hunting example. The Vampire Tsarina's body is still on display in the Frost Palace. (D120/178, GU11/78, SN195/234)

**Von Konigswald, Schlichter:** The

horrifying, noseless apparition of this honourable nobleman has been sighted on several occasions by his descendants in Ostland. (D127/245)

**Weirdroot:** An addictive substance that causes fevered dreams and visions and leaves purple squiggles in the user's peripheral vision afterwards. It can be chewed in sticks or mixed with tea to make "dreamjuice". Signs of a weirdroot addict, or "weirdhead", include abnormal-sized pupils, shaking hands, and blue-stained lips. Weirdroot is also an ingredient in some alchemical potions. (T123/126, GU91/147/228/233, BiV181/193)

**Year of Seven Emperors, the:** After the death of the Emperor Carolus 1200 years ago there followed a year of unrest during which no less than seven claimants vied for the Empire's throne. This kind of competition for the throne became more and more common until it culminated in the Age of Three Emperors. (SN137)



# THE HARPIES OF VINDELL'S FOLLY

A Scenario by Robin Low

One hundred years ago, or thereabouts, the wealthy mayor of Wandstadt, Vindell Eckstein, proposed the construction of a tower at the heart of the town. His plan was for a structure that would serve as a watchtower overseeing the surrounding land and a bell-tower to inform the inhabitants of the hour. He also argued that such an impressive structure would attract visitors to Wandstadt during its various annual festivals, fayres and markets, drawing people away from rival towns. Vindell was wealthy, popular and his ideas seemed reasonable, and so the council approved his schemes and work commenced.

The tower was designed by Georg Nocht, a young architect from Altdorf, and constructed by a team he hired himself (Vindell only kept local builders happy with a new housing scheme). Nocht's credentials seemed impeccable and the examples of his previous buildings in Altdorf impressed the mayor and town council alike. Sadly, Nocht graduated with a poor degree, and his first class certificate was a first class forgery and the "ones I built earlier," were in fact drafted and built by far more talented men. The masons, carpenters and labourers he hired were a bunch of crooks, too. After two years of bleeding the town's coffers, Nocht and his team produced an ornate and impressive-looking tower. Unsurprisingly, they all had to leave for another job in Middenheim before the opening ceremony and inaugural ringing of the bell.

The bell was rung, for the first time, at the height of the ceremony. A single, magnificent BONG! rang out across Wandstadt, which was shortly followed by a dreadful crash as the bell ripped free of its support, fell through the opening below it and took out two floors and the bell-ringer. When the dust finally settled, local masons and carpenters were sent in to inspect; they all came out again rather quickly, noting that even though the tower's builders were a bunch of crooks, they were very brave to have spent any time at all within the building working on it. A great deal of shouting and finger-pointing took place during the subsequent months; only Vindell's money allowed him to keep his job.

The tower had been built at the heart of Wandstadt, with other important buildings and residences close by. Collapsing the thing was deemed unwise; even the dwarven engineers who were brought in didn't want to risk it. Instead, the tower's base was heavily buttressed and closed up. In the years following, the area within the tower's shadow became Wandstadt's slum district where only the poor and desperate would risk living (on the plus side, some of the slums have really large rooms).

As for Nocht, he changed his name, invested his money well and became a rich man. If anyone discovered the connection between a certain wealthy Reikland family and the name of Nocht, then the town council of Wandstadt would certainly take action, legal or otherwise, to recover its losses.

## Vindell's Folly Today

Amazingly, the tower is still standing one hundred years after its construction, although its ornate decorative



stonework has weathered heavily and chunks of masonry still fall from time to time, littering the streets beneath (and there's a little money to be made in selling a chipped stone rose or a section with an exotic chiselled design). The most robust-looking parts of the tower are the broad, dark-stone buttresses put in place by local masons to keep the thing upright, and the red-tiled turret at the top, which Nocht apparently spent some money on. All over it, weeds and small gnarly shrubs grow twistingly out of the innumerable cracks and gaps. It must be said that the tower has a certain gothic charm about it, and visitors to Wandstadt are impressed in an amused sort of way - Vindell's hope that his tower would draw travellers and merchants away from rival towns has at least come to pass.

There is only one proper entrance to the tower, a large, arched double-door made of dark-oak, studded with now-rusty bolts, heavily shadowed by deep buttresses on either side. Its two ring-handles are secured tightly with heavy, rusty chains and padlock, the key to which is kept like a guilty secret in the offices of the town council. Nevertheless, a narrow hidden crack has been found by the town's children, and creeping through it is a standard dare.

Inside there is a desperately uneven tiled ground floor, through which all sorts of bizarre fungi grow in autumn - the children believe these show where Nocht's dead labourers were buried (and death during large building projects is far from unknown in the Old World). A massive central stone pillar rises from the floor, from which beams radiate supporting the floor above. It's very dark in here, as the buttresses outside tend to overshadow the arched windows of the ground floor. A broad, ornate, and woodworm-ridden stairway curves around the wall of the tower to the first floor; it creaks and rattles in the most alarming way.

The first floor is littered with plaster crumbled from the walls and a century of leaves and feathers blown in through the arched windows. Again, the central supporting pillar rises through the floor and a rickety stairway curves around the wall. The second floor is much the same, although a mighty bell rests against the central pillar. Beneath its edge are the shattered bones of a Human, the remains of the unfortunate bell ringer whom no one was brave enough to retrieve (and, yes, they do say that his ghost still haunts the tower). Looking up, one can see the broken floor above, boards brutally torn; two broken supporting radial beams lie not far from the bell. Anyone hitting the bell will get a decent-enough BONG! out of it... and half a minute of terror as it echoes ominously around the crumbling tower.

#### Locating Wandstadt

If you do plan to use Vindell's Folly in conjunction with the Harpies plot, then Wandstadt will be reasonably remote, although there should be a few other towns for it to compete with economically (or at least there were a century ago when the tower was built - perhaps those other settlements are just deserted ghost towns now). As Harpies are described as dwelling far to the east of the Old World in the Mountains of Mourn on the eastern edge of the Dark Lands, it's unlikely that Wandstadt is much further west than the foothills of the World's Edge Mountains. Finally, as Wandstadt is a large enough place for various districts (such as the slums) to have developed, it also ought to be within a reasonable distance of a trade route of some sort to justify its size.

The stairs to the third level have collapsed. Ladders or rope and grappling iron would be needed to get to the third floor, either through where the stairway originally led or through the hole created by the bell's fall. However, lying close to the edge of that hole on the third floor is one of the supporting beams that used to hold up the fourth floor. Anything that might conceivably cause that beam to fall through would be dangerous at the very least. The third floor is much the same as the second, though without the bell and the stairway up is more or less intact.

Each lower level has high ceilings, but the ceiling of the fourth floor is almost twice as high as those before it. Looking up, one can see the remains of the supports for the fallen bell, offset to one side as the supporting stone pillar still rises centrally. Circling this level, halfway between floor and ceiling, is a broad wooden gallery, supported by carved wooden columns, which can be accessed by a stairway like those on the levels below. Around the walls on this gallery are shelves and cupboards. What Nocht imagined this would be for is anyone's guess. As it stands, the gallery is hazardous, but PCs will certainly want to explore every shelf and cupboard. Generous GMs may give them something to find (and there has been a century of opportunity for anyone to use the tower as a hiding place for one thing or another). From the gallery, another stairway leads to a strange platform level full of beams, unsecured planks and twisted metal, all associated with the bell housing. A dusty ladder can be found here leading to a hatch into the fifth floor above.

The fifth floor has a lower ceiling than any of those below it and is narrower in diameter. The narrowness is due to the presence of a decorative battlemented walkway that surrounds this floor - one of the tower's original purposes was to keep watch over the countryside beyond the town's walls, and you do get a very good view (anyone fancy using a telescope to spy on certain houses or townsfolk?). There are four small doors to the walkway, one at each cardinal point. Apart from the usual clutter of fallen plaster and windblown debris, there are an awful lot of pigeons, dead pigeons, pigeon feathers and pigeon poop. Oh, and a small cast-iron stove and an iron ladder built into the wall, which goes up to a hatch in the roof to the tiled turret above (which is described below).

The accompanying picture of Vindell's Folly shows recent additions to the above description. Three concentric circular walls have been added, following the lines of the old stepped buttresses, for additional support. The new outer door is not locked, but it does tend to stick during damp weather.

GMs should feel free to add monsters if they feel the need to give their players some perilous fun in a hazardous building. Logical beasties include rats, bats, fungus and moulds. But if you want to go nuts, a small colony of Snotlings could be fun, especially if you tie them into a series of local thefts and give them links to Human thieves. Or they might worship the eagles that have recently built a nest on the fifth floor (and a local bird-watcher who has spotted the eagles flying in and out wants some eggs for his collection). Other hazards as the PCs explore the tower include rotting floorboards and creaking stairs, sudden falls of crumbling plaster or a chunk of decorative masonry, or groups of startled birds suddenly taking flight as the PCs reach the next floor. Use one or more of the above ideas whenever the PCs have to go into the tower. Moving around in the tower should always be a risky, tense

experience, and minor events or encounters will make it more than just going cautiously from one level to the next, no matter how often the PCs go inside.

### The Harpies

Recently, two creatures have taken up residence in the red-tiled turret atop Vindell's Folly: a pair of vile Harpies. The foul creatures

arrived under cover of darkness, although there are some folk who claim to have seen them swoop past the moon one night and break in through a door built into the turret. Since then, the Harpies have only been abroad when night is turning to dawn and dusk turning back to night again. Apart from flying around the top of the tower screeching horribly, they have amused themselves by dropping their excrement on unfortunates below, and making daring swoops into the streets to snatch meat and offal from local butchers setting out their stalls early in the morning. Some claim that they have been flying to the surrounding countryside and carrying away sheep and goats. A few arrows and quarrels have been loosed at them, but not to any effect. However, as the Harpies' activities have been mostly confined to the slums around the tower, the town council and the Watch are refusing to believe reports of their existence. The council may or may not have a reason for this, such as believing that the slums are too populous, a breeding place for criminals and ne'er-do-wells who require culling.

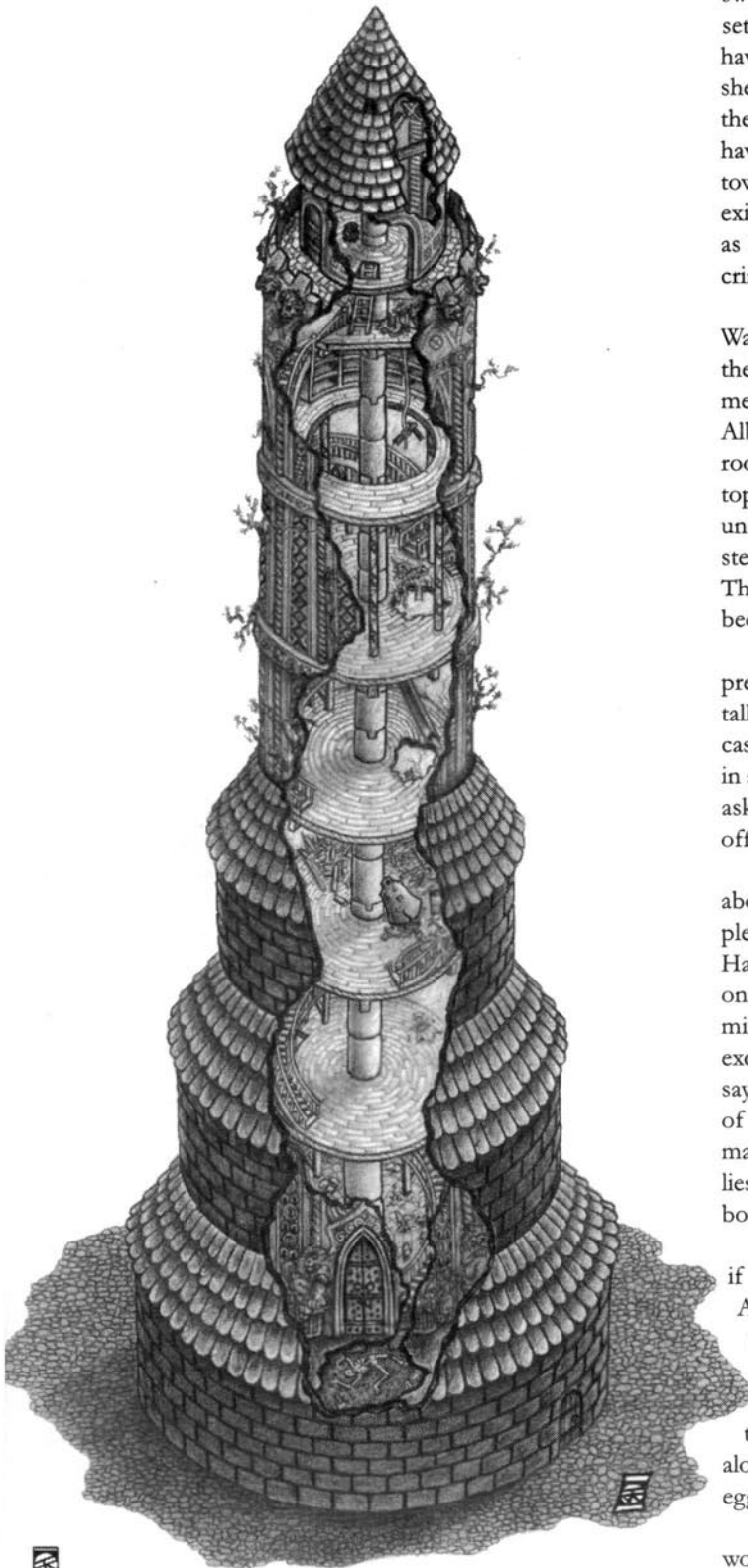
However, the wilful ignorance adopted by the council and Watch has had to change in light of the Harpies' recent atrocity - the midnight kidnapping of the eighteen year-old son of a leading member of the Wandstadt Guild of Merchants, Albrecht Stoppel. Albrecht was apparently lured in some way to the balcony of his room where he was snatched by the pair and carried aloft to the top of the tower. This was several days ago, but due to the dreadful uncertainty regarding the tower's stability, the town Watch has steadfastly refused to make any attempt to rescue young Albrecht. The Harpies have not been seen recently, although the tower has been under observation.

The PCs may be well-aware of the tower (either from direct previous experience or having stayed in Wandstadt for a while and talked to the locals), or they might be new to the town, in which case the town council definitely won't exaggerate the risks involved in attempting a rescue. Either way, a rescue is what the PCs will be asked to attempt, if they don't do the decent thing and make the offer themselves.

The Harpies are living in the conical red-tiled turret that lies above the fifth floor. Before their arrival, this was a remarkably pleasant chamber, sturdy, secure and weather-proof. With the Harpies in residence, it retains all those characteristics, although one would want to add 'un' to 'pleasant'. The place is a reeking midden of rotten meat and offal, bones, feathers and harpy excrement. The footing is treacherous, the stench off-putting to say the least (penalties as the GM sees fit). In addition, a large nest of bloody bones has been constructed - the purpose of the young man's abduction suddenly becomes horribly clear, and its success lies in the form of a large brown egg resting on feathers in the bone nest.

The Harpies will fight tooth and claw to protect the egg, but if the PCs enter the turret cautiously they may be able to grab Albrecht and get out fast, only having to suffer some hideous screeching and harpy spit. The real problem is Albrecht who has become somewhat unhinged by his ghastly ordeal and feels an obligation to the egg he has fathered. Depending on what the PCs try to do, he may refuse to leave the turret or fight alongside the Harpies to protect them and, more importantly, the egg (the Harpies have mixed feelings regarding Albrecht).

This situation could go in a number of directions. However, it would be interesting for Albrecht and the egg at least to survive,



creating a situation where the young man insists on caring for it until it hatches and then taking care of his daughter. The social consequences of this madness should make for some lively roleplaying and plotting.

### A Few Notes on Harpies

"Oh, yes, my son! Thick as the manure that covers their feathers, are Harpies! Thick and greedy about sums them up! You mark my words: spread a feast of rotting food out on a net-trap and you'll catch them, easy as fish!"

Harpies are creatures of vile and voracious appetites, capable of tremendous cruelty and malice. Their over-riding motivation is to satisfy their desires, preferably directly though the physical, emotional or mental suffering of other living creatures. It is commonly believed that Harpies are stupid and can be easily tricked into traps that end their existence. The reality is that while they are far from geniuses, most are possessed of twisted cunning and powerful suspicion. It is these characteristics, in conjunction with the prevailing belief in their stupidity, that help make Harpies dangerous. On top of that, they have wings, and the sense to use them to their benefit. However, their spitefulness and desire for vengeance over those who wrong them can overtake their caution. Harpies are not innately creatures of Chaos, despite their fused form of bird and woman, but the roads of evil and Chaos suit their nature, and most Imperial bestiaries classify them as Beastmen anyway.

The human female half of a Harpy is usually staggeringly beautiful, the raptor half as magnificent as any Noble's favourite falcon. However, Harpies are slatternly beasts, with no qualms about wallowing in filth and gory entrails. Their feathers and breasts are mired in grime, wet, slimy or encrusted, and their stench is abominable. Their lairs and nests match them, being filled with rotten meat, bones and excrement. It is curious, however, that sailors' tales often describe Harpies as beautiful; perhaps only men who have been at sea for many months can truly see through the muck to the beauty beneath. It must also be said there are other Harpies, less birdlike and more bat-like, with the bodies of slender, long fingered women with leathery wings, whose visages may be lovely or hideous. However, the personalities and habits of each sort remain repellently similar.

Harpies delight in their squalor and the revulsion it excites. It is common for Chaotic Harpies to follow Nurgle's trail, taking every chance to spread disease, defecating down wells, onto good pasture and travellers' heads as they swoop overhead. Such a Harpy could destroy a village without even entering it.

Avarice, gluttony and lust: these three sins characterise the appetites and cruelties of Harpies. All Harpies seek to indulge themselves in all three, though most have their particular cravings. Although most Harpies live in the Mountains of Mourn in the Dark Lands, their desires will often bring them westward to the Old World where they can indulge themselves more fully.

At the Mountains of Mourn, Harpies associate and even cooperate with Chaos Dwarfs, Black Orcs and Hobgoblins, most commonly acting as spies, guards and aerial watchmen. Chaos Dwarfs in particular make full use of Harpies for observing the activities of their uncorrupted brethren along the World's Edge Mountains, and the birdwomen make excellent tools for capturing slaves to keep their black industries running.

# FULL BOARD AT THE THREE OAKS

## A SCENARIO BY DAVID A NEALE

This encounter is set in a coaching inn on the edge of a village. It involves an attempt to obtain some money hidden under the floorboards.

### The Inn

The Three Oaks is a coaching inn, a bit smaller than the one in WFRP1 or the *Game Master's Pack*. It has a common room with eight beds, and four private rooms - in this scenario three of these are taken (two by a group of Road Wardens). A single door at the top of the stairs in the bar leads to all these rooms. The inn has no outer defence-wall, being just inside the walls of the village. It has only three staff: the owner, Jens Hoger, his son Manfred, and the barmaid Danielle (Jens' wife died of tuberculosis eight years ago). Food is cooked by whoever is available at the time, and is generally poor. The inn is frequented by locals from the village, but also gets some travellers passing through by coach.

### The Situation

Jens Hoger has been the accomplice of a group of bandits. In return for using the inn as a hideaway and safe house, Jens gets a cut of the gang's loot. This morning, however, as the bandits returned from a raid a group of Road Wardens suddenly arrived. One of the thieves knew of a loose floorboard in the inn and quickly stashed the loot under it, something witnessed by the whole gang and Jens. The raid had been peaceful so no weapons were bloodied, and nothing distinguished the gang. The Road Wardens asked them a couple of routine questions and then moved to Jens.

As he was questioned, the bandits left, feeling sure that Jens would tip the wardens off about their activities. In fact Jens' greed had got the better of him, and he desired the reward money. Also, as the bandit activity was attracting increasing attention, Jens saw informing the authorities as the best way to save his own neck. The fact that the gang left hurriedly and have not contacted him all day has made Jens suspect that they know or have guessed at his betrayal. He has identified the gang to the wardens, but as he has offered no proof the wardens will not act. He has not told them of the loot - substantial evidence - because he plans to keep it. The wardens are now waiting for the bandits to return. Due to the presence of the wardens and other customers Jens has not been able to get the loot from its hiding place yet, but plans to do so as soon as the inn closes. The bandits will not risk entering the inn again.

### Claus Kannicher

Claus Kannicher is the village herbalist, and a retired scout. Three years ago Claus fell from his horse, and the injury that resulted meant he could no longer ride or move with stealth or speed. Claus had learned basic medical skills on his travels and moved back to the village of his birth to become a herbalist. Claus' skills have



made him a valuable and relatively wealthy member of the village, but while most villagers respect him, some of them harbour a quiet hatred of him. He is distant and cold and often gets drunk and rowdy. He sees the village as his prison. It is for this reason that he has become associated with the bandit gang, financing them and attending to their wounds in return for a share (a third of the loot is his). In time he became their leader.

Having been informed of recent events, Claus has entered The Three Oaks to scout out the location of the loot and consider ways of retrieving it. Jens knows that Claus is an associate of the bandits and assumes his role is fairly minor. For this reason, Jens is suspicious of Claus' presence but does not know how to act. The bandits have no desire to deal with Jens anymore, and a direct raid would prove difficult due to Jens' blunderbuss, his large son, Manfred, and his equally large dog. As Claus sips his pint and considers the situation, guess who enters the inn...

### The PCs Involved

If any of the PCs are wearing hoods or similar, Jens will be suspicious, as he is expecting a strike from the bandits at any time. He will be wary and downright rude in any case, so it is perfectly possible that the PCs will get on the wrong side of him. GMs should include a small encounter with Jens, such as the innkeeper spilling beer on a PC by accident but failing to apologise. If the PCs complain Jens will appear fairly distracted, then respond in a brief and gruff manner before walking off.

In response to such an incident Claus will approach the PCs as soon as Jens and Manfred are both absent from the bar (but this does not happen often and Jens will not be gone long). He will greet them, then say, 'You look like people I could use. There's gold under the floorboards. Get it by closing and a third of it's yours.' He glances round surreptitiously (checking Jens is still absent) then adds 'It's the loose board under the far leg of that farmer's table, near the dog. I can't be seen talking to you'. He will then rise and leave the inn quickly, ducking behind a nearby house to make sure he is not followed. If the PCs are quick they may get to ask him one or two questions before he leaves. Claus will say the money is his and that it does not belong to the landlord, but will not say how it got there, saying that there is no time for explanations. The board he described is five boards from the bar and two boards from the wall, the edge of it is just under the leg of a table occupied by a farmer and his wife (the board can be lifted up enough without moving the table, but the PCs won't realise until they get close enough to have a proper look), and a large dog sleeps nearby.

What the PCs do now is up to them. The inn's current occupants consist of four Road Wardens, two farmers, Jens and Danielle. Manfred is in the back room, and will emerge regularly to check the bar (about ten minutes in, ten out, and so on). A large dog sleeps near the far wall, right next to the floorboard. Jens has a blunderbuss behind the bar, the end of which can be seen sticking out (**Perception Test** to notice). Some possible PC actions are outlined below, but it is a very open-ended affair so be prepared to wing it! You could briefly outline the results of any other actions you think your players may take before you run it.

### Where's Claus?

In just over five minutes Claus will return. The bandits are watching the inn from just outside the village, and Claus has been to inform

them of events and tell them to be alert and watch for the PCs. The bandits use a point where the river runs into the village to enter and exit after dark (or simply in secret) - it will be possible to spot wet patches on Claus' trouser legs when he returns. Once back inside he will buy a drink and retreat to a far corner of the inn, offering the PCs no more than a glance. He will shake his head at any suggestion of interaction and if the PCs talk to him he will pretend not to know them, possibly feigning drunkenness or anger. If Jens sees him talking to the PCs, their chances of retrieving the bag will be curtailed, as Jens will become suspicious of them.

### The Direct Approach

The PCs may opt for a huge fight with everyone in the inn. Remember those Road Wardens however, and due to the increased bandit activity there are more of them around than before. More may enter while the PCs are at the inn. If obvious trouble develops the PCs could be in for a difficult time, especially as they may be thought to be the bandits themselves.

### Jens

Jens Hoger is a man who takes whatever he can get. In this way he is similar to Claus Kannicher, but he has none of Claus' subtlety or intellect, and never thinks out the consequences of his actions. In this scenario Jens is afraid of bandit action but comforted by the presence of the Road Wardens. His fear comes across as rudeness, and he appears distracted.

### Manfred

Manfred is a large, strong, twenty-two year old. He is someone who likes things the way they are, and he has a fear of change of all kinds (in the right circumstances he could make a good follower of Law). He does not drink, and is angry with his father when he does. He knows about the bandits and the gold, but is not greedy like his father. He hates the risk that supporting the bandits entails. He does what his father tells him to practically all the time. He is attracted to Danielle, but has never told her. He will always try to move trouble out of the inn, and will use direct methods to solve problems such as knocking trouble-makers unconscious.

### Danielle

Danielle is a fairly plain looking twenty-year old, quite clever, caring, and sociable. She does not like Jens. The PCs may befriend Danielle and get information. She knows the inn is used for some shady activity but has no details, though she has seen suspicious men visiting Jens at strange times. She does not know about the gold.

### The Table

The PCs' first action may be to try to occupy the table next to the board where a farmer and his wife currently sit. The PCs could use the ruse of joining them for a drink, or use a distraction - the couple arrived on a hay-cart whose horse could conveniently break loose from the stable (with a little assistance, of course). The PCs could simply bribe the farmers to leave. The table is fairly heavy, but it shifts easily enough off the important floorboard if given a quick shove (watch those pints!).

### Distraction

The PCs could cause a distraction to get people (especially the

Road Wardens) out of the inn. This may not get them far however (and they may return quickly) depending on what ruse is used. Jens and Manfred will not leave.

### Drink

The PCs could get Jens drunk by buying him drinks, which he will readily accept, as long as no-one has had a chance to drug them. The PCs may try this ploy for the whole pub, but this could well have the adverse effect of causing the inn to fill up quickly with thirsty locals. Manfred will not drink, and will become angry if his father does.

### The Dog

The dog is asleep with its paw on the board. The usual ploy of throwing it some food should work. But, if it finishes the food it may well start barking for more, alerting others. If the PCs try to get the money while the dog sleeps they need to make two **Agility** tests to lift the board, and you should provide a description of the dog shifting position, grunting and the like. The dog will only wake if the PCs fail both **Agility** tests, but if it does wake there is a 60% chance it will bark.

### Closing Time

Through the night, numerous locals (and possibly more Road Wardens) will come in and out (but mainly in until closing time). When Jens stops serving, Danielle will go home, and most clientele will also leave or go up to their rooms. After this, only the PCs, Claus, the dog, and the wardens will remain in the bar (Manfred will stay in the back room from this point, unless he hears signs of trouble). The Road Wardens are staying the night in the inn, still on the lookout for the bandits.

Jens will eventually request that the bar is emptied, and the Road Wardens will wait until everyone is either out of the inn or up in their rooms. Claus will feign unconsciousness in the corner, and Jens will throw him out at the same time as the PCs. If the PCs have bought drinks for Jens or the Wardens these actions may be different. If Jens sees the wardens leaving the bar he will become concerned. If the Road Wardens have been bought drinks, or otherwise been made favourable to the PCs they may simply go upstairs, warning the PCs to be wary of bandits.

### The Bag

The bag is big and heavy. It contains quite a bit of money and assorted jewellery, but the exact contents and value are up to the GM. It will not be easy to move the bag inconspicuously.

### Night-time

Once the bar is empty, Jens will lock the door that leads to the bedrooms, and then fetch the bag from its hiding place. He will lock it away in a hidden compartment in the cellar, under one of the beer barrels, which the bandits do not know about. If anyone tries the door from the bedrooms while it is locked Jens will unlock it (after taking the loot), apologise and say it was extra precaution against the bandits. By this time, it will be very difficult to recover the loot.

At this point the bandits will concentrate on different methods of revenge. In the next couple of days the loot will be used to hire an extra guard for the inn, as well as, ironically, to finance a reward

for the bandits' capture. You could expand the scenario to encompass this eventuality and any future actions of the bandits.

### Leaving the Inn

Once the PCs get the bag they may leave the inn, or go upstairs to a room. In either case Claus will follow them. If they have gone upstairs he will tell them to meet him outside and then leave. Once the PCs are outside with Claus he will ask for the bag. If they hand it over he will throw roughly a third into their hands and make his way into the woods to meet the bandits, taking care to avoid being followed.

If they refuse to hand it over he will tell them they had an agreement and that they are making a mistake. If they continue to refuse he will shake his head and walk home. Whenever the PCs leave the village, they can expect a formidable bandit ambush.

Claus may ask the PCs to follow him into the woods, perhaps if they suggest counting out an exact third. Depending on how far they follow him and how gullible they seem he will lead them into an ambush and reclaim all the loot.

### The Road Wardens

There are four Road Wardens in the inn, led by Captain Nikolaus Keller. If told about the floorboard they will lift it carefully and discover the loot. Jens will deny he knew it was there, but if the wardens cannot arrest anyone else they may well take him, and they will probably interrogate the PCs in a fairly harsh manner, too. Jens will blame numerous people: he will mention Claus first, but lacking evidence and given Claus' standing he may try to pin it on the PCs instead. The PCs may decide to go to the wardens after they discover the bag's contents. Depending on how much help they give with capturing the bandits they could get a reward for this.

Note that if Claus sees the PCs go to the wardens, or suspects this, he will be angry with them and wary of any action by them or the authorities.



# LOWEBRAU

A SCENARIO BY ROYSTEN CROW

Many years ago, an Ogre mercenary force that had served the Electors in several battles decided that they had grown weary of the Empire. They spent their gold on fine armour, weapons, food, and much drink, and began to head home to the Badlands.

When they reached the foothills of the Grey Mountains they were met by Dwarfs from the nearby Karak Norn. The Dwarfs were prospecting in the area and, thinking the Ogres hostile, they were ready to defend their home.

The Ogre Warlord told the Dwarfs that he would fight them if they wanted, but his forces needed time to sober up first. The subject of drink attracted the interest of the Dwarfs, for they had been working in the mountains for many months and had not tasted beer in a good long while. The Warlord brought forth kegs of the finest brews that the Ogres had acquired in the Imperial cities and an impromptu drinking contest ensued. The capacity of both races for mass consumption of alcohol was put to the test but there was no



clear victor. With pride and honour at stake on both sides, it was decided that they would meet at the same spot in ten years time and settle the matter once and for all.

Word spread of the incident and many Imperial brewers attended with carts laden with their wares and left with fat purses of gold and gems. With the Dwarfen reputation at stake, Slayers and the like began to attend to ensure that they showed the Ogres just who was the master drinker. Ogre chieftains and warlords did the same and a begrudging respect was earned with regard to the contest. The cream of both races' brewers and drinkers began to muster every ten years and Kazak Gorog was born.

### **Kazak Gorog**

This basically translates into Drinking War, but the words have attained much more importance since it was started, especially because the Dwarfs (sometimes called Grey Dwarfs) tend not to have the wealth that generates prestige amongst their race. This makes Karak Norn the focus of the fight to prove that not only can Dwarfs handle drink better than Ogres, but that Grey Dwarfs are the greatest even amongst their own race.

To add prestige to the event, two very special Nogarung were created. The two largest troll skulls that could be found were forged into tankards, plated with Gromril, and inscribed with symbols for good luck, good drinking, and victory over one's foes. Similarly, a massive stone table was set on the site of the contest by Dwarfen masons, who were eager to see an outright victory.

The Dwarfs and the Ogres conduct their own contests for the right to take their race's Nogarung to the table, and only the most sterling drinkers manage to duel their way to the top.

When Nogarung and table meet, the tankards are filled with the most potent of Dwarfen brews brought in especially for the fight. When drained, the Nogarung is refilled each time their base slams to the table and the duel begins in earnest.

Should one of the bearers lose consciousness, their race is deemed to have lost the battle and the shame remains for the decade until the next rematch can be orchestrated.

### **Bierkrieg**

Every ten years, at the foothills of the Grey Mountains, thirty miles upstream from Stimmigen, a small town of tents and carts appears around the stone table and lasts for a week.

A huge festival dedicated to the alcoholic arts is held. It is rowdy, raucous, and not for the faint of heart or weak of liver. The brewers who have attended the Schaffenfest, the Middenheim Carnival, plus master brewers from all over the world attend, and the climax of the festival is the customary duel between the Dwarf and Ogre who currently hold the Kazak Gorog Nogarung.

There are wares to be bought, entertainments to enjoy, and of course, vast, gargantuan quantities of drink to consume.

The authorities remain indifferent to it because it keeps the Dwarfs happy, brings a significant Ogre force into the Empire that could be recruited in an emergency, brings record sales

of alcohol and generally placates the more violent sections of society. Plus, taverns start to fill up even more than usual in the few weeks leading up to it as people try to 'get in practice.' Finally, it's a grudge match between Ogres and Dwarfs: is it *really* worth trying to break it up?

### **The Velvet Serpent**

This year the festival has drawn the interest of a small cult dedicated to Slaanesh. It has been operating for some time amongst the upper reaches of Imperial nobility and has numerous shadowy contacts with other cults throughout the Empire and Bretonnia. A few years ago, their leader set up a small brewery in the south of the Empire to facilitate a plan to expand their pleasure. The village they chose is well out of the way, is exceedingly poor, and no one really even notices it. It is the perfect place for them.

### **Lowebrau**

The brew they finally perfected is manufactured with several psychotropic drugs and then subjected to various magical processes. Lowebrau causes a loss of inhibition, an ecstatic mental state, and greatly enhances the response to physical stimuli. Delighted with the effects of this drink, the cult has been sending Lowebrau to other cults of Slaanesh as well as using it during their own revelries.

When some of the cult visited the brewery, they noticed just how poor and isolated the nearby village was. A nefarious scheme was hatched and after adjusting certain batches of the brew, they started to 'generously' offer it to the impoverished peasants.

Addiction quickly set in and the village is now in an almost constant state of licentious attitude. Plied with Lowebrau, the cultists visit them as they will and can do whatever they want with the villagers. The peasants are now starting to succumb to mutation but because of the potent and lingering effects of prolonged Lowebrau consumption, they barely even notice.

### **The Teetotaller**

Herman Kretschner is a former cleric of Verena who left the faith due to chronic alcoholism. He relocated to the village some time ago to live in isolation and try to repent for his weakness. He has been sober for several years and saw the establishing of the brewery as a test from Verena. The goddess was seeing if he could resist temptation and if he did, he might once again be permitted to rejoin the faith.

He has started to see the effect that Lowebrau is having on the villagers and is growing concerned.

### **Party Time**

The cult is going to attend the Bierkrieg and set up a stall to distribute the original Lowebrau recipe. Some of their female members are going to put on an erotic show and reap the effects of Lowebrau influenced viewers. Ogres and Dwarfs are races that the cult is eager to explore. If they can manage to get just a couple of them addicted, they can seduce them

back to the village and add new members to their perpetually intoxicated harem.

They have all studied the relevant languages to assist them in sales and seduction and are heading to the festival with their wares.

## PART 1 THE WORD IS OUT

In the months and weeks before the festival, small pockets of people in taverns across the Empire will start to talk about it. Some will be intending to go; others who do not have the means will envy those who do. It is a crude event, and cultured persons will be derogatory of this vile tradition. Dwarfs, however, will be most enthusiastic because the son of the king of Karak Norn himself won the right to carry forth the Dwarfen Nogarung, and they have heard that Bushpig, a descendent of the original warlord now holds the Ogre tankard. This has not happened in decades, and they feel this recourse back to the source of the Kazak is a good sign that there will be a mighty victory.

## PART 2 ADVENTURE HOOKS

The following are some ideas for bringing PCs to the festival.

### Roll out The Barrel

Herpin Brauer, a local brewer, is in a panic. He was all set to take his wares to the Bierkrieg to earn a very tidy profit that would combat the debts he ran up from gambling. Unfortunately, the guards he hired to protect his investment en route have found better paying work at the last minute. He is now desperate for help and will approach the party as an alternative to travelling alone and unguarded.

Half a crown a day, food and board provided during the journey, a free ride to the Bierkrieg, and accommodation in his sizeable tent is his offer. During the journey, he will set the PCs up in the common room of coaching inns and take a single room for himself. At least one of the party members will be expected to guard the cart at all times during the journey and at the festival.

Brauer is 5' 5" with a head of thinning brown hair and a round face. He has a significant belly.

### Just What the Doktor Ordered

The adventurers are abroad one night or otherwise enjoying themselves when they encounter Luigi Pavarotti (from *Power behind the Throne*). Herr Doktor from Middenheim

is looking for people to party with. Luigi will of course spring for drinks and food in his usual open and overt manner, and he will try to woo any female characters or at least flatter them.

Luigi has heard of the Bierkrieg and is eager to go. He takes a shine to the group and asks them to come with him and together they will have a grand old time. He has hired a splendid coach and the Graf of Middenheim is insisting on sending some Knights Panther in plain clothes to protect him. He is looking for good company because no one else at the court is going. Dieter has been forbidden to attend by Kirsten, it's not really Rallane's scene, and most Middenheim folk look down on it.

At the festival, he will of course put his titanic ability to consume to the very limit and the PCs can either tour the place with him, or do their own thing.

Full details on Luigi Pavarotti can be found in *Power Behind the Throne*. The baronial physician to the court of Middenheim, Luigi is 6' 2", enormous of build with thick black curly hair



and beard. He has brown eyes and huge hands. He is flamboyant and larger than life, a highly social and friendly creature who relishes every sensation. He eats and drinks with alacrity and gusto, takes drugs, and will indulge any sexual activity with almost anyone or anything.

Luigi is escorted by four undercover Knights Panther. They have been handpicked for this assignment and are always near to Luigi. They drink frugally to fit in and know when to stop before they are affected. They will protect their charge with their lives.

### The Dok, Stok, and Skrund

In Altdorf, there is an exclusive tavern whose name is Khazalid for 'spot it, smack it, massacre it'. It is a very traditional Dwarfen location that brings the atmosphere, cuisine, and décor of the strongholds to those who are far from their homelands.

It is a stone building in a discreet back street with thick pillars outside carved with images of Dwarfs and many runes. There is a sign that says 'Dawi only. No Elgi, Ogri, Umgi, or Thagi' (*Dwarfs only, no Elves, Ogres, Humans or murderous traitors*).

The spacious interior has a low ceiling and two roaring fireplaces with meat always cooking over it. There is free flowing ale and splendid and authentic Dwarfen cuisine.

The walls of the main bar are stacked high with many bleached skulls. In the snug in the back and out of direct sight is a number of Elf skulls and the inn's highly venomous book of grudges.

Adding a Goblin head to the collection gets you praise, an Orc head gets a pint of ale, an Elf skull or erasing a significant entry in the book gets a pint of the incredibly rare Bugman's XXXXXX, which they save especially for such occasions. When they get drunk, many of the regulars talk about how one day they will erase a specific entry and then go into lengthy and violent detail about how they would do it.

There are always Dwarfs in here. Most will have just finished work and be singing and letting their beards down. Informal shouting contests, wrestling, head butting, and bragging is common and constant.

*Special Occasions:* Every Festag there is a 5 gc entry fee for all the ale and food you can consume. They lay on some

rambunctious Dwarfen musicians and much of the festivity ends up spilling onto the street. Because no Dwarf would fake having paid their way, and few non-Dwarfs attend, this does not present a problem.

On 33rd Pflugzeit, Vorgeheim, Brauzzeit, and Vorhexen, the street around the place is filled all day as they ship in some of the finest barrels of Dwarfen brew to celebrate the holy days of Grungni.

The watch know to let the Dwarfs have their fun and keep away. One special part of such days is to vie for the honour of having one's name inscribed on the inn's Nogarung.

This splendid and huge drinking tankard stands above the bar and is embossed with Gromril. By entering (20 gc) and winning the Kulgur Guz (the art of cooking Troll/eating with gusto) and devouring more Troll flesh than any other competitor, the current champion may drink out of it for free whenever they visit the inn.

Bahny Gumbolg has held this honour for the last two years. He also takes the Nogarung and represents the home team in the drinking contests at Kazak Gorog because he is just as proficient at drinking as he is at eating.

#### Prices

Single Room	1/3
Breakfast	1/-
Lunch	2/-
Dinner	3/-
Traditional Dwarfen Miner's Packed Lunch	2/1

Any Dwarfs in Altdorf will be offered a seat on the carts that are taking the inn's home brew and team to the event. Just by helping a little with the lugging of kegs and doing a couple of hours at the stall, they get a free ride and a place in a tent. They have to provide their own beer money, blankets, and food.

The heavyweight drinkers in the team will be seeing how many Ogres they can defeat in duels. Gumbolg defeated eight last time and is looking to eclipse this score.

#### Protection

Three hardy folk from the forests of Athel Loren moved to the Empire and made a decent living in the city as merchants. They went to taverns to socialise, and declined wine and the finer drinks so they could acclimatise themselves to rougher fare and fit in easier with those around them. They could see that Humans prized the ability to handle alcohol highly and their merchant trade depended on good relations. This led to the developing of their talents and eased trade deals when they managed to soften a client's resolve while remaining unaffected after matching them drink for drink.

After being heckled by Dwarfs from the Dok, Stok, and Skrund, they decided to come to the festival and show the Dwarfs their mettle.

They are led by Matwee Hillsep, the now notorious Elven drinker. They are bringing a few barrels with them of a home brew called 'the Amber Thunderclap.' They tout it as a



traditional Elven drink that they will sell at 4/- a pint. It counts as two units and a *Poison* test must be passed when each drink takes effect or the drinker will be rendered unconscious for 20 minus their *Toughness* in rounds. The ‘drink’ is actually used by Elven folk to strip the rust off metalwork and Matwee is bringing it to pretend that Elves can make just as vicious a brew as any other race. They will not dare touch the stuff themselves, but a number of Ogres will commit to a mass contest over it. They stand in a circle and gulp down a pint. Those who pass out are instantly disqualified and the winner is the last Ogre standing.

The Wood Elves are looking to hire some added discreet protection. Player character Elves will be invited to help them shame the Dwarfs at their own game via their fake drink and their own considerable drinking skills. At the festival itself, tension will be high between the Dwarfs and any other Elves in the party, but the Dwarfs are intent on showing the Elgi that they can trounce them at drinking just like they can trounce them at everything else in life.

### PART 3 JOURNEY TO THE BIERKRIEG

The town of Stimmigen has many boats moored in its docks. Most are selling to individual traders who are taking food, weapons, armour, and especially drink out of the town by cart and wagon. Some are transferring their wares to vehicles and mules, joining the large procession that leaves the town and heads south along the riverbanks.

Within the town itself are many people selling items of use to those heading to the Bierkrieg such as tents, blankets, cooking equipment, and illumination. These items are two steps lower than usual for *availability* and +10% cost.

### PART 4 THE BIERKRIEG

*The River Tenfel starts to thin as it gradually winds up towards the Grey Mountains. Empty barrels, floating bottles, and other refuse start to appear in it. The distant din of yelling and singing announces the presence of the Bierkrieg and then plumes of smoke from numerous fires start to create a hazy cloud in the sky. The foothills that lead into the mountains are covered in hundreds of tents, marquees, pavilions, and stages. There are huge crowds of people moving amongst them along with carts, wagons, and heavily laden mules. As you draw closer, you can see a large area of squat and sturdy tents where many Dwarfs are celebrating. Another area holds huge makeshift canopies under and around which many monstrous Ogre warriors have congregated.*

So long as they are attending to entertain, sell, or consume, all are welcome at the Bierkrieg.

Tents are pitched wherever one wishes but races generally congregate together. During the day and throughout the night, there are a number of large bonfires as well as smaller campfires where people prepare their own food. Many people are always sat around the fires singing, eating, and drinking heartily.

## THE DWARFEN QUARTER

In the core of the Dwarfen area are the tents for Prince Hakkit of Karak Norn and the other Dwarfen nobility. There are a number of Slayers who stay deep within the quarter and do not mingle with the other races. They constantly drink themselves into a coma while bragging of what they have faced in the search to fulfil their vows.

### Drink

*Dok, Stok, and Skrund Home Brew:* At their tent, the beer goes for 10p and each unit consumed counts as two due to its potency.

*Hazkal tents:* These stock recently brewed beers and ales that are normal with regard to drink tests and cost a shilling each.

*Gorog tents:* Standard Dwarfen beers and ales are available here and they cost a shilling each and each unit is **Hard** for Consume Alcohol Tests.

*Grizdal tents:* Beers and ales that have been aged for at least a century. They are extremely virulent and each unit counts as three. These cost anything from 5/- to 2 gc each.

### Food

*Drongnel* (“Dragon” stew with cave mushrooms that has been marinated in strong ale and so it counts as half a unit): 5/- a bowl, served with bread.

*Frongel Soup:* 2/- a skillet and served with bread.

*Kuri:* 4/- a plate.

*Troll Pie:* 8/- each.

### Amour and Weapon Stalls

Armour for Dwarfs abounds and every type is automatically available. For Humans and Ogres, items that are *Average* or better in availability are automatically available, *Scarce* are 40%, *Rare* are at 10%. Swords, axes, hammers, maces, and flails of every type are readily available.

A new availability roll is allowed each day as new supplies and vendors arrive. All prices are at +25%. There is a 10% chance that any item that is available is also available as **Best** quality of exceptional workmanship.

### Souvenir Tents

Items are of excellent quality and Dwarfen style. The lower price is for the basic item, and they range upward with increasing elaboration and expensive decorations to those with more precious manufacturing materials.

*Nogarung:* 10 gc to 200 gc

*Ragarin:* These are troll-skin garments that count as leather amour, cost 200% more than the normal type of garment and have 50% more encumbrance. Worn for style.

## THE OGRE QUARTER

The central part of the area that is occupied by the Ogres has a pile of rocks heaped upon it with a large rough throne set on top of them. Sitting in this throne is a massive black skinned Ogre. Warlord Bushpig wears a heavy iron crown that has a huge horn on the front and teeth jutting from the sides. He has a huge mane of black spiky hair and is clad in layers of fur that have had hundreds of finger bones stitched crudely to them. This causes him to rattle like a horde of charging skeletons when he bothers to move. He holds the Nogarung in one hand and a huge spiked club in the other. He keeps a small sheep on a leather leash and this is his lucky pet and emergency snack, 'Flossy.'

### Drink

The Ogre brew that is popular at this event is a terrible concoction called 'Rippah' and it goes for a shilling a go. No one is quite sure how it is made, and even the Ogres who make it generally just throw things into the mix until it looks about right or begins to eat through the pot. Each unit counts as two and a *Poison* test must be made or the imbibor takes one *Wound* from internal trauma.

### Food

*Whole chicken*: 1/6.  
*Haunch of pig*: 1 gc  
*Haunch of cow*: 1 gc 10/-  
*Bucket of offal*: 3/-

### Souvenir Tents

These have Goblin and Orc items. The Ogres have no use for them but they have seen that Humans like to buy them and pretend it was they who acquired them in battle or through bravery. They also do a decent trade with the Dwarfs who buy Troll heads, meat, and hide from them.

*Black Orc skull*: 12 gc  
*Orc skull*: 10 gc  
*Goblin skull*: 2 gc  
*Goblinoid war banner*: 10 to 50 gc

There is an unspoken code of conduct amongst the Dwarfs and Ogres. They are here to prove their drinking prowess, not their battle skills. Violence does occur but the more sober and levelheaded members of the race will usually intervene to drag the combatants apart before it escalates. If the event degenerates into a battle, then no one will ever know just who the best drinker is.

The Dwarfs of Karak Norn are the most dedicated to the contest because nothing gives them greater pride than hearing others of their race comment, 'Grey Dwarfs? Not the richest of Dwarfs but damn, they sure can put it away.'

*Thieves*: Because of drunkenness, people passing out, and the spending of large amounts of money, the criminal element is

of course interested. However, even the most reckless and desperate is not going to try anything at the festival. Dwarfs and Ogres are not forgiving of those who are preying on the very same Humans that are providing them with drinks, services, and entertainment.

In years past, those who have tried were very publicly beaten senseless. Those taken to the Ogres never emerged and 'Sticky Finga Pud' was served later on. The Dwarfs who found a thief took them in chains back to Karak Norn. The thief then appeared some months later in their hometown without arms, legs, eyes, tongue, or ears.

### Competition Tents

In every quarter, there are places where competitions are held. They are indicative of the race involved and although anyone can enter, the home race tends to have an innate advantage. There is always considerable gambling on the outcome of each bout.

### Dwarfen Quarter

There are **Troll flesh eating** contests that cost 8 gc to enter and are facilitated by Kulgur contests, which is the art of cooking it. Kulgur is a Dwarfen art form and competitions to see who can do it best are frequent. This leaves a lot of expertly cooked Troll about the place and so eating contests are the logical way of using it. There is an excitement about eating this, especially so because there is still the most tiny chance of a mistake during preparation that would cause it to start regenerating and kill the person who ate it.

There are **Rorkaz** bouts. These are shouting contests. They are resolved over the course of three turns, based on who succeeds by the greatest total amount in three *Fellowship* rolls. There is a +10% bonus for *Public Speaking*. A character will suffer a 10% penalty for every Rorkaz they enter during a day after their first bout because they will grow increasingly hoarse. If their modified *Fellowship* reaches zero from sustained participation, they will lose their voice for 10 minus their *Toughness* in days.

Skuf pits are home to **drunken brawls** where competitors enter and fight until one side or the other yields or is rendered unconscious. Fights are unarmed, with no amour, and are always to *stun*.

Repeated instances of excellent victory will result in an increase in social standing amongst Dwarfs as the tale of the best gut/voice/fist they have seen in decades spreads.

### Human Quarter

**Arm wrestling** contests. *Strength* rolls are made and a draw on the results keeps the competitors level. A success against a failed roll from an opponent and they start to pull them over. Another success over a failure and it puts them to the table and wins. If the opponent defeats the character, they can pull



their way back up and the contest continues. For every round of arm wrestling they acquire a 1% cumulative *Toughness* penalty on every successive roll. Lost points heal at the rate of 1 every 2 hours (x2 if *Heal* is used).

**Drunken axe throwing.** Seven shillings to enter. The wooden target is placed before a large wooden wall to handle the frequent misses. Ten throwing axes are used and if they hit the target and cause at least 8 points of damage then the axe sticks. If they miss or the axe falls, the competitor will have to quaff a beer. Because it can take up to five minutes for a throw to be made due to singing, backslapping, gambling, boasting, and general messing around, drunkenness can greatly hamper performance. The desire to win a bet generally overrides the desire to miss ten times in a row for the acquisition of beer.

**Wrestling pits.** Two competitors who are unarmed, unarmoured, and fighting to a stun or to a yield.

**Ogre Quarter**

There are constant head butting contests where two competitors remove all head amour and *charge* at each other. If both miss, they get up and try again. If only one person hits, they do damage to their target as normal. If they both hit, both attacks are worked out and each one acquires a +2 damage bonus because of the ferocity of the double impact. This often results in a joint *Stun* in which case the victor is decreed by who comes to first. Critical Effects are rolled as normal with 7 being the maximum result allowed on the Critical Hits Table. Because of their incredibly dense brows, the damage done with a head butt on an Ogre by a non-Ogre is at -2.

**The Central Arena**

In the middle ground, situated around the duelling table, there are a large number of temporary tables where Ogres and Dwarfs face off for individual pride. There are always a lot of their own race cheering them on, and a large group of Humans placing bets. Any other race can risk entering (Dwarfs have 70% chance of having two grades of *Consume Alcohol*, and 20% chance of three grades. Ogres have 50% chance of having two grades and 20% chance of three grades).

**Brain the Snotling**

This is a very popular sideshow area where violence and entertainment exploit captive Snotlings. It was founded by Klaus Gaul who once ran a poor trade in horses in the south of the Empire. When he encountered some Snotling stragglers in the wake of a Goblin force, he managed to catch a few of them. He knew of the Bierkrieg and hit upon an idea to improve his lot in life by breeding the Snotlings in captivity.

The creatures are raised like battery farm chickens: kept caged, without freedom, education, access to fungus and spores, and, there is little for them to do but breed and serve their captors' purpose. All they know is the cage; they are no

**THE HUMAN QUARTER**

**Drink**

Beer and ale has costs and effects relevant to the standard of the tent or brewer supplying it. Poorer beers have less effect per unit consumed and the more expensive brews are more potent.

Type	Unit strength	Typical Cost
Normal	Easy to Routine	3p
Good	Average	6p
Expensive	Challenging	10p

**Food**

*Turkey leg:* 3/-

*Meat pie:* 6/-

*Meal* (meat, potatoes, vegetables, bread): 1 gc

**Amour and Weapon Stalls**

The festival counts as a population 10,000+ settlement and a new roll is permitted each day. All items are sold at +20% cost. Human stalls sell human-sized amour. Some have Ogre sizes and these are at -20% availability and an additional 50% cost.

**Souvenir Tents**

The items are of lesser quality than the Dwarf Quarter and there are a lot more souvenir ones specific to the Bierkrieg. Some may have a picture of a Dwarf and Ogre facing off. Others may have images of flowing tankards, or slogans such as 'This tankard is the only thing I remember from Bierkrieg 2513'.

*Tankard:* 10/- to 5gc

*Plate:* 5/- to 2gc

longer wild; they are still vicious. Those who run the games can happily pass all of this along.

There are two stages and several large wagons with cages that are filled with trembling bound Snotlings. The people who run the games are also those who breed the Snotlings. They are very visible because they all wear bright red outfits with stitched patches that resemble green blood splats.

The following games are available.

**The Brain Bell:** A tall and brightly painted shaft rises up

**Drinking Rules!!!**

Use the WFRP2e Drinking rules "The Effects of Alcohol" (pg. 115) with the following change. In a drinking contest, every time you fail a test after Stinking Drunk you roll on the *Stinking Drunk* table. Any result of 'Sleep...now...' loses the contest.

An alternative set of drinking rules can be found on the Warpstone website.

from a small stage and it has a rail along one side. It is painted with images of Snotling heads with crosses for eyes and lumps on their heads. At the top is a large round bell whose underside is spattered with green blood.

There is a squat metal plinth before the shaft and at the base of the pole is a Snotling bound by dense straps that holds it to the rail. A monstrous two-handed warhammer waits at one side. Two gold crowns gets three swings. Because of the Dwarfen hatred of all things green, and the Ogre love of beating up small things, there is no shortage of competitors.

A *Weapon Skill* roll is required to hit the target accurately enough to have a chance of braining the Snotling. If this fails, the creature shoots up the rail but does not get close to the bell.

If this succeeds, the Snotling takes a hit to the head at the

basic *Strength Bonus* of the contestant.

If wounds are inflicted, it causes the bell to ring. The higher the damage, the louder the ringing of the bell and this causes a corresponding level of cheers to go up from those watching the game. There is no prize, it is just fun.

**Snot-Whack:** Dwarfs are slow but accurate with their attacks. Ogres are powerful but slow. Humans can be quite quick compared to the above. This game evens this all out in a test of speed, accuracy, brawn, and viciousness.

A large iron box has three rows of small holes across the top and numerous pictures of Snotlings being hit on the head painted all over it. A warhammer is set to one side, near to a lever that starts a cycle of the game.

Within the box is a set of cogs and gears that will cause one

of the Snotlings set beneath each hole to briefly shoot up and then duck back down again. The object of the game is to see who can wallop the most Snotlings in the head in three minutes, and extra awe is afforded to those with the highest kill ratio. One go costs two gold crowns.

Every d4 rounds, for three game turns, a Snotling head wearing a dense metal pot helm (2AP) pops up at *Initiative* 20 + 4d10. If the contestant has any attacks equal to or higher than this, they may have a chance to hit the creature before it vanishes. A *WS* -20 roll is needed. Because it is in motion the Snotling does not count as *prone*.

Hits bring applause. Kills cause cheers to go up.

**The Great Snot Chuck:** A ten-yard long wooden alleyway painted with pictures of Snotlings flying through the air. At the far end is a red target with a Snotling's head emerging from the middle. At the other end is a basket of ten Snotlings who are tightly bound with dense leather straps, formed into a rough ball.

For a crown a basket, the contestant gets to hurl the Snotballs at the head and



either hurt the Snotball with a miss, or injure and perhaps kill the target with a hit. The Snotballs are improvised weapons and the target is *small* so all attempts are at -30 BS and inflict -2 damage on both Snotball and the head if they manage to hit it. Each Snotball has a 20% chance of being down d3 wounds. The head has 60% chance.

### Entertainment

There are stages everywhere with a risqué show, comedy act, or performances that impress quickly and easily such as fire breathers, sword swallows, acrobats, and assorted novelty acts. Only the best performers attend because there is a high risk of being pelted with rocks and bottles if they do not impress or amuse the crowd.

### Busking

If the character is a Dwarf or Ogre performing in the relevant quarter, there is a +20% bonus. Females of any race acquire a +20% bonus.

Group 1: *Performer* -20%. Actors, Artists, Dancers, Palm Readers, Strongmen. A one hour performance nets a penny per point of success on the roll.

Group 2: *Performer* -10%. Escapologists, Mimics, Singers, Storytellers. A forty-five minute performance nets five brass pennies per point of success on the roll.

Group 3: *Performer* chance normal. Acrobatics, Clowns, Comedians, Erotic/risqué dancers, Fire eaters. A thirty minute performance nets one shilling per point of success on the roll. Failure by more than thirty or rolling 00 will result in d6 Strength 2 hits each round from bottles and rocks until they leave the area.

## PART 5 KAZAK GOROG

The climax of the festival is held at dusk on the final night. Prince Hakkit of Karak Norn and the Ogre Warlord Bushpig sit before the great stone table with their most trusted aides beside them to provide encouragement. A large portion of the festival gathers to watch the showdown. Wagons and carts pull up to provide extra viewing points. Silence falls and then their Gromril plated Nogarung strike the stone surface of the table. Dwarfs and Ogres pour from great barrels and the leaders



steadily drain them and slam the Nogarung down to gain another measure. For about eight hours, they match each other in drinks and then Hakkit begins to lag. The Dwarfs shuffle nervously from foot to foot and watch with relief as their leader shakes off the effects and continues with more determination. Gurgles and grumbles issue from their bellies as they continue with this and fight to the finish. Bushpig starts to sway from side to side and then pauses. Hakkit gives a grin, sensing victory, but the Ogre merely belches loudly and quaffs another brew with a rampant smirk that lingers even as he topples back and strikes the floor with a mighty thud. His wife gives a scowl of irritation and slaps the unconscious form about the face, trying to rouse him. When this fails, his aides drag him away and retrieve his now inert Nogarung.

A great cheer goes up from the Dwarfs as the Prince hoists his Nogarung and proclaims that Karak Norn is the stronghold of strong drink and even stronger Dwarfs. The Prince then staggers awkwardly into the throng to celebrate with his people.

The Ogres drown their sorrows with a binge, and the Dwarfs do the same but to revel in their victory.

## PART 6 OH YEAH, THE ADVENTURE

### The Lowebräu Tent

There are several large tents behind a small stage. To one side is a pavilion with a cart next to it that is laden with barrels of beer. Scantly clad women serve the brew and banners that have a stylised 'L' set upon the silhouette of a lion's head are everywhere.

Several times a day, six exceedingly comely women perform a very suggestive erotic dance routine while people come round selling Lowebräu. Afterwards, the dancers mingle with the audience and take advantage where they can. Those they seduce are brought back to their tents.

All the nobles in the cult are posing as average folk using only their first names. They profess to be villagers from Misthausen where their brewery is located. Invites to come and visit are easily gained because once there, the addictive variety of Lowebräu will ensure that they do not leave.

### Somebody Put Something in my Drink

This original variety of Lowebräu causes an intense feeling of bliss and heightened reaction to stimuli as well as the usual loss of inhibition brought on by drunkenness. It has the normal effects for an alcoholic beverage but each unit requires a *Toughness* test or ten points of *Will Power* will be lost while the brew is in effect in a character's system. This will make inebriated characters highly susceptible to seduction and the charms of the cult. At zero *Will Power*, they will collapse and be rendered delirious. Memory will be lost until they are back in positive numbers again and this leaves them at the mercy of the cult.

The cultists have a tolerance for Lowebräu and know how to drink it and retain self-control while also greatly enhancing the pleasure they will take from their victims.

### Hey, How You Doin'?

Cult members wander through the festival, seeking people who are out of the ordinary. Player Characters may be targeted and attempts to get them to come and watch the show with a few drinks on the house (and perhaps more?) are made.

If Luigi is at the festival, he is a very prominent and tempting target. Suspicion can be raised when they see him entering a tent with a couple of the women. When they next pass the Lowebräu area, they will see that everything is gone and Luigi's four Knights Panther are unconscious on the floor after having had their drinks spiked with a long lasting and highly virulent toxin.

The knights may be able to manage a few words where they will beseech the PCs to find Luigi. They know that they have been drugged, and that means something bad is afoot. They, their order, and the ruler of Middenheim will be immensely grateful if they can protect and save the physician.

The knights will not be able to even walk for at least two days, and for a week they will be dizzy and hardly effective in a fight.

Another hook to get them to the village is when they see the Lowebräu tents packing up and leaving. A couple of Ogres, a Dwarf or two, and some Humans are all helping while wearing broad and ecstatic grins. They are going to the village to take a tour of the brewery and perhaps buy some bulk supplies of their new favourite tipple.

## PART 7 THE CULT OF THE VELVET SERPENT

### BARON ADOLF GALLAND

*Appearance:* A tall and lithely built man with curly blonde hair and penetrating blue/grey eyes.



*Persona:* A complete hedonist. No crime or act is beyond him if it will provide a new experience for him to savour. Even his own cult is secondary to this, but he is aware that their support and protection are valuable in getting him towards Daemonhood. If he begins to mutate then he will need them to hide him until he can achieve immortality and experience deviant delights no mortal can even comprehend.

*Background:* A typical noble, his wealth and access to the best in life soon ran the gamut of normal pleasures and he started to grow bored. He explored other countries seeking new diversions until sexual antics and drugs became his next fad. When these vices brought him to the attention of the cult, he immediately joined. His fervour for exploration and experimentation gained him champion status and he swiftly acquired leadership over the cult. Then Slaanesh sent him a dream that revealed the runes to assist in the creation of a sorcerously infected brew and the rituals to activate them. He established the brewery and used this knowledge as well as his own considerable drug expertise to experiment and finally refine a usable recipe.

*Cover Story:* He made a decent living as a navigator and explorer of distant lands, which is where he acquired his monkey, 'Pebble.' He grew tired of the dangers and used his money to

establish a small brewery. His knowledge of drinks from around the world allowed him to create his recipe and after wowing everyone at the festival with his wares, he intends to expand as quickly as he can. New investors are always welcome; perhaps a tour of the facility will encourage them.

**Careers:** Noble, Champion of Slaanesh

**Race:** Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
56%	42%	33%	51%	48%	32%	40%	51%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	15	3	5	4	2	3	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Magic), Academic Knowledge (Heraldry), Blather, Channelling, Charm, Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow+10%, Drive, Gamble+20%, Performer (Musician)+10%, Petty Magic (Arcane), Read/Write, Ride, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Additional (Breton), Speak Additional (Khazalid), Speak Additional (Grumbarth), Very Resilient

**Talents:** Acute Hearing, Arcane Lore (Chaos), Dark Magic, Disarm, Etiquette, Lesser Magic (Move), Lesser Magic (Magic Alarm), Lesser Magic (Magic Lock), Luck, Public Speaking

**Armour:** Leather Jack, Pot Helm

**Armour Points:** Head 2, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Knife

**Trappings:** Knife, Ingredients, Purse 4gc 7/6, Pebble

**Chaos Attributes:** Magic resistant: +20 on *magic* tests.

**PEBBLE**

**Slaaneshi Power Familiar**

*Appearance:* A small monkey with black and white fur, emerald green eyes, a long prehensile tail, and a jewelled collar. In combat it sprouts long and vicious claws.

*Persona:* Pebble is a playful little creature that is always on Adolf's shoulder or around his feet. If Adolf dies, the creature dissipates.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
41%	34%	41%	30%	43%	43%	43%	5%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	7	4	3	4	0	0	0

**Special Rules:** Provides +1 to the Baron's casting rolls.

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Claws (1 damage only)

**Trappings:** Collar, worth 10 gc.

**LADY GERTRUDE DOENITZ III**

*Appearance:* A voluptuous woman with long golden tresses and blue eyes.

*Persona:* She seems cheerful, passionate, but a little vacuous. However, these traits hide the fact that she is calm, collected, ruthless, and utterly focused on her allegiance to Slaanesh. She is immensely loyal to Adolf and yearns for them both to become Daemon Princes whereupon they will bathe in depravity for a million lifetimes in Slaanesh's hallowed realm.

*Background:* When the fortunes of her family started to sharply decline because of poor investments, she decided to attach herself to a higher ranking noble and escape the destitution her parents were bringing. She married well but found her husband tedious and boring, which led to affairs. She found such a lifestyle highly enjoyable and this brought her to the attention of the cult. Her husband discovered her infidelity



and promised to ruin her for it. Adolf had him killed before this happened and recruited her into the cult. Since then, she has been a devoted follower.

*Cover Story:* A simple tavern wench who used to offer 'other services' when she needed extra gold. She was working in Marienburg when she came across Adolf who was about to start his brewery endeavour. She knew a fair bit about such things and accepted his offer to help be the pleasing face and promoter behind Lowebräu. She has also ploughed her life savings into the brewery and intends to retire on the profits it will reap when it becomes famous. There's still time for other people to do the same. Come and see the place!

**Careers:** Noble, Champion of Slaanesh.

**Race:** Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
34%	42%	75%	43%	50%	30%	38%	47%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
4	12	7	4	4	0	2	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Heraldry) Blather, Charm+20%, Consume Alcohol, Gamble, Performer (Acrobatic), Performer (Dance)+20%, Performer (Contortionist), Performer (Singer)+10%, Read/Write, Ride, Speak Additional (Breton), Speak Additional (Khazalid), Speak Additional (Grumbarth)

**Talents:** Ambidextrous, Etiquette, Lightning Reflexes, Luck, Public Speaking

**Chaos Attributes:**

- Regeneration: 50% chance to regenerate each lost wound at the end of the round. Those not healed by this power must heal as normal.
- Spits acid: 10 yard range, BS to hit. SB 3.
- Strength.

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** None

**Trappings:** Skimpy dress

### THIRTEEN VELVET SERPENT CULTISTS

*Persona:* Dedicated to the cause of Slaanesh and fanatical in their loyalty to Adolf and Gertrude.

*Background:* Bored nobles who for one reason or another became more indulgent in illicit and immoral behaviour. Their experimentation brought them to the cult's attention and after being screened to verify their leanings, they were offered membership.

**Career:** Noble, Servant of Slaanesh

**Race:** Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42%	40%	35%	35%	46%	29%	26%	47%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Blather, Charm, Consume Alcohol, Performer (Dance), Gamble, Read/Write, Ride

**Talents:** Ambidextrous, Luck

**Armour:** Male - Leather jack; Female - None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1/0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Male - Handweapon, Dagger; Female - Dagger

**Trappings:** *Females:* Skimpy dress; *Males:* Sturdy work outfit

## PART 8 MISTHAUSEN

This small village of thirty-two souls has no militia and was initially hopeful that the building of the Lowebräu brewery might reverse its terrible fortunes. However, they soon forgot such things when the free samples started to emerge. They now grow food and raise animals for themselves and the visiting owners, and at the end of the day, they receive their reward in the form of Lowebräu.

When the cult returns to the village, they will show their gratitude to the peasants by giving them a hefty Lowebräu feast. The new arrivals, including Luigi, are taken into the brewery and offered the more potent version to enslave them and erase all notions of leaving. The cult then takes the time to explore the new 'recruits' in every way possible. So long as they are taken off Lowebräu within a week, they will suffer stern cravings for the stuff but will be able to kick the addiction. When they come round, the Ogres and Dwarfs sheepishly depart without word and head home, and Luigi will go back to Middenheim whereupon the party's help will be greatly lorded.

### Typical Villager

*Appearance:* They appear normal enough but the more the party see of them the more something appears amiss. Even for impoverished southern peasants they look a little too inbred. Large noses, odd shaped teeth, eye discolouration, small deformities. Nothing overt, just nothing quite normal.

*Persona:* They are all deliriously happy and content. All they care about is getting their next Lowebräu at the end of a hard day's toil. They wander around grinning inanely while they conduct their daily routine. They can barely recall anything because of their prolonged exposure. They don't remember what debauched things the cult has done to them, or anything other than how good Lowebräu is.

**HERMAN KRETSCHNER**

*Appearance:* A portly man with long grey hair and a shaggy beard. He has large bags under his eyes and constantly squints because his sight is starting to fail.

*Person:* He is quiet and somewhat ashamed of his past. He is a decent man but knows he has a problem.

*Background:* He studied in Nuln and it was during these days that his drinking accelerated from mere social events towards full-blown compulsion. This was not easy on his finances and so he started selling his skills as a scholar to pay his mounting bar tabs. He did not see anything wrong with his consumption and just looked on himself as a man who liked to party after his toil. He was a dedicated man of knowledge and treasured it for its own sake, he hated the injustice he saw all around him in the city and eventually entered the priesthood of Verena. However, by then, he was a true alcoholic and although he managed to hide it for some time, it finally came to light. There were several attempts to help him, but he always relapsed and finally deserted the temple and forsook the worship of the goddess until such time as he could once again control himself. He settled here and only recently noticed what was going on because he is often engrossed in the books his old friends at the temple send him. He has bad eyesight.

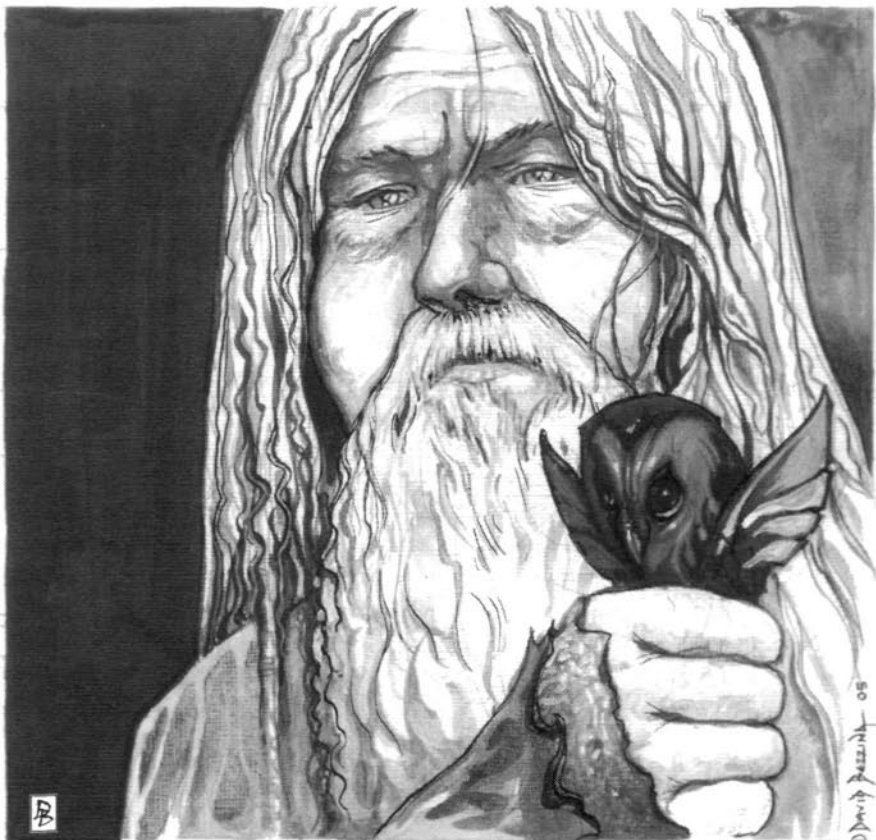
Herman has a small cottage on the edge of the village with some small fields of crops that he tends and a coop of chickens.

**Career:** Priest of Verena (ex-Initiate, ex-Scholar)

**Race:** Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
18%	16%	38%	52%	28%	48%	42%	36%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	9	3	5	3	2	1	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Theology)+20%, Arcane Knowledge (Astronomy)+30%, Arcane Knowledge (History)+10%, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire)+10%, Common Knowledge (Kislev), Common Knowledge (Dwarfs), Consume Alcohol, Evaluate, Heal+10%, Magical Sense, Perception+10%, Read/Write, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Speak Language (Kislevian)+20%, Speak Language (Khazilid), Speak Language (Classical)+20%, Trade (Cartographer)



**Talents:** Linguistics, Petty Magic (Divine), Savvy, Super Numerate

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** None

**Trappings:** Rough robes, a symbol of Verena clutched in his hand at all times.

*Entering the village:* The party will see people conducting token work with oddly large grins. They are very polite and some even come and talk rather haltingly to new arrivals and ask if they have any Lowebrau on them. The villagers forget what they are saying in mid sentence, stop and stare vacantly, start giggling, and generally cause the party to become nervous. All the while, they will keep seeing Kretschner moving about. He keeps glancing at them from behind a wall or home and then darts away. Once he has watched them for a time, or if they make for the brewery, he will approach them and tell them to leave the village because it is a damned place. Something evil lurks within the brewery and the villagers are all slaves to it.

His suspicions will be dismissed by villager and cultist alike as the cravings of a drunkard who cannot bear to have his weakness presented to him. It is believed that he wants the brewery gone before he lapses again.

**PART 9  
THE LOWEBRAU BREWERY**

**Main Door (1):** A sturdy wooden affair banded with riveted

iron and bears a small viewing hatch, this door is always kept locked and barred. If anyone knocks, a worker verifies their identity before the bar is removed and the door opened. Only those who are expected may enter. However, once the cult has returned, the workers will be told to let those seeking the tour ingress. This requires a successful *Bluff* test unless they are truly hooked on the brew. If the PCs fail, the worker will go and get Adolf or Gertrude to check over the arrival first. If there is serious doubt about their authenticity, they are told to go away and not come back.

Those who gain access will be sat in the lounge and plied with the addictive version of Lowebräu. This lowers Will Power at the rate of twenty per unit consumed and at zero, delirium and amnesia set in. Regular daily consumption will cause chronic addiction after one week, and after six months, mutation will start to set in as the mental effects become permanent. The beer will still bring about a period of enhanced effect, and it will still be required to sate the addiction.

The tactic here is to talk with them amidst many drinks, ask about their exploits, offer investment opportunities, and generally stall until the party want to move on or do the tour. Their host will then say that they will get someone to do this and desert the guests after telling them to help themselves to beverages. The host returns to the playroom and intends to let them drink for about half an hour to ensure complete incapacity and then go to fetch them. The party have the chance to explore if they wish and this may allow them to ambush the indulgent cult before they are alerted. Only if the party were hostile and refused drinks will the cult be armed for a fight.

Interior doors are not generally locked.

**Lounge(2):** A large chamber with soft armchairs and long couches arranged around a low table. The walls bear some pleasing works of sedate art and there is a portrait of Adolf standing before the brewery when it was still being constructed. To one side is a small bar with a number of large tankards with a stylised 'L' set on the silhouette of a lion's head on them. There are two large kegs behind the bar, one is normal, and the other is addictive Lowebräu.

This area is used to help maintain the front that this is a normal brewery.

**Delivery and Storage (3):** The outer doors are very dense, banded with riveted iron and are barred from within. They are only opened when the supply cart comes back. Inside the chamber are piles of barrels. On one side of

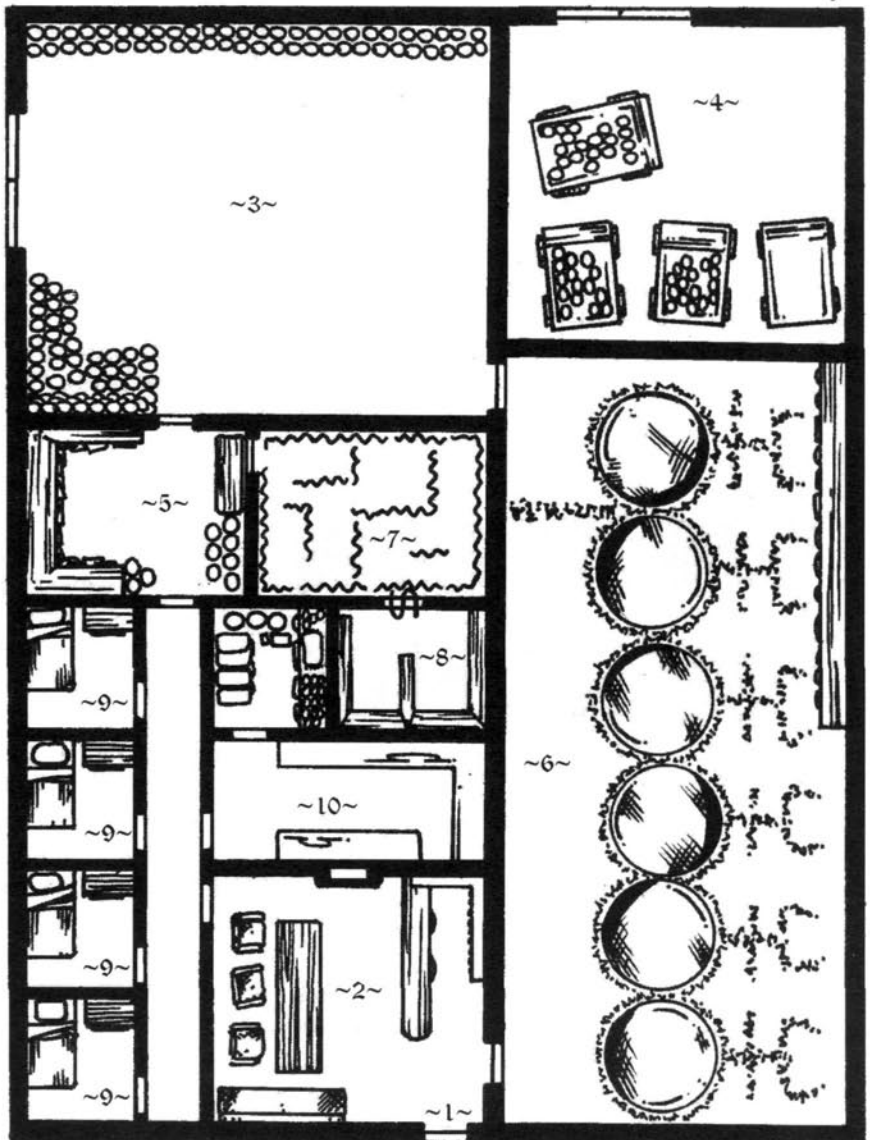
the room there are empty barrels, and on the other normal Lowebräu.

**Stable (4):** This area holds a large cart and there are two horses outside grazing. When the cult have returned there will be three carts laden with barrels that are all almost empty, and six more horses outside.

**Storeroom (5):** This chamber is filled with sacks of hops, corn, and barley. There are barrels of spring water, jars of herbs and drugs, all of which are used to make Lowebräu. There are brushes, shovels, jugs, lumber, barrels of fuel oil, hammers, nails, iron bands, and other equipment to help run and maintain the brewery.

An **Easy (+20%) Perception Test** will hear moaning, laughter, and faint applause coming from behind the wall of the playroom. The door is not locked and by storming them here the party can catch the cult with their pants down.

## The Lowebräu Brewery





A sparsely laden cabinet with hidden hinges to allow it to swing outward hides the door to the playroom.

**Brewery (6):** This large hall has a row of six massive vats in it. Strange lines of runic text surround each and the same arcane script is etched into the sides of the vats.

These contain both varieties of Lowebräu and while individual servings do not register as magical, the whole vat will. The runes are readable with *Speak Arcane Language: Magic* and provide a sorcerous alternative to the boiling process; they also agitate the waters, as well as making other more esoteric contributions.

The shelves hold ingredients for making the brew.

**Playroom (7):** This large chamber is filled with divans and large opulent pillows. Drapes of silk and satin create compartments and ornate lamps and incense burners line the walls. Sets of shelves hold small boxes and several kegs.

Amongst the bedding are countless devices and items for sensual excess and perverse indulgence. More lay in the boxes that also hold a limited encyclopaedia of narcotics, hallucinogens, and amphetamines. The kegs hold the normal variety of Lowebräu.

The recruits from the festival will be lying around in here, lost in a Lowebräu and drug stupor as the cult uses them. Adolf and Gertrude will be atop divans, watching with satisfied pride.

If they have been alerted to intruders, they will arm themselves from location 8 and seek to intercept them. Their recruits will be too delirious to help, but if the cult can call to the villagers, they will swear to deprive them of Lowebräu unless they kill the trespassers. This will get the whole village committed to the fight.

If the party are going to be heavily outnumbered and outmatched, you can either have an Ogre or Dwarf come round, go berserk, and enter the fray. Alternatively, a number of the cultists may be too intoxicated from Lowebräu indulgence to be combat effective and thereby even the odds.

Normally, the recruits will come round properly in a couple of days.

**Armoury (8):** Pulling down the light fixture to its left activates the secret door. This room has racks for weapons arrayed upon the walls. There are fifteen crossbows with quivers of ten bolts. There are fifteen swords, daggers, sleeved mail coats, and horned knights' helms that have visors shaped like half female, half male faces. There are twenty shields with the symbol of Slaanesh painted on them, and fifteen breastplates that have all been moulded to present one female breast.

There is also a locked iron box that holds the funds to buy ingredients and run the brewery. This amounts to 20gc, 253s and 62p. When the cult returns, another identical box with 8gc 372s 263d in profits from the festival is added.

**Worker Quarters (9):** Each room has a small and simple bed, a wardrobe, and some shelves filled with personal effects.

**Kitchen (10):** A simple kitchen with a food store attached to it. The workers make meals here as they wish and at the end of the day relax over a Lowebräu or two.

## PART 10 AFTERMATH

It is doubtful that the party will discover the lofty position held by the cult members. The entire Velvet Serpent cult will be at the brewery and if they are killed, there are no more links to their homes, or the documents therein that pertain to other cults. Eventually, their servants and such will investigate their private quarters to see if they can find out where their masters went. When they find the truth, they will burn the evidence lest they be accused of being accomplices to Chaos worship. After a little covert looting, they will seek new employment elsewhere.

Captured cultists who are handed to the authorities will either be tortured until they reveal all that they know or have bribes used to acquire their escape and flight to join their brethren in Bretonnia.

If Lowebräu production is halted, the villagers will go through agonising withdrawal and Herman will tend them. If it has not already been done, he burns the brewery and with its destruction, he feels that he has redeemed himself. When life starts to return to normal in the village, he returns to Nuln and to the temple where he is welcomed back.



# The Free City of CARROBURG

By Tim Eccles and Simon Dennett

## Pre-History

Prior to the coming of Man, nothing is known of the land upon which Carroburg now stands. No ancient race is thought to have settled there, and no existing Elf or Dwarf records hint at any special significance. The first to come to the area were the druids, who used the low hill now known as the Schlaefanstieg as a meeting place. Certain obscure druidic lore refers to 'the place where the waters are cleft,' and it is thought that the place held significance for many centuries before the druids abandoned it.

In the following centuries the area became populated by the human tribe called the Kruebi, early settlers of the lands that were to become the Empire. The tribe was smaller and less warlike than many of

their contemporaries such as the Teutogens to the north and the Unberogens to the south. They prospered in the fringes of the forest, fishing in the river and practising agriculture along its banks. Woodcarving became an important part of the material culture of the tribe, and the unique style that characterises Kruebi carvings lives on even today in traditional folk art. Some evidence of contact with the Gnomes of the Mirror Moors is apparent in certain carvings preserved in the city, although the nature and extent of the relationship is unknown.

The Kruebi did not settle on the site of Carroburg at first, rather it was used as a place of counsel for the chieftains of the tribe. At some point a large hall was constructed on the Schlaefanstieg, using stone from the abandoned druidic circle. A small settlement grew up around the hill, and by the time of the coming of Sigmar it was the location of a small hillfort.

## History of the City

Eventually the fort became a permanent settlement. When Artur founded Middenheim, a number of dissident Teutogens moved south to the area. They formed a local alliance with the Kruebi, exchanging manufactured goods for furs and (to some extent) protection. Eventually the two groups amalgamated, but some distinctions remain in the local culture to this day, most clearly in the division of citizens into two broad classes. As the town grew, the heritage of the craft-orientated Kruebi formed the basis of the fledgling economy and the hunting/war-orientated former Teutogens had more influence on the rural surroundings. Carrolus was the leader of the Kruebi during the time of Sigmar, and it was he who led the local tribes alongside the founder of the Empire in his wars. His settlement took his name and he became the patron of the nascent craft guilds that emerged from the Kruebi artisans. Many guild rituals today reflect the link.

In more recent centuries the city and Middenland have changed hands between various noble families. This has led to a diminished respect and influence of the nobility, further undermined by the cosmopolitan nature of the city. Instead, the powerful craft guilds have dominated the running of the city, although they have always paid lip service to the ruling family.

The rise of merchants in Carroburg has been a product of a number of interrelated factors. The power of the guilds comes in part from the proximity of Marienburg - which offers both an easy source of transportation to other markets and an example of a city grown rich through commerce. Inconsistent nobility has proven able to offer little but crisis leadership and defence of the city, allowing the craft guilds and merchants to fill a power vacuum. Given their supposed tribal origins as Kruebi woodcarvers, the local



minor nobility are well-disposed towards artisans and the distinction between guildsman and noble is less obvious than elsewhere in the Empire.

The 'Greatswords' are a famous infantry regiment from Carroburg who wield great two-handed blades. Common legend tells that at some point the city was under siege by an army of goblinoids, during which the famous gate to the palace was defended by Prince Karad von Carron and a unit of Greatswords. This is a celebrated event in Carroburg history and a statue of von Carron and two Greatswords stands in the main platz. In fact, the real attackers were Middenlanders, who were defeated by the defending Reiklanders but this is regarded as politically inappropriate in modern times. Prince Karad von Carron himself is buried in a magnificent mausoleum in the Skaag Hills.

### Geography

Carroburg is located at the point on the River Reik where the River Bogen flows into its slow-moving waters. The land is relatively flat, with the city rising gently away from the northern bank of the river. However, at the point where the Bogen joins the Reik is a steep cliff, atop which stands the Elector's Palace. The Reik here is very busy and still navigable by ocean-going vessels - consequently the city has come to rely almost solely on river traffic. As a result, the roads to and from the city are poor by the standards of the Reikland, picking carefully through the boggy land. For example, the riverside road that leads westwards to the village of Dunkelbild is a hazard for any transport more sophisticated than a horse.

Surrounding the city are the trees of the southern Drakwald Forest. Its oak, ash and elm trees are fairly sparse, allowing more light through the canopy than in the northern reaches of the forest. The low-lying land to the east of the city walls is marshy and prone to flooding; while the vast swamplands of the Furdienst lie only a few miles away. Local legends tell of sinister gangs of pirates and daemons that dwell in the mist-swathed bogs and tales of the area are used by mothers to frighten unruly children. GMs expanding this particular location should feel free to introduce monsters such as the bog octopus, fen worm, bloodsedge, chameleoleech, lashworm, giant spider, marshlight, and various swarms. Note that the marsh should be essentially deserted and thus not overpopulated with beasts. A more numerous enemy might be a small tribe of Fimir or degenerate Goblins.

A poorly maintained track leads away on the southern bank of the Reik towards the village of Schattenlas, while a better road accompanies the river to Weissbruck and beyond.

North of the city are the Mirror Moors, so-called because of the large number of shallow lakes that reflect the sky upon their still surfaces. If a traveller were to follow the track north from the city towards these barren highlands, he would pass through the small settlements of Punzen and Anselldorf, before eventually reaching the hill where the gnomish community of Glimdwarrow can be found.

On the southern bank of the Bogen a gradual gradient rises gently

through the forest towards the Skaag Hills and Weidmarkt.

### The Schlaefanstieg

Carroburg is dominated by the low hill known as the Schlaefanstieg, the location of the original settlement. In historic times this formed the old town - the remains of ancient city walls are still in evidence around the foot of the hill and until the quays were built in the second millennium, the area around was flooded every winter. At the highest point of the city are two large squares - the Heiligplatz and the Carronplatz. The former is the location of the city's larger temples; the imposing Cathedral of Sigmar stands on the west side of the square opposite the sturdy structure of the Temple of Ulric. In between on the north side of the square stands the smaller Temple of Verena, facing towards the river. In contrast, the Carronplatz is the hub of the city's secular administration - it is here that the magnificent Guildenhaus can be found adjacent to the City Hall and Courts.

The remaining buildings of the Schlaefanstieg district are those of the wealthy and important citizens. Many important guildsmen have townhouses on the eastern slope, alongside the homes of priests and senior public servants. It is here that some of the Empire's finest examples of the unique Carroburg architectural style can be found. Although the Schlaefanstieg is little more than an area of elevated land, it is the only part of the city to stand well above the water table, and consequently the buildings are far more likely to have cellars than those closer to the river.

### City Wards

The Dockyards is an important and bustling area, where docks are available for naval, private and commercial purposes. Admiraltät, the Admiralty building, is located here, overlooking the naval dock. Officially, the building is the Empire's naval headquarters but real power is found in Altdorf - and increasingly on the northern shore of the Empire where Imperial strategists are once more considering the merits of the nation's only coastline with direct access to the sea.

The Palace district is located on the cliff above the Bogen-Reik split. It consists of the palace and high-class residencies of the minor nobility and guildsmen. The entrance to the district is the famous fortified gate that was defended by Prince Karad von Carron and his Imperial Greatswords - familiar to visitors through being immortalised on the city's crest. The housing here is not actually the grandest in size, indeed much of it is quite small and irregular as the houses seek to cram in close to the palace buildings. Whilst some government buildings related to the craft guilds are located inside the palace, most are found inside the various wards. The area also contains a small private museum (the Bibliothek), owned by the Grand Duke but supported by 'public subscription' by certain members of the elite. For the price of a shilling, visitors can look upon both artefacts and mundane archaeological items. The current Grand Duke has little interest in history, but some of his forebears were avid collectors. Some believe that genuine relics are more likely to be found here than in the temples (as described below). There are certainly authenticated items from the time of Sigmar, and one



**Silversmiths' Guild**

sword with the name 'Marius dux' still visible upon it that has caused some controversy.

The Market Square is actually a number of small squares, surrounded by craft workshops. Each of these tends to specialise in a particular craft and is also the location for a guildhouse for that craft. The most central of these is the Weights and Measures Courtyard, where local guilds and the Cult of Verena attempt to resolve trade disputes amicably.

There are six city wards recognised by the government apparatus and a phantom seventh, the latter being an administrative glitch. These are called the *zuerst*, *zweit*, *dritte*, *vier*, *fünfte*, *sechste* and *siebente*. The city regards the wards as cosmopolitan and integrated, without zoning. This reflects its attitude towards craft and industry. In reality, of course, this is far from the truth. Like everywhere else, the rich prefer to keep apart from the rest, despite the proclaimed equality of craftsmen. The Palace and Dockyards are also technically separate wards, leading to much confusion as to exactly how many wards there are for differing administrative purposes.

The main roads running through the city are not so much thoroughfares as places to meet and do business. Most routes are crammed with traders and inhabitants going about their business. It is often said that Carroburgers are rude, in that they barge through people, but in effect this is the only way to get anywhere in the city.

### The Living City

The city is perhaps best presented as the soft underbelly of the Empire. Despite its position, Carroburg is inhabited by a complacent populace that sees its city as a safe and prosperous place to live. There is some validity to this, as the craft guilds maintain both senses of tradition and of economic prosperity for the future. In short, Carroburg is a typical petit bourgeois (or middle class) city of craftsmen and shopkeepers.

Geopolitically, its location is more precarious - should Marienburg adopt expansionist policies the city is under threat both economically and physically. It is no surprise that the Marienburg situation influences all that happens within the city. Whilst the inhabitants dislike merchants who have no craft (and thus the Marienburgers), they also fear its economic prosperity and the danger it poses. Whilst some in the Empire rumble about Carroburg as a base for the re-conquest of Marienburg, some in the city (quietly) consider a more permanent alliance with the Wasteland. That aside, there is a strong sense of rivalry with Marienburg and a common view is that the people of Carroburg are superior because they actually make what they sell.

### Religion

Geography and history have conspired to make Carroburg a culturally cosmopolitan place. No one god dominates life in Carroburg, although Middenland is still largely Ulrican. There is a pragmatic disinterest in religion in the city and although prejudice between cults is known, it is not as common as elsewhere. There are large temples to Ulric, Sigmar and Verena, and also a number of small shrines to localised craft patrons (variously regarded as gods, spirits or saints). The nobility are traditionally pragmatic Ulricans -

recognising the importance of tolerance in the city's prosperity and unable to impose religion (even if they wanted to) due to the influence of the guilds. The city is also something of a pilgrimage site for a number of faiths due to relics held in the temples, but locals are far more impressed by the money brought by these visitors than the items themselves.

**Sigmar:** As the first major stop along the River Reik for visitors into the Empire, the Cult of Sigmar realised that it needed an impressive display of power here, and so the Cathedral of Sigmar was designed and built to *impose*. Of course, this necessitated both political and economic ingenuity and resulted in similar reactions from other faiths. Ironically, one of the more tolerant (or disinterested) cities in the Empire has arguably the most impressive collection of temples within the nation. The cathedral looks down on the river from the Heiligplatz and its spires are visible for many miles around. It is the seat of a Lector, the Baron Klaus von Meyer, an aristocratic and eccentric priest who has few friends in the cult but maintains his position due to his popularity and influence within the city.

The city also recognises Saint Kurt, who is said to be the smith who served Sigmar and who is responsible for dutiful craft workers. Here Saint Kurt is regarded as rather more than a servile smith, of course, but as a fully fledged and independent craftsman. The cathedral contains a number of relics relating to the saint and also a horseshoe said to have been thrown by Sigmar's horse and which struck a local woman, slaying her. There was much consternation at this, until it was discovered that she carried a dagger and had sought to slay Sigmar. This was then praised as a most fortuitous event and the shoe is said to bring about misfortune to all those of ignoble heart or seeking to bring down the Empire. The church also contains a finger bone, which is said to have been cut from

Carrolus' hand by an orc axe during the battle of Blackfire Pass and later returned by one of his followers. Carrolus jokingly said that he had little use for it anymore and gave it to the man. There is much disagreement over the item's validity. It is rumoured that a dishonest priest sold the true relic centuries ago, whilst others discount the story completely. Nevertheless, it is housed in a reliquary of exquisite craftsmanship, provided by a forgotten grandmaster of the Guild of Goldsmiths in centuries past.

The church also contains a glassware set of the most beautiful decanter and goblets. It was claimed that Sigmar once owned these, a concept now accepted as impossible. However, what was once a source of abuse by Ulricans seeking to debunk the church's other claims has now become a great asset in a city where glass is a major source of trade - the set is accepted to be perfect. The decanter is used at certain guild ceremonies, but the glasses are securely hidden away now at all times. The items' true origins remain unknown.

There are three additional Sigmarite shrines in the city, one specifically to Saint Kurt.

**Ulric:** On first sight, the temple to Ulric is less imposing than the Cathedral of Sigmar, but it is much better loved by the ordinary



Goldsmiths' Guild

people of the city. This is because it is primarily wooden, built upon a stone first storey, and utilises local craft skills in carving the superstructure. The current upper frame is some 300 years old, but inside is retained earlier parts of the building and the church maintains a good relationship with local guilds that send their apprentices to services in order to appreciate the work. The temple also exhibits on holy days a very tired wolf pelt, which (it is claimed) was slain by Carrolus on a hunt with Sigmar. A bronze axehead is also located here, said to be Carrolus' axe used at Blackfire Pass. There is competition between the Ulricans and Sigmarites over the validity of their relics. Overlooked, but quite likely genuine are a collection of tin arrowheads. Sadly, they are indeed pretty boring to look at and far less impressive than the other items

**Verena:** This is a large building frequently used by the city to hold 'public' meetings. Like the temple to Ulric, wood is evident throughout the building although less ornately worked. In addition, the temple exhibits work crafted by former counts upon their accession to power - this is all surprisingly (or not, if one is cynical) of reasonably high quality. The church and the city have normally cordial relations and the guilds involve the priests in some of the more public acts of governance when all registered citizens are involved in public meetings to discuss issues. Recently, there have been rumours of disagreement between the two, as the priests have demanded more involvement or the guilds have refused more democracy in running the city - depending upon the perspective of who passes the rumours! Not to be outdone on the relic front, the temple holds what is believed to be Carrolus' helmet given to him by the Dwarfs in thanks for his part in their alliance. Close inspection

reveals a minuscule dwarfish rune that matches no known existing pattern.

**Handrich:** Worship of Handrich is quite popular within the city, but only because the god is presented in the aspect of a guildsman rather than a merchant or financier. A temple and a number of shrines are found throughout the city offering devotion to Handrich as the patron of a particular guild or craft. The temple holds the charters granted the city by various emperors, a source of constant dispute with the Cult of Verena. Because of this, recent charters have been awarded in duplicate with one copy going to each.

**Manann:** Within the admiralty building there is a small temple to Manann, although this has little impact on the city at large. A shrine is located in the Dockyards for those seagoing sailors who spend a little time here, but it is poorly maintained compared to the Imperial Navy's own.

### Local Deities

The role of local deities within Carroburg is limited; saints and aspects of the other (mainstream) gods have usurped their role. One local and worn statue appears to be a man holding a sphere and has been adopted by many of the inhabitants as a semi-divine patron of the city. Its origins and age are unknown but local followers of Ranald have taken it as their own - which has given it a degree of protection from vandalism. However, modern scholarly opinion has linked the sphere to a local sun god, who had some role in ancient burials - based upon some old burial sites found outside the city. Certain Altdorf scholars argue that Alluminas is (or was) the (a?) sun god and that this is a representation of him. However, such intellectual argument holds little interest for the people of the city, who simply see the statue as a lucky mascot.

In addition, whilst not exactly local deities, a large number of statues and 'shrines' are found throughout the city. These are the work of powerful (or, more precisely, rich) people within the city over the centuries, who wished to exhibit memorials to themselves. These take many forms from self-portraits to works concerning the history of the city or the gods. In theory, those who wish to provide such a work, in addition to purchasing the right to exhibit a permanent work must also pay into an annuity in order to fund the *künstlerichpolitizist*, a private militia employed to protect the works from theft or violence. It is not unknown for works to be destroyed by rivals or sold to visitors to the city. However, the payment of the militia is such that popular rumours suggest that they do most thieving, and in any event they are in a continual conflict with the local watch divisions over various protection issues. Today, most families arrange for additional private protection for the work of their family and allies.

Many of the shrines are attached to the patrons of various crafts practised in the city. Each year, the guilds mount a procession through the city, carrying the guild banners and representations of their patrons aloft, and putting on allegorical plays for the entertainment of the citizens.

An example of such a shrine is that devoted to Alazari, patron of the guild of dyers. Located on a crossroads close to the guild's office, a statue depicts the figure of Alazari as an elderly man in Arabian attire. He was said to have revealed the secrets of the dyer's art to the founders of the guild during the early history of the city - almost certainly a fiction, but one which provides the guild with semi-legendary origins alluded to in their rituals. Another significant shrine



is that of the guild of ropemakers, dedicated to St. Agavar - a minor saint of Manann. Agavar is said to have made a rope so strong that it was used by the saint to restrain and strangle a great leviathan of the sea. Each year the guild takes part in the procession preceded by a member dressed as the sea monster and another as St. Agavar, re-enacting the battle.

A less prominent shrine is that run by the guild of coopers in one of the city's less salubrious areas. Ostensibly dedicated to 'Klaus,' a particularly memorable (and rotund) member of the guild from centuries past. It is effectively the centre of a major protection racket run by the guild's leaders from the shrine. When pressed on the story behind Klaus, most coopers will bluster about 'craft secrets,' but the reality is that none of them have any idea who he was or what he did.

**Government**

The city government is dominated by the guilds, especially the craft guilds. This reflects the tribal history of the city, and tradition is an important part of the life of the city. At the same time, this tradition is seen as a tool of trade and not an end in itself. The most influential guilds include the Carpenters and Woodcarvers, who draw their power not from the importance of their crafts, so much as from a link back to the tribal origins of the city. In fact, every Middenland elector count is initiated into this guild as a non-craft member. Carroburg is also a centre of human architecture and another influential guild is the Stonemasons of which architects are members. There is a Carroburg architectural style, which can be found throughout the Empire. This speciality has fostered a dislike of Dwarfs for their apparent condescension over Carroburg's standards and quality of workmanship.

Newer guilds are also powerful, relative to the financial importance of their business to the city. Equally, the city's charter provides equal power to the various religious cults in the town. However, the cults lack solidarity and as such, the secular groups have far more power than the spiritual. This was enforced by the battle of Schattenlas at which an Ulrican 'army' seeking to return power to the cult was defeated by the city militia.

The city has two tiers of government, both of which are elected. The first is the town council, whose members are elected by the guilds and other recognised organisations. The second is the wards, whereby councillors are elected by voters determined on the basis (and mass) of property ownership.

On the larger scale, Carroburg is the seat of the elector for Middenland and capital of the province. The crest is a portcullis indicative of stalwart defence and is a good general indication of the nature of the town and people. Open to all, but at the same time capable of dogged obstinacy when provoked. The town is also unique in that, aside from The Moot, it is the only province to supply troops directly to the emperor rather than serve as vassals to their elector within a confederated Empire army. This makes them particularly useful to the emperor and places Carroburg in a very favourable position for obtaining an emperor's favours. These troops form a regiment known as the Carroburg Greatswords, who

were formed as a distinct unit within the city in 1865 as a consequence of the aforementioned troop that mounted a valiant defence of the city against Middenland. Their white Reikland uniforms were so stained with blood after the battle they looked like they wore red uniforms. Red and white were also taken as the city's colours, separate from the blue of Middenland.

**Trade**

The city is a centre for trade due to its geography. The River Reik is navigable at this point and access for those upon the River Bogen is controlled here. This makes the city the gateway to the Empire, after the loss of Marienburg. It also ensures that the city is an important location for those wishing to trade outside the Empire with Marienburg and, to a lesser extent, Bretonnia. Accommodation and provision of services for travellers is an important source of employment, and taxation on their goods is a major source of income.

The city remains known for glass and pottery, a relic of the artisan Kruebi tribe, and is fairly affluent. Whilst there are many small businesses in Carroburg, major families run most of the trade. Glassware is run by the von Pilkinton, Govain and Krippon Glass businesses. Whilst the three recognise the advantages of co-operation in maintaining stability, they are still in competition with each other. Govain was originally established by an immigrant Bretonnian and will always be distrusted by the other two, but von Pilkinton is currently highly concerned at alleged plans by Krippon Glass to produce cheap glass for wider consumption. Krippon Glass is, unlike the other two, not a family business but run on behalf of investors. All three are deeply worried by rumours from the east of the Dwarfs. Stories have reached them via informers that the Dwarfs have made a concerted effort to catch up with Humans in their technological advances. In particular, it would seem that a Dwarf artisan has created what he claims is a 'self-cleaning glass.' Needless to say, this does nothing to improve relations with Dwarfs.

Pottery has only two main players, though neither is as dominant as those within glassware; these are the Hohnrsee and Dohnton families.

Wood from the nearby forests furnishes raw materials for the skilled craftsmen. It also provides a cheap source of fuel for glass manufacturers - though charcoal is preferred to timber itself.

Gnome trade with the city has resulted in its reputation as a famous centre of clock manufacture, particularly cuckoo clocks. Two merchant families have a duopoly for this trade concession and have been competing for centuries to obtain the sole monopoly rights. They are the noble von Roalekz family, who own lands around Anselford, and the more mercantile Kwartz family, powerful guildsmen in the city. Members of the Kwartz family are senior figures within the Silversmiths' Guild, despite the fact that they have little financial interest in the trade and are predominantly agents for the Gnomes. No serious Carroburg family would admit to being simply a merchant.

The Merchants' Guild is largely irrelevant. Merchants remain



**Jewellers' Guild**

members of their manufacture guilds since the value of craftsmanship is an important theme of the city. Marienburg is seen as the antithesis of this as it puts profit before craft, and so the Merchants' Guild remains small and useless. In recent centuries the rise of merchant classes (and Marienburg especially) has led to the city becoming slightly less prosperous. This is not yet visible, but will worsen over the next few years and strengthen the Guild Council's dislike of their neighbours downstream. The Guildmaster of the Merchants' Guild is one Ferdinand Oldenhaller, who seems strangely unconcerned about the way his guild is perceived - many believe he has some other source of income, as his business would appear to operate at a loss.

Just as legal trade is dominant in the city, so illegal trade is also powerful. As a major port, smuggling opportunities are rife. Indeed, Henri Govain, before becoming a legitimate guildsman and setting up his business, was known to deal in the manufacture of extremely accurate glass imitation diamonds for various nefarious purposes. Not only has the family never lived this down, but centuries later, it is still rumoured that they continue the business. Whatever, diamond smuggling is certainly undertaken to avoid both Marienburg and Empire taxes.

### Politics

Whilst in general trade dominates the city, politics is a necessary evil. Although the city is technically the seat of Middenland, there is little love between town and country. Many Carroburgers are very wary of what they see as the extremism and bigotry that they find in the region, whilst those in the outlying villages and farmsteads see Carroburg as rather irresolute and weak. However, Carroburg is clearly aware of its proximity to Marienburg and Bretonnia and the dangers that this poses. Bretonnia is distrusted since the city would be a worthy prize for an adventuresome Duc or Comte.

The relationship with Marienburg is complex and outlined elsewhere. Whilst there is little military threat from the Wasteland, the Council of Ten have an interest in influencing the city in their favour and as such there are several spies within the city hall, Guildenhaus and the Grand Duke's court. Most of these are in the employ of the Haagen family, who have many business interests within the Empire. In addition they fund a number of agitators to whip up support for the Wasteland and generate unrest about the Empire, largely through complaints about taxation. Altdorf is aware that infiltration has occurred and a number of agents have been deployed to the city to counter Marienburg espionage. In general, these two groups operate an informally friendly and tacitly accepting relationship and Carroburg is often referred to as 'the game.'

Some within the city desire to become a city state in its own right, and not represent Middenland, which is seen as poor and irrelevant. Indeed, it is sometimes mistaken for one, since it deals with the emperor directly on a number of issues that it has negotiated into its charter in payment of its direct support for the Empire army. It is this position of wealth and influence that has allowed the relative democracy of Carroburg to thrive in the Empire. In many towns and cities, agitators will point to the relative stability of the city as

an example for representation of and by the people.

The city is also interesting in that it has diplomatic ties with a Gnome community. However, since these ties are essentially involved with trade and the Gnomes have never shown any interest outside of this, the alliance is more one of unusual potential than anything more serious. At the same time, Carroburgers have a tendency to dislike Dwarfs, who they see as arrogant and bigoted in their assurances of their natural superiority as craftworkers. Carroburg is unusual in that most of those in the city will clearly exhibit xenophobia towards that race. On occasion, the Ulricans have utilised this politically by playing upon traditional Sigmarite favour towards Dwarfs as an example of that faith's ambivalence to the needs of the city.

Internal city politics are controlled by the guilds, who effectively determine who is elected to all city posts. This allows them to control the demand for their work and so monopolise its supply to their own membership. Some latitude is given to goods passing through, which might allow the less scrupulous to illegally import into the city whilst apparently simply using Carroburg as a stopping point during transit. Dwarfs are not welcome within the guilds, although no official policy refuses them access. In any event, Carroburg has a negligible Dwarf population, since they can easily find a better welcome elsewhere.

Grand Duke Leopold von Bildhofen is a distant figure in both the running of the city and its status within the Empire. While the guilds press for greater standing and trade protectionism, the Grand Duke has expressed no interest in politics at all. A disinterested figure, he takes part in the city's ceremonies with an undisguised blankness. Most of his official duties are carried out by his chancellor Arnold von Schacht - a stooge to the Guildenhaus, who is also in the pay of anti-Marienburg fanatics in Altdorf. Beyond the borders of Middenland, the other electors see Leopold as easily

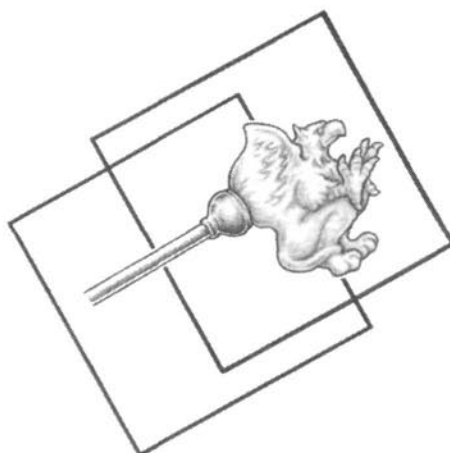
manipulated and politically naive - but most realise that he is not the real power in the province or city. The Grand Duke's only real passion is alchemy, and as such he surrounds himself with charlatans, eccentrics and mountebanks who claim to have discovered the secret of true transmutation.

### Environs

Notwithstanding the poor infrastructure described above and the consequent difficulties in communication overland, Carroburg does maintain a network of small hamlets and villages in which a variety of manufacturing takes place in the form of many cottage industries. These are all obligated to leading guildsmen within the city and are in reality little more than wage slaves to the large industrial families in the city. Life in these villages is monotonous, hard and short. That said, employment remains relatively full and, whilst poor, the locals are not starving. Most of these hamlets lie along the river, but they are also spread out for about a day's travel encircling the city. Others form satellites to the few 'major' settlements noted above, including Dunkelbild, Schattenlas, Punzen and Anseldorf.

The only noteworthy villages and hamlets are:

**Schittenchave**, near **Schattenlas**, for its large monument to those



**Glassworkers Guild**

killed in the Ulrican attempt to capture Carroburg, and which is now used as a symbol for toleration by those seeking peaceful relations between the various local factions.

**Carolhof**, thought by some to be the precise birthplace of Carrolus, and at which some interesting stonework has been found referring to what appears to be a King Carol.

**Wervik**, a village created by the exodus of Empire loyalists after the independence of Marienburg.

**Dadizele**, the site of a statue discovered 250 years ago (and now found in the Bibliothek) of a naked woman and locally referred to as the 'Dadizele Virgin.' Local wags commonly suggest that she is the only virgin to be found in the village! Claims persist of sightings of a mysterious naked woman and have resulted in more serious pilgrims including the village in their journeys.

**Utenhoffe**, a hamlet of absolutely no interest at all but for the fact that it is a saltpetre site - and which has caused its military importance to colour all local political issues for those in Altdorf, Marienburg and Oisillon.

**Gaver**, another irrelevant hamlet but for the discovery of small gold and lead deposits that have underpinned the city's economy for the last century. Three minters are found here, producing coins for Middenland, Carroburg City and the Empire (as taxation payments to the Imperial Treasury). The security for the three provides the hamlet with the most soldiers per capita of population in the Empire, since the Prince limits the number of inhabitants and so prevents the usual economic expansion associated with gold and soldiers with money to spend. Sadly, the deposits have almost run out and there is little actual wealth here anyway.

**Gruuthuse**, which really is a nondescript collection of cottage workshops to reinforce the notion that most surrounding hamlets are indeed irrelevant to those exciting adventures undertaken by the favoured few.

**CAMEOS**

**A Dirty Rat?**

Things are going to pot. It all started with a couple of murders and now the rat catchers and rakers claim that someone (or something) has it in for them. The streets are not being cleaned. Councillor Marcuse is demanding protection for them - but he has his eye on

the next election. Their guild, Rechengild, is split over what to do; some want to strike. This is also deepening political and economic divisions within the guild. Rechengild is split into two divisions: rakers and rat catchers. Each of those has a head and two geographical or technical subordinates. Balderman Stoll, guild administrator for the south and external rat catchers, is making a play for power against the head of the Rechengild, Wilhelm von Ellfenstein, and everyone is taking sides. The murders are certainly adding to discontent with the guild's current leadership and von Ellfenstein is looking to hire independent investigators to uncover what is happening.

**Hands On**

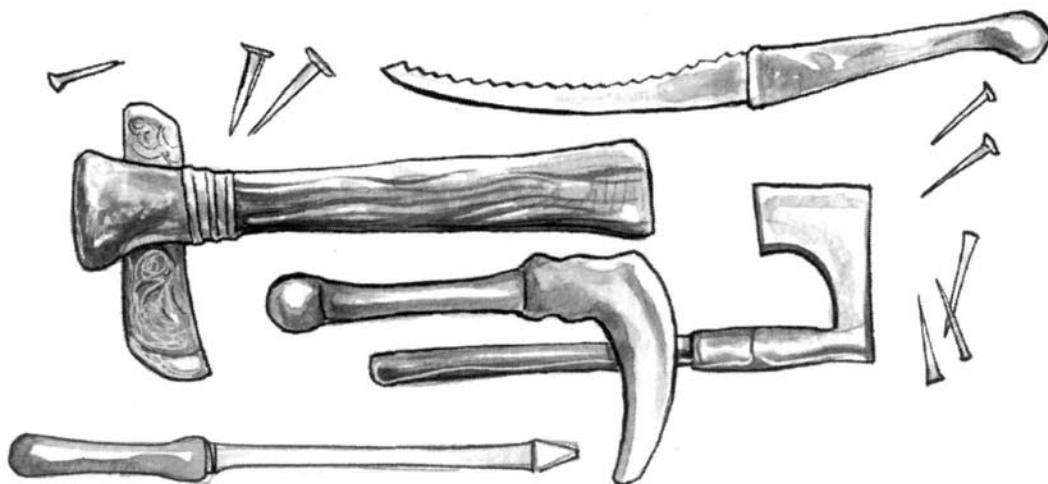
The Elector for Middenland has suddenly taken an interest and sacked the Meister his father had appointed to run the Council (although he was a dotty old Cathayan who no-one ever trusted). Rumours are running through all levels of the city as to what this might mean. But why has he suddenly taken an interest in what he once described as the work of one's menials? And what exactly has the damned foreigner been up to, to cause this shift?

**Gnome One at Home**

The gnomes have apparently disappeared! Things are so serious that the Kwartz and von Roalekz businesses are working together to equip an expedition to discover what has happened to their erstwhile trading partners.

**Frijtore**

Leif Aelfricson has made a name and money for himself in the last couple of years, and become very unpopular. He is usually seen as a mad Norscan, wandering around with a drinking horn, two-handed axe and horned helmet. This hides a canny businessman. Many think that he must scare the City into employing his building company, Frijtore, since they undercut guild rates and employ scab labour. To so openly undermine recognised guilds is very risky for so many reasons, and yet the Council continue to employ him. What does he have on them? Or are they simply so tight-fisted, they will employ his cut-rate bodgers? They are currently building a turf fort and boom on the northern bank, a contract he seemed particularly keen to get. Less well known, he also owns Frijtkrone, through which he runs slaves under the cover of administering the prison hulks tied up off the Gestadfurt. Does the Council condone this? Is this why the Elector has taken personal control, to protect his people from illegal slavery? (Yeah, right!)



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# NIGHTMARE ON HELMSTRASSE

A Scenario by François Dubé

*"Nightmares have no rules"*  
Anonymous

## A Feasting Night

Because nightmares have no rules, be ready to unleash your imagination and remind your PCs that they can never be safe. And yet the monster is weak - a serial killer living an afterlife. The scenario is a tribute to the movie *Nightmare on Elm Street* and concerns a guardian spirit attacking his victims during their sleep.

## The Old Smithy Inn

The scenario is set in a coaching inn built on the top of a rocky hill surrounded by forest (the exact location is left up to GMs). The settlement was built 200 years ago after the discovery of a small ore deposit in some nearby marshes. The small ore and metal working industry operated for a century and then stopped when the deposits became too poor and too dangerous to work. The owner of the settlement gave it to a few faithful friends and left, never to be seen again. A few businesses had grown up around the mining community, notably a blacksmith, a trading post, a general store and an inn. Since the mine closed, the village has been in decline. The general store and trading post are now the same building. The blacksmith shop was closed a long time ago

and the innkeeper's father bought it to change this working place into a feasting hall where travellers, hunters and traders (including a few smugglers and outlaws) get some time to enjoy good food and beer. Occasionally adventurers coming to and from the nearby mountains are also seen. Built in the old smelter building, the feasting hall's massive chimney is the first thing a stranger notices.

Through numerous marriages, the control of the settlement is now in the hands of the van Kester family which owns the general store and the trading post. The Zimmerman family operates the inn but it is common knowledge in the settlement that the van Kesters want to buy it. Few people actually live in the settlement (fewer than fifty people including the children). There are four watchmen (three at night and one during daylight)

keeping an eye on the nearby forest where Beastmen have been reported. The watchmen are villagers on a rota serving three days at a time.

As a safeguard against attacks from Beastmen, or worse, the settlement is surrounded by a ten-foot high stone wall with a small watchtower. A cliff ending at a small river further protects two sides of the village. However, the main protection for the settlement comes from the armed hunters coming here to trade before returning to their homes in the forest.

## Secondary Plots

The scenario is best played if some secondary scenarios are run simultaneously. For instance Beastmen can attack in the middle of the night, smugglers (linked to the van Kester family) may be passing through, or there may be a few hunters or outlaws in town.

## And Now the Nightmares

A long and terrifying scream is heard in the feasting hall. For a few seconds talking stops. Then there is the muffled sound of a fight, followed by the sound of a firearm. A man has just been killed. He is alone in his room, with a smile on his face. The door is locked and the window is shut. He lies in the middle of the room with a bullet in his head. A pistol lies on the floor. The innkeeper does not want trouble and

concludes (or agrees with the PCs) that it is a suicide. The PCs can convince the innkeeper to let them search the room without too much effort. The other guests are not too interested in what happened and the innkeeper is ready to make them forget what they heard (beer for all). Servants will stay with the PCs to remove the body (moving it to the storage room for burial outside the settlement the next day) and take the personal belongings of the dead man to the innkeeper's office to await the watch.

First, however, the PCs will need to open the door that is locked by the *Magic Lock* spell (a good axe will do the job). Opening the door, they see a dark room, lit only by the few lanterns in the passageway. They will see the dead body of a man wearing a nightgown. Searching the room (ask precisely where they look - do not forget that the innkeeper is there), the



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PCs will notice blankets, lying half on the bed, and a wooden chair on the floor. In the expensive travelling clothes hung on the wall, they find 3gc 10/6. On a small desk, there is ink, paper and books. The man's travel bag has spell components, clothes and a heavy metal bookcase. The bookcase is locked by magic and made of steel sheets and lead. This bookcase is empty but radiates magic; also it is smaller than the spell book (see below).

If the servants are questioned while the innkeeper is not there, one will remember having heard the scream and the man's shouts for help but cannot be sure ("It all happened so fast, you know."). Another servant recalls having seen light late during the evening. "I recall it because the light was not natural. I know about these things. A witch charmed my brother-in-law in Altdorf. That's what he said to my sister and to my father when they found him naked with her."

The servants will then leave the room with the dead body and the belongings. If the PCs have not done so yet, they can search beneath the bed to find a leather bound book with dark arcane

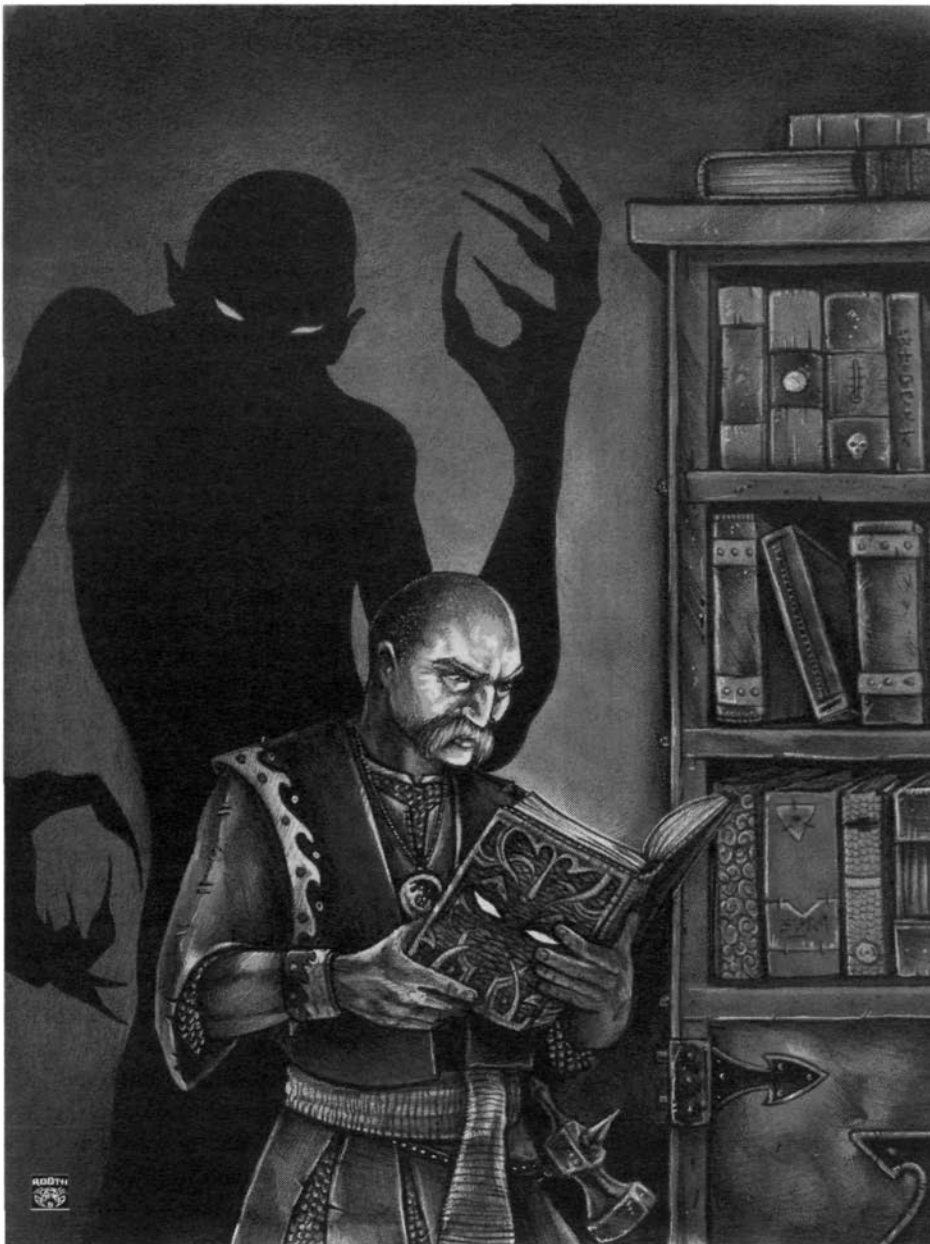
signs on it (if PCs can read Magick, they will read the title *Necronomikus* on the first page). If they had already found the spell book, the servants will take it with the other belongings to the innkeeper's office. The *Necronomikus* is written mostly in Magick with a few words in Classical and others of an unknown origin. Reading the book requires a few days, but understanding its content will take many months if not years. Fast reading will give an idea of the content. It describes horrifying rituals to prepare enchanted skulls and various spell components. For each minute spent reading the book, the reader will have, later in the scenario, 1% chance (up to a maximum of their Intelligence score) to remember having read a few words about spiritual watchdogs (never say 'guardian spirit' in front of the players). If looking for this information in the book, running through pages, it takes two to eleven minutes (figure out the time required and then ask the PC how much time they spend reading). In all cases, proper lighting is required to read the dark pages (a candle or a torch will not work).

If you feel the timing is right, it could be the time to unleash a Beastmen attack. If not, the PCs could begin an investigation with the other guests. The victim's name is unknown to the others, but is embroidered on one handkerchief. The man came by coach and did not talk much. The coachmen remember he had an accent from the north and identify him as a Marienburger: "Perhaps the son of a rich merchant on his way to school in the city." Most people will resist investigation and secondary plots can come in to mix things up.

If the PCs did not find the *Necronomikus*, the next day a servant will find it while cleaning the room. If PCs were nice to her the previous day, the servant will show them the book before showing it to the innkeeper (provided the guardian does not choose to possess her and have her carry the book to a leaving coach).

**The Dead Man**

Gijsbert Willburger was a wizard's apprentice from Marienburg. If it was not for his father's money, he would not have made it to Baron Henryk's College of Navigation and Sea Magicks. Desiring fast and easy power, he decided to look for more knowledge on Dark Magick. He was quickly unmasked but he was caught and enslaved by a necromancer. In time Gijsbert finally decided to flee the city with a book he stole from his master's study. It is on his way to a new life that he found his death.



On the night he died, he succeeded in opening the bookcase. He shut the door and window, and started to read but did not put it back in the box. The guardian spirit attacked him while he was sleeping. Gijsbert awoke from his nightmare, fell from his bed and screamed. The spirit decided he would kill him anyway. So he attacked poor Gijsbert who struggled with the beast inside. Finally, the spirit possessed Gijsbert, loaded his pistol and fired right between the eyes (he loves the way he sees a bullet rushing towards him, but never dies!).

### About the Guardian Spirit and the Bookcase

Gijsbert's master protected his precious book by binding a guardian spirit to it. He selected the skull of a serial killer to make a perfect watchdog. Sadly, the guardian spirit retained a will of its own. One night, the spirit attacked the necromancer during his sleep but failed to possess him. Threatening to destroy him, the necromancer noticed the desire for survival in the mad spirit and revealed to him that if the *Necronomikus* was destroyed he would also be destroyed. At that moment a mad duo was created. The necromancer purchased a steel and lead bookcase to keep the spirit inside while he was sleeping. He took pleasure in freeing the spirit once in a while and letting it track victims (in a radius of 48 meters of the bookcase).

The guardian spirit, named Rolf Vermeer, has developed a taste for the afterlife and a keen sense of survival. He prefers to attack his victims while they sleep but can decide otherwise if he feels threatened. If not threatened, he will attack victims with low Will Power first, taking his time to choose the perfect moment. If threatened, he will attack characters with the power to destroy him (PCs with magical weapons or spell casters). Again, if not rushed to protect his afterlife, he will prefer to wait and see. For him, the bookcase is not totally a jail. It is also a place where he feels safe. The spirit can exit or enter the bookcase, but there is (a cumulative 5% chance each round of being destroyed if the *Necronomikus* is in the bookcase and he is not.

The bookcase radiates magic as the lead coffer has a permanent magical lock. The *Necronomikus* has magical protection against fire and acid, but will burn if put in a very hot fire like the one in the feasting hall. Burning it with a torch is a long task (thirty minutes) because the paper tends to only darken and the PC will need to burn it page by page. In a hot fire, two to five minutes are required since the book will act more like a wet log than like a normal book. Against magical fire, the *Necronomikus* has 6TB and 15W. Before it burns, it is likely that the spirit will do all he can to possess a victim and have the book removed from the fire. If the *Necronomikus* is hit by a sword (magic or not), it still has 6TB and 15W except that the book will not be destroyed at the end (there will be many pieces instead of one). The spirit can survive even if only a square inch of the book is left and the tie binding the spirit can jump from one piece to another provided it is less than 48 meters away (the guardian spirit does not know this).

The spirit is ethereal (moves through walls, doors, etc.), invisible and can fly. He will spy on the PCs or other potential victims, hearing all that is said, waiting for the best time to

strike. The spirit will stay away from things that can destroy him (magic items, spell casters, etc.) if possible. He can also try to mislead investigators (by possessing a suspect, for instance, to kill somebody else), and he has fun doing it. Also remember that normal weapons cannot harm the guardian spirit. If a non-magical weapon hits a possessed victim, only the victim takes damage. If the victim is hit with magical weapons both the victim and the guardian spirit suffer damage.

The spirit is linked to the *Necronomikus* and will know if the book is attacked. If the victim succeeds a Will Power Test the spirit leaves their body, but the victim has to pass a Will Power test (the spirit causes Fear), once each round until success, to do anything other than scream. The spirit cannot attack for the remaining D6 rounds, as it recovers, and can only move at half speed (but is no longer a prone target).

If the victim fails his Will Power Test, he loses D10 Will Power points and is still under attack. The victim and the guardian spirit are considered prone targets during spirit combat. When reduced to 0 Will Power, the spirit takes full control of the victim. Will Power recovery is at a rate of 1 per round. Possessed PCs can make a Will Power Test each turn to take back the control of their body. The spirit can exit a possessed body when he wants to.

Finally, the guardian spirit may decide to attack one PC during his sleep even though PCs can be stronger than most other people in the inn. This could happen if their investigation and ideas (the spirit is listening and watching them) are getting close to him. The guardian spirit could also find some PCs too smart, and want to teach them a lesson.

### Rolf Vermeer Guardian Spirit (ex-Serial killer, ex-Teamster)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
0 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	18% <sup>2</sup>	48%	0 <sup>1</sup>
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
- <sup>1</sup>	17 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	0 <sup>1</sup>	4 <sup>1</sup>	0	0	0

<sup>1</sup> The possessed victim's profile applies if the guardian spirit takes control of a body

<sup>2</sup> 58 can be used when tests are linked to the planning of a murder, trying to lure investigators or victims, or other tasks for which the mad soul of Rolf is at its best.

If your PCs are smart enough to burn the book right from the start, a Beastmen attack or a greedy innkeeper can always come in handy to avoid this situation.

### Mechanics of Nightmares

To run the nightmares the following game mechanic is recommended. First, the guardian spirit makes a real attack only once per round of nightmare: a Will Power Test failure causes a loss of D10 Will Power; at 0 Will Power the victim dies from

terror. The Will Power Test is at -10% unless the victim realises he is dreaming or if somebody is trying to wake him. The dreamer cannot kill or harm the guardian spirit (even though the spirit can appear to be bleeding, scared, prone, smashed to pieces); the only way out is to succeed in a Will Power Test. One round of nightmare can be many minutes of dream (usually what ends a round is a major attack against the dreamer in the nightmare, but that is GM's choice).

Anything can happen in a nightmare. Both the spirit and the dreamer have the freedom of modifying the setting and the weapons, but it takes one round of dream-time (and a successful Will Power Test). Still the only way out of the nightmare is to succeed the "real", end-of-round, Will Power Test. With this success, the PC wakes. He has to make another successful Will Power Test to avoid gaining an insanity point and wake screaming.

Some advice that may be useful:

- Never say, "Make a Will Power Test" when the real thing happens. The GM should roll the dice himself not telling what he is testing for.
- Never say the words "guardian spirit". Fear is at its best when you don't know what is attacking you. Even the *Necronomikus* never talks about "guardian spirit" (it uses the words "spiritual watchdogs").
- Never talk about loss of Will Power points. Instead say that the PC feels tired or exhausted and needs to sleep.

During a PC nightmare, it is best to also have the other PCs believe it is really happening and let them react as they would normally. Otherwise, it may be better to spilt the players up.

### Nightmare Examples

Here are a few examples of nightmares that can be used.

The victim wakes up and hears something near the window. He may decide (PC's choice) to wake up the other (dream) PCs. He moves to the window and sees something flying. Tentacles move through the wall to seize him. First Will Power Test. If successful, the PC wakes, sweating, making another Will Power Test to see if he gets an insanity point and if he screams. If the first Will Power Test fails, the nightmare continues. Tentacles try to grip and kill the PC. False attacks and damage is rolled (the other PCs also attack or try to escape the room - to make the nightmare seem real). The next Will Power Test comes

when the victim - or one of the fake PCs - receives a major blow or a critical hit. If tentacles are cut (WS45, SB4, TB4, W10), the PCs get a few rounds to try to escape the room. Surprise, the door has a magical lock on it. The daemon moves through the wall. More Will Power Tests...

The PC receives a critical hit somehow and should be dead; instead he feels his body beginning to mutate and a second head grow. He controls one arm, one leg and one head. The PC must fight against the other half of himself.

The PC says, "It's only a dream" and wakes sweating. The other PCs ask what happened. The PC explains it all. Then he sees behind the other PCs that a daemon has moved through the wall and is now ready to attack. The nightmare is not over. This time does the PC still think it is only a dream? Will Power Test. False rounds of attacks, fake PCs try to burn a fake book, etc.

A PC (not the dreamer) falls asleep while not supposed to



and is attacked by a fake guardian spirit. The dreaming PC sees this and tries to wake the fake victim. All that he does that would normally work does not work. The fake PC starts bleeding. His skin breaks in many places until the fake PC dies. Then the eyes of the fake PC open and he runs a dagger through the dreaming PC near the heart. First real Will Power Test is made.

### Outside the Nightmares

Outside the nightmare many things can happen with other PCs. First, the PCs can realise that one PC is having a nightmare or is asleep (one Intelligence Test per round after the first round) and try to wake him up (negating the -10% to Will Power Test). Before the first Will Power Test of the dreamer, it is not possible to notice that the PC is having a nightmare different from any other nightmare. After the first Will Power Test it becomes more obvious that something is going on since he will begin to sweat heavily, with a terrorised look on his face. From the second test the dreamer will start to move his arms (although not fully) in accordance with the dream, muttering a few incomplete sentences.

PCs can also have other ideas with potential effects on the guardian spirit. For instance, to throw blessed water on the dreamer or to cast spells like *Banish* or *Destroy Undead* requires the guardian spirit to make a Will Power Test to stay in the body he is trying to kill/possess.

It is also possible to attack the *Necronomikus*. As discussed, the guardian spirit will be alarmed by this attack and on the failed Will Power Test (each round) will leave the victim's body to see what has happened. This applies only if the guardian spirit has no idea of what is going on outside. Otherwise, the spirit is free to choose what he does.

At the GM's choice, it is possible to cast the spell *Sleep* on another PC. This magical sleep allows the PC to enter the nightmare and to help the victim provided that the sleeping PCs are less than a metre away (highest Will Power is now used for the tests and Will Power point losses are split between all the PCs in the nightmare).

After a few nightmares, the PCs will begin to realise what is going on (at least begin to understand that attacks are "only" dreams and that they are attacked while sleeping). To avoid things becoming boring, nightmare time can become equal to

#### Possession while not asleep

Optionally, the GM can say that possession can occur while victims are not sleeping, following pretty much the same game mechanics. For those witnessing the possession, they see the victim standing still as though dreaming and they can act to wake the victim in similar ways to those described in this article. The GM can make a mental note of where the PCs are when the possession starts and describe to players the dream and not what is really happening. When the possession fails, the victims awaken and all the players realise that the last five minutes of game play was only a dream. This can happen quite a few times during the final battle and make it far from ordinary.

real time and you can run two or three action sequences in parallel, with PCs making decisions in each, unable to tell which one is the nightmare and which one is real life. You can also (after at least a few nightmares), once in a while, narrate the nightmares and only "play" the real life.

Also, the guardian can always decide to possess NPCs and use them to attack the PCs or mislead their investigation.

### Aftermath

If the PCs haven't solved the problem, then at the end of the night the *Necronomikus* may still be under Gijsbert's bed and the guardian spirit at large. In this case the PCs will leave the inn not understanding what happened and the *Necronomikus* can reappear in their lives in the future. It is also possible that the PCs will carry the *Necronomikus* with them and the killer will have more time and means to act.

It can also end with a wider campaign. After all, the PCs have found a forbidden artefact. They can try to track where the *Necronomikus* came from. Eventually, travelling to Marienburg, they find that Gijsbert was studying at the Baron Henryk's College of Navigation and Sea Magicks, find his father and try to discover who his master was.

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# ARROWS OF OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE

A scenario by **Wim van Gruisen**

This adventure is set at an archery tourney held at the monastery of St. Lucas. PCs may participate in the tournament (actually, it is expected that at least some of them do) or at least spend the night there, enjoying the action or rooting for their friends. At the first day of the tournament, one of the participants is murdered and the PCs discover the body. They may try to uncover the murderer, but all too soon find that they have to deal not only with murder, but also with blackmail, burglary, poisoning, cheating, Chaos worship and everything that Sigmar forbade.

This adventure has a structure that you might not be used to. Instead of a more or less linear plot, this adventure has a number of NPCs who all have their own plans. Those plans will clash, the PCs find themselves in the middle and trying to guess what's

going on. As the PCs will not often be told what they should do, players are expected to be proactive. This means that the GM will often have to improvise. A key to good improvisation is good preparation and the GM should make sure that he has a good grasp of what happens during the adventure, and more importantly, why it happens; this means understanding the goals of the various NPCs.

## The monastery of Saint Lucas

The monastery is located on the Salzenmund-Middenheim road, a little more than half a day south of Salzenmund. A coaching inn, the Red Donkey Inn, lies close to the monastery, and the village of Wertenbad is an hour away towards Salzenmund. The woods are pretty close, and in those woods, close to the monastery, there is an ancient shrine to Sigmar.

The monastery has been led for the last twenty-eight years by the abbot, Father Adolphus Spärgelhitzer. Relations with the local people are very good. Wertenbad prospers because of the monastery nearby - the monks gladly buy what the farmers produce, and in return they educate the villagers. Quite unusual for a farming community, many people in Wertenbad know how to read, write and do arithmetic.

## History, as told by Rudi Grimm

About two hundred years ago the Imperial army fought a battle against the incursions of Chaos. A Chaos wizard dealt blow after blow to the Imperial army, who could do nothing in return. Forced to withdraw, they were close to routing. That is, until Lucas Pfeilmann, an unremarkable farmer who was enlisted as a longbowman, received a divine vision. He let this vision guide his arm and shot an arrow much further than was thought possible, hitting the Chaos wizard straight in the heart. The loss of the wizard discouraged the Chaos army and gave the Imperials a second wind. They slaughtered the largest part of the Chaos army that day, driving the rest away.

The Church of Sigmar was quick to proclaim that Lucas's arm was guided by Sigmar, canonise him and build a monastery at that place, close to a temple of Sigmar that was already there. Ultricans protested, as they thought that it was not Sigmar, but Ulric who had sent Lucas that vision. They still do not agree with the official version.

To celebrate the victory, the monastery has organised an archery tournament every three years, only open to Humans (Sigmar is a Human deity, after all). The Ultricans made a habit of sending their best men there, as winning the



tournament shows that it really was Ulric who granted Lucas his vision. In response, Sigmarite templars also showed up more and more. As of now, an Ulrican has been the winner of the tournament 26 times, a Sigmarite 27 times, and the rest won by unaligned archers.

### Present day

This year, some fourteen participants to the tournament have shown up. They all stay at the Red Donkey Inn, close to the monastery and the tournament fields. The tournament has also drawn other people - spectators from Wertenbad and other nearby villages, and even as far as Salzenmund. And where people flock together, traders, charlatans and thieves are never far off.

The tournament is already in full swing as the adventure begins. The PCs engage each other in a duck shoot. The three best archers of each round can continue the next day while the others drop out. This round is held in the late afternoon, too late to travel anywhere. So even the people who dropped out will be staying for one more night in the inn.

### Cheating, as told by Rudi Grimm

The prize money of the tourney is considerable, but a multitude of that amount passes hands among people who place bets. The Ulricians and Sigmarites, however, consider the honour to their order as even more important. With the stakes so high, it is not surprising that many attempts have been made to... errrrm... help the gods in choosing their favourite.

Six years ago there was a scandal as a participant bribed a monk to feed his target ducks a soporific. The monk gave too strong a dose and the ducks were fast asleep when the cage was opened. That was still better than the time when someone fed the ducks a laxative - especially when the wind drove those ducks towards the public. A certain young lady, daughter of a Salzenmund noble, found herself stood right under the trajectory of the ducks. She later swore to never come to this tourney again.

Magic has always been a favourite way of cheating. Clerics boosting the participants' abilities gave the teams of Ulric and Sigmar such an advantage over other participants that these last ones refused to compete in tourneys that Sigmarites and Ulricians participated in. There was also the time a spell was cast on certain ducks so that the arrows were attracted to them, or the times the wind was summoned to blow arrows off course.

The organisers have said that they won't accept any cheating this tournament, though. The monks who take care of the ducks collect those that have been shot, have been carefully selected. The use of magic is forbidden and monks will look for any sign in order to apprehend those who try. Spärgelhitzer and Merk seem to be very serious in their efforts to be cheating from this tournament.

### Managing the adventure

Lots of things are happening at the same time in this adventure, as several plot threads are being played out. This can lead to chaos and confusion, which is alright, as long as it is the players who are confused and not the GM. This is why a number of tools are provided to help you manage the game. We have:

## TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

First day:

- Duck shooting - challenger rounds

Second day:

- Morning: Duck shoot for teams. Entry is open for anyone except the winners of the challenger rounds
- Late morning to early afternoon: Speedy shot competition
- Afternoon: Duck shooting - final rounds.  
Late afternoon: Award ceremony

## PLACES

Several places are important in this adventure.

- The monastery of Saint Lucas - by the road, at the edge of a large forest.
- The Red Donkey Inn - by the road, a few hundred yards from the monastery.
- The tourney fields, next to the monastery.
- An ancient temple to Sigmar, in the forest.
- The market: a number of tents, stalls and carts where vendors try to sell their wares. During the day, Wilhelm Hügel and Harald Krupp can be found here.

- A list of characters with a short description for each of them (pg. 47). This is an aid for the players; there are a lot of NPCs in the game, and this list will help the players keep track of who is who. A copy of this is available from the *Warpstone* website for you to amend as required.
- A list with the motivations and plans of some characters.
- A list with events in chronological order, from the duck shoot late afternoon until the morning after.

Also on the *Warpstone* website you will find a diagram with events arranged by person and by time, with lines indicating cause and effect relationships. It will allow you to tick off events as they happen. If PCs cause an event to have a different outcome than expected, you can follow the lines to see which subsequent events may be affected.

There are no stats and skill lists for NPCs. This allows you to fill them in yourself, tailoring the opponents to the strength of the PCs in your group. Stats are not needed much anyway, because this adventure has virtually no combat or other conflict. However, you know your players best; if you think that combat may ensue anyway, prepare accordingly.

The PCs might already know some of the NPCs. If they have met targeteers or templars before, swap them with the sample

NPCs. Two of the NPCs particularly address the PCs: Bart Trautmann will ask a PC to keep an eye on his wife, whom he suspects is cheating on him, while Dirk Gehmann will ask a PC to collect a bag containing 100 gc from an old temple in the middle of the night. These events allow the PCs to be drawn into the adventure; however, it may be a bit strange if complete strangers ask the PCs to do these favours for them. It will work better if you can replace NPCs with characters that the PCs have met during earlier adventures, or somewhere earlier in life.

The PCs will not always act together in this adventure. There are a number of hooks to draw each PC into part of the action. You know your players and their PCs best; determine beforehand which hook fits which PC. The different hooks are:

- A note with an invitation by Ute, the comely waitress, to a PC to meet in the night.

- A request by Bart Trautmann, the inn-keeper, to keep an eye on his wife.
- A request by Dirk Gehmann to pick up a purse with 100gc.
- A silver chalice that is used in Chaos rituals, left in a PC's room when a burglary went wrong. Preferably pick a PC with knowledge of the threat of Chaos for this hook.

If everything goes as planned, three PCs will find themselves trapped in a temple in the middle of the night, while a bowman prevents them from escaping. If some PCs in your group don't like each other, pick those people to end up in there.



## THE DUCK SHOOT

To get this game off to a flying (ahem) start and to get the players in the mood for an archery tourney, it is best to begin with one of the tournament qualifying rounds. Put all participating PCs in one pool (the last). If any PCs are not participating, let their players play NPCs in the same pool; choose between Michaela Tarnat, Christianne Linger, Dietmar Manann and Karl Nummerige. All these NPCs have a **Ballistic Skill** score that is close to the average of the **Ballistic Skill** of the PCs that are competing.

Since just shooting at an unmoving target is a bit boring, this tournament starts off with a duck shoot. Thirty ducks are kept in cages, each having a coloured ribbon around its neck. There are six ducks with a red ribbon, six others with a yellow ribbon, and six each with green, blue and purple ribbons. Each participant gets assigned one of these colours. They also get ten arrows. When the ducks are released, the competitors have to shoot as many ducks of their own colour as possible before they've flown away, with as few arrows as possible - they have to hand in the arrows that are not used, which are then counted. The ducks that have been shot are gathered by the monks and counted. The three participants who performed best are allowed through to the second round, the next day.

The results of the first two pools:  
(name, ducks shot / arrows used)

<b>POOL 1</b>	Matheus Lothar	6/6
	Moritz Volz	5/7
	Berthold Vogts	5/7
	Jürgen Kinsmann	4/8
	Karl-Heinz Leider	3/8
<b>POOL 2</b>	Bodo Ilgner	6/8
	Ruud van Hasselkamp	5/8
	Thomas Kreuz	4/6
	Dieter Loss	4/9
	Franz von Bauenbecker	2/9



Round	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Near	6	6	5	3	2	1			
Far	6	6	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Extreme	6	6	6	6	5	3	3	2	1

After nine rounds, all ducks are either shot or have escaped. Count the number of ducks killed by each participant and check the number of arrows used. If you use critical hits and misses, then:

- a critical hit kills two ducks with one arrow;
- a critical miss means that the character shoots an opponent's duck; determine at random whose duck is shot.

### Side events during the tournament:

Duck shoot for teams: Same rules, but now teams of two targeteers participate. Entry is open for anyone except the winners of the previous rounds.

Fast shot competition: Open for everyone. If you participate, roll against **Agility**. If you roll under **Agility**, you may shoot as many times as your roll/10, rounded up. If you rolled over, you may shoot once.

Five balls are catapulted in the air; you have to hit as many of them as possible before they hit the ground. You may increase or decrease your **Agility** for this game (only in steps of 10), but your **Ballistic Skill** decreases or increases by the same amount. So if you take **Agility** +20, your **Ballistic Skill** will be -20.

The duck shoot is played out as a mini game. You will require:

- 10 tokens for every contestant - they represent their arrows. If you have no tokens, just note how many arrows you've used.
- 6 dice for every contestant - they represent the ducks.
- A game board with three fields, each representing a distance: normal, far (-10) and extreme (-20)

Each round, all contestants can shoot or aim. If a duck gets shot, the corresponding die is removed. At the end of each round, the GM rolls the dice for the remaining ducks. Ducks start in the "normal" field, but fly to the next field if their die roll is equal or higher than the target number (see below). If they fly out of the "extreme" field, they're gone. Characters who can fire more than one arrow a round can do so as required.



## PLOTS AND MOTIVATIONS

The Verbund is a spy organisation set up by the Emperor. Its aim is to fight the Chaos cults that undermine the Empire. **Matheus Lothar** is a spy of the Verbund, and he carries a message that is of the utmost importance. Feeling unsafe, he hides the message in the safest place he can think of - the foot of the tournament trophy.

**Moritz Volz** is jealous of Lothar, who is a better marksman than he is. Volz follows Lothar into the prize room and kills him, shooting him at close range.

An involuntary witness of the murder is **Dirk Gehmann**, one of the servants at the Red Donkey Inn. Gehmann has become infatuated with **Ute Seeler**, the serving girl of the inn. But Ute has expensive tastes, and Dirk realised that he could only win her heart if he had money. So he planned to steal the cup and sell it. When he was in the trophy room, however, he heard someone at the door. He had just the time to hide himself before Lothar came in. From his hiding place, Dirk saw him hiding something in the foot of the trophy, and then him being murdered by Volz. That gave Dirk an idea; stealing the trophy was dangerous, as people would certainly search for it. It would be much easier to blackmail Volz.

**Gertha Müller**, a thief, is planning to break into a number of rooms during the night and steal items of value. To make that a little easier, she poisons the dinner with a strong soporific.

**Christianne Linger** is a member of the Chimera, a Chaos cult which has the objective to sow hatred between the two main clerical orders of the Empire, those of Ulric and Sigmar. She poisons the wine that is reserved for the Ulricans. She is quite confident that the Sigmarites will be blamed for that. She has a silver chalice in her possession that is engraved with several markings of Tzeentch; she wants to use this the next morning in a ritual that turns the resentment generated between the two orders into outright hatred that burns into their souls.

**Ute Seeler**, the serving girl, is flirting with one of the PCs - one that looks rich. She sends him a note, inviting him to her room at midnight.

**Barbel Trautmann**, the innkeeper's wife, is another member of the Verbund. She was expecting a message from Lothar, which she had to pass on to **Karl Nummerige**. However, now Lothar is dead and the message cannot be found. During dinner she sends a note to Nummerige, suggesting she meet him at the old temple of Sigmar. That note gets mixed up with Ute Seeler's one. Nummerige sends a note back, telling that he will be there. Barbel gets the note, reads it and hides it. She burns it in one of the fires of the inn at the first opportunity.

Meanwhile, Bart Trautmann, the innkeeper, has become worried about his wife. He has noticed that she has become sneaky and evasive and that someone is sending her secret messages. Not knowing about the Verbund or Barbel's role in it, he began to suspect that she was cheating on him. He tells a PC (preferably someone he knows) and asks him to keep an eye on her.

And a third note is being sent. Gehmann sends an anonymous message to Volz, telling him that he witnessed the murder. Volz is to leave a bag with 100 gc at the altar of the old temple to Sigmar to buy Gehmann's silence. While Volz is reading the note and thinking about what to do, Gehmann enjoys some

## CHARACTERS

### THE RED DONKEY INN

**Bart Trautmann** - the innkeeper. Short man, grey beard. Grumbles a lot.

**Barbel Trautmann** - Bart's wife. Prissy older woman, orders Bart - and everyone else - around.

**Dirk Gehmann** - Stable boy and general gopher. Nervous, thin, young man.

**Ute Seeler** - Waitress. Beautiful, cheerful girl.

### ORGANISATION OF THE GAME

**Father Adolphus Spärgelhitzer** - Abbot of St. Lucas, master of the games.

**Martin Merk** - Militiaman. Sheriff for the duration of the tournament. Reports to Spärgelhitzer.

**Heinrich** - Bald, young monk. Looks as if he has not had enough sleep in some time.

### PARTICIPANTS IN THE TOURNEY

**Matheus Lothar** - Templar of Sigmar. Tall, severe, serious. One of the best marksmen in the Old World. The favourite for the tournament

**Moritz Volz** - Templar of Sigmar. Just like all templars; no fun at all.

**Bodo Ilgner** - Templar of Ulric. Strong man, wild black hair. Looks like he would be easy to anger.

**Berthold Vogts** - Templar of Ulric. Slender man with long, red hair. Serious challenger to Lothar.

**Thomas Kreuz** - Young, brash, handsome. Favourite with the women spectators.

**Franz von Bauenbecker** - Noble. Seems to be here to party rather than participate.

**Ruud Hasselkamp** - Wastelander. Horse-faced, weathered. Quick and accurate marksman.

**Karl-Heinz Leider** - Stocky, swarthy man.

**Jürgen Kinsman** - Middle-aged, bald, moustache.

**Dieter Loss** - Energetic, good-looking.

### OTHERS

**Dietmar Manann** - Broad, middle-aged man. From the scars on his face it looks like he fights for a living.

**Michaela Tarnat** - Cleric of Sigmar. Severe, serious. Taciturn.

**Karl Nummerige** - Middle-aged, full moustache, fierce eyes.

**Christianne Linger** - Tall, short brown curly hair.

**Gertha Müller** - Lithe, plain-faced woman.

**'Fast' Paul Neumann** - Middle-aged man, handsome, grey hair. Slick.

**Wilhelm Hügel** - Balding, fat man. Bookmaker.

**Harald Krupp** - Wiry middle-aged man. Fletcher.

**Rudi Grimm** - Old man, greying hair. Raconteur.

leftovers, and pours himself a mug of the Ulrican wine. The combined poisons make him violently ill. Not feeling capable of going out to the temple himself, he asks one of the PCs to go in his place; he mentions the bag of money but doesn't say where it comes from. He offers to split the loot equally.

At midnight, Barbel Trautmann leaves the inn and goes to the old temple. If a PC agreed to keep an eye on her, he will see her leave and won't have much trouble following her. Another PC should be on his way to the temple to find a bag of gold coins, while a third one goes there to have a romantic assignment with Ute Seeler. They should all arrive at about the same time.

Moritz Volz is heading there as well, but he has a bit of a head start. He does not want to get blackmailed; in his mind the only witness to be trusted to keep a secret is a dead witness. He puts

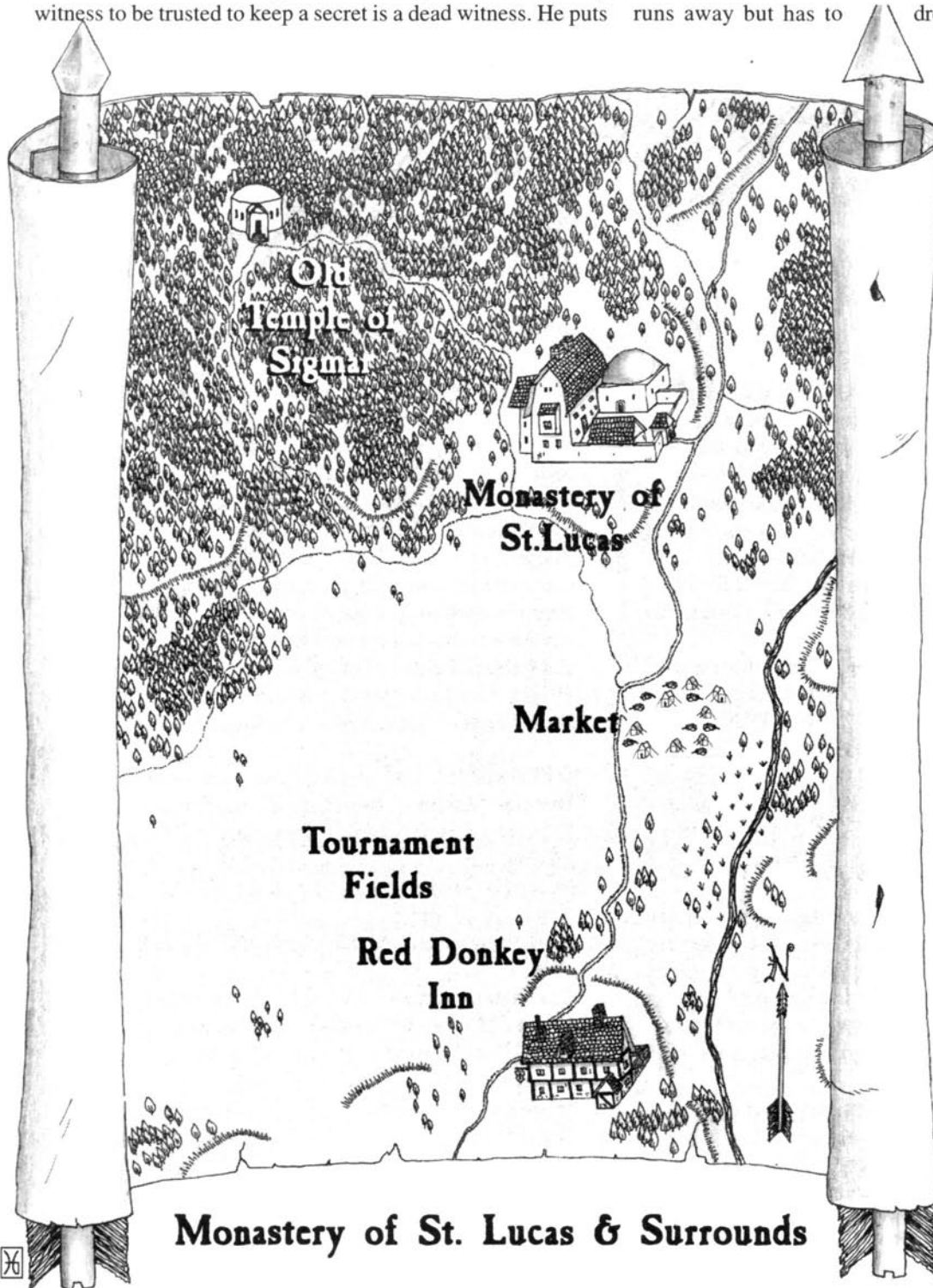
a bag filled with rocks on the altar, and then hides in a thicket from where he can keep an eye on the entrance of the temple. He will not shoot anyone entering the temple, but does so when they come out.

Meanwhile, Gertha Müller has started her rounds. She has stolen a silver chalice from Seeler's room (it was so dark that she could not see what it looked like) and is now robbing one of the PCs (one not at the temple). At the same time Nummerige visits Ute's room, expecting Barbel to be there. Ute screams when she does not discover the PC she expected, but someone else entering her room. The scream is heard throughout the inn, and the PC who is being robbed, wakes and sees someone else in the room - it is too dark to recognise the figure. Gertha runs away but has to drop her bag of loot. Even worse, she tears her clothes on a nail in the wall; a piece of cloth remains hanging on the nail, to be discovered in the morning.

When Gehmann hears of the trap that Volz has set, he begins to get scared. He realises that Volz does not want to pay the bribe. Gehmann decides to flee before Volz realises who tried to bribe him. Before sunrise he sneaks to the stables, steals a horse and leaves.

**Dieter Loss** is an early riser. Having gone out for a morning walk, he sees Gehmann ride away fast. Early in the morning Linger wants to start with the ritual, but she finds out that her chalice has been stolen. Since she doesn't have the time to find out who did it, she steals the only other chalice she can think of as a replacement; the cup which is the trophy for the tournament. Another thing she needs for the ritual is a fresh human heart. Unfortunately for Loss, she meets him on her way back. She swiftly kills him and then cuts out his heart.

The news of Dieter's gruesome death spreads quickly. With all that has happened - the two murders, the thieving in the

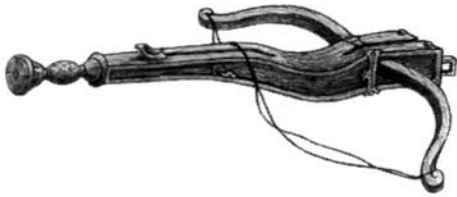


Monastery of St. Lucas & Surrounds

night, the ambush at the temple (and perhaps the discovery of a Chaos chalice, if the PCs reported that), Spärgelhitzer and Merk decide to suspend the tournament and find out what has happened. A courier is sent to the nearest city which city, asking for an investigator to find out what happened and punish the guilty.

The Ulricans protest heavily against being kept prisoner in a Sigmarite monastery. This frustration is added to the cheating with the score at yesterday's games and the attempt to poison them later that evening. They proclaim that Sigmarites do not have the right to stop them from leaving and get ready to depart.

Meanwhile people are being sent out to find Gehmann and bring him back. Volz insists on joining the posse.



### EVENTS - or things that go bump in the night

Events listed in italics happen out of sight of the PCs. Events in normal text are those that the PCs are aware of, or may play a role in.

#### Duck shoot

- *Dirk Gehmann sneaks into the trophy room to steal the trophy. Before he gets to it, however, he hears someone at the door and hides.*
- *Matheus Lothar comes in and hides a message in the foot of the trophy.*
- *As he is doing so, Moritz Volz comes in and kills Lothar, using a black arrow that looks like the ones the Ulricans use. Gehmann is witness to it all, but cannot tell anybody. He is just a stable boy - nobody would believe his word against that of a Templar of Sigmar. And besides, he'd have to explain what he was doing there. Gehman has another idea to get money, though; blackmail may be more lucrative than simple theft.*
- *Volz takes the body and hides it in the forest - or anywhere the PCs are likely to find it.*
- *At the duck shoot, Linger finds two ducks that have been shot by a Sigmarite. She removes the ribbons on the ducks and replaces them with ribbons in Ulrican colours.*
- *At the tally, the Sigmarites are angry: they shot more ducks than the tally shows. They start accusing Ulricans of foul play, which leads to a small row.*
- *A PC finds Lothar's body, with a black arrow, like the ones the Ulricans use, stuck in his throat.*

#### Dinner (roast duck) and afterwards

- *Innkeeper Bart Trautmann asks a PC to keep an eye on his wife; he thinks she is cheating on him. He offers 10gc if need be.*

- *Waitress Ute Seeler flirts with a good (and wealthy?) looking PC. She smiles at him, gives him some wine "on the house" and slips him a note: "Meet me in my bedroom - second floor, end of the corridor".*
- *Barbel Trautmann sends a note to Karl Nummerige. "Meet me after midnight in the old temple in the forest."*
- *The two notes get mixed up.*
- *If someone is watching Barbel Trautmann, let him see her reading a note that she received and then hiding it in her clothes. It is a note from Nummerige, saying: "I got your message. See you tonight." Barbel will burn this note as soon as she gets a chance of doing so unseen, in the fire in the common room or in the kitchen.*
- *Yet another note: Gehmann sends a note to Volz, blackmailing him. "Bring 100gc to the temple in the forest or I will tell everyone that you killed Lothar in the trophy room. Put the money on the altar, then leave."*
- *Linger poisons the Ulricans' food, to make them sick. Müller spices the food with some sleeping powder to make her thieving later in the night easier. Some of this food is sent to the PCs' table. Have them make a **Toughness Test** - if failed, they are drowsy (-20% to all characteristics on Main Profile) for the rest of the night.*
- *Gehmann gets the leftovers of the Ulricans' meals and becomes sick. Not able to go to the old temple himself, he asks a PC to go in his stead. He will tell that a bag with 100 gc will be lying there, which he is willing to split evenly. He will not reveal where that money is coming from, though.*

#### Night

The night is cloudless and Mannslieb is full.

- *Volz puts a bag filled with rocks in the temple, waits outside with bow and arrow, hidden in the bushes. He will let people get into the temple, but shoots them when they come out.*
- *Trautmann goes to the temple for her planned rendezvous with Nummerige, followed by a PC if everything went right.*
- *A second PC, hoping for a romantic rendezvous, also shows up at the temple.*
- *And a third PC goes to the temple to get the blackmail money.*
- *When anyone comes out of the temple, Volz shoots them (BS -10 because of the dark) with black Ulrican arrows. If you want to be nice, the first arrow misses by default.*
- *Unless something strange happens, or if the people in the temple can escape, Trautmann asks what the PCs are doing. When asked what she herself is doing there, she explains, telling about the Verbund.*
- *Gertha Müller sneaks into a sleeping PC's room, trying to steal stuff.*
- *Nummerige visits Ute. Ute screams. Everyone will wake up.*
- *PC wakes, sees the thief in his room. Müller runs away before the PC can recognise her, leaving the bag with the loot in his room. This loot includes the chalice of Chaos that she stole from Linger. She tears her clothing on a nail in the wall - a green-blue piece of cloth remains hanging on the nail.*
- *Linger destroys Ulrican equipment, breaks arrows. She then feeds the ducks a poison which makes them drowsy.*

### Morning

- *Early in the morning, Dieter Loss gets up to take a short walk in the forest.*
- *Linger needs a new chalice to perform the ritual, so she steals the chalice that is the prize for the tournament. She meets Dieter Loss, who was returning from his walk, and kills him. She then begins a ritual that will increase the hostility between the templars.*
- *Gehmann flees before breakfast. He has become scared because of the murder attempt last night.*
- *The PC who was visited by Müller in the night finds a green-blue strip of cloth hanging on a nail next to the door.*
- *When the Ulricans are accused of shooting people in the old temple, or elsewhere, they consider this the last provocation. Indignant, they leave the tournament.*
- *The theft of the trophy chalice is discovered. People have seen Gehmann run away before breakfast.*
- *Loss's body is found, with his throat slit and heart cut out. Looking around (or a successful **Perception Test**) reveals that Müller is wearing a green-blue blouse with a piece torn out. If she is questioned, she will confess that she stole the chalice from Linger's room.*
- *If Gehmann gets captured by the PCs, he will tell everything - about the blackmail, about Volz being the murderer, but also that he saw Lothar hide something in the foot of the chalice.*

### Side plots, red herrings and other stuff

Use some of the plots below if you want to give the PCs a bit more to do.

**Karl-Heinz Leider** is an ex-cleric of Sigmar. He was cast out of the order when he was caught stealing. Matheus Lothar is the one who was mainly responsible for Leider's punishment.

Several people have seen Leider and Lothar quarrelling early in the evening. A number of monks at the monastery, as well as the waiting staff of the Red Donkey Inn, will know that Leider used to be a cleric of Sigmar, but do not know why he quit or that Lothar had anything to do with it.

Volz, Tarnat and Spärgelhitzer know of the history, but the last two are reluctant to talk about it - they reckon that Leider's excommunication has been enough punishment. If asked, Volz will gladly tell the PCs about it - anything to put them off the trail that leads to him.

**Dieter Loss is a gambler.** He has bet heavily on the Ulricians not winning the tournament (as Wilhelm Hügel can attest) and has been seen being thrown out of Lothar's room. Dieter visited Lothar in his room and tried to bribe him, offering him money if he would lose the tournament on purpose. Lothar got angry and threw him out. Loss got the same treatment a bit later from Moritz Volz, but as Volz has not been murdered, this generated no rumours. Once news of Lothar's death reaches Loss, his remaining target is Volz.

He approaches a PC before dinner, offering him money if he passes a drug to Volz. The drug will keep Volz awake at night, so that he will be sleepy and perform worse in the morning.

**Heinrich**, a young monk, has visions of Chaos. There is a chance that he gets such a vision when the PCs are near. He will stiffen, then shake uncontrollably and finally fall on the ground, making spasmodic movements, all the while saying things like: "I can see them coming ... tides of blood ... a hammer lies broken on the battlefield ... everyone's dead ... a heart's sacrifice will please Chaos..."

Apart from the last prediction Heinrich has nothing useful to say about the adventure. If you are playing a campaign, however, you may think about adding some prophecies to fit the campaign.

**Paul Neumann** and **Thomas Kreuz** are doing the tournament circuit. Kreuz is a young, cocky, and very talented targeteer but one with more brawn than brains. He is participating in the tourney, but acts as if he is much worse than he really is. Neumann is a shrewd operator: an ex-targeteer who now earns a living from gambling. He has bet on Kreuz with Hügel, and taken a number of private bets too. Kreuz and Neumann plan to lose this tourney. Kreuz will get a reputation for being not good enough, which lowers his rate, so that in the next tourney, bets made on Kreuz will have a much better reward.

Some Neumann quotes: "You gotta have two things to win. You gotta have brains and you gotta have balls. And you got too much of one and not enough of the other." Also, "Money won is twice as sweet as money earned."

**Father Adolphus Spärgelhitzer** is abbot of the monastery. He has absolute authority during the tournament. He is mainly in charge of the games themselves.

**Martin Merk**, a militia sergeant, has four militiamen under him and is charged with keeping order during the tournament. In the knowledge that Spärgelhitzer is fully supporting him, he acts without fear for rank or reputation. He takes care that neither he nor his soldiers are rude or obnoxious, but tries to be resolute, swift and even-handed. He does show a bias toward Sigmarites, though.

**Harald Krupp** is an artisan, a fletcher. He sells high quality archery materials.

**Wilhelm Hügel**, a fat, bald man, runs a betting office. Many people bet on Lothar winning the tournament - his death gives Hügel a big profit.

**Rudi Grimm** is a raconteur. He gets free lodging and food at the Red Donkey in return for him amusing the other guests with his tales. Having been a guest at many of the previous tournaments he is well informed about its history. He can tell about the history of the tournament (see before), or about incidents like the druid who won a number of bets after he cast a spell that caused arrows to be attracted to certain participants' ducks. Others have tried to conjure magical winds to try to influence the game. These are reasons, Rudi explains, why nowadays the priests cast spells to detect any magic.

# CONSPIRACY

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

### ACT THREE: ANARCHY

#### Act Three: A Summary

Three Skaven assassins are sent to capture Walewijn Droomer and bring him to Alfons van Rugkil. The Watch are also looking for the PCs and bring them to meet Reiner Derschakal. Derschakal realises they know too much and, to give himself time, arranges to meet them the next day. Elisabeth van Rugkil becomes aware of this and murders him.

Elisabeth van Rugkil finally reveals herself to the PCs, but they are attacked and separated. They know enough to think that she has been taken to the Alfons van Rugkil mansion. There Alfons van Rugkil is ready to launch his assault to "save" the city but his body is mutating.

The Skaven forces launch their attack and chaos reigns in the city. Nothing can be done to stop them. However, the PCs actions will decide how much damage is done.

#### Need A Place to Rest?

By this time, the PCs need a well-deserved rest. The threat from ORDESA and the resurgent Cult of the Scorpion will hopefully have been eliminated. If not, the arrival of the Skaven will put the two groups in the background for the duration of the adventure. Cold-hearted GMs may decide that the PCs' current place of lodging has become a victim of the latest fires.

Around them, fires rage for the remainder of the night. After setting the fires, the Skaven Gutter Runners retreat into the sewers. Anyone who had the misfortune to cross their path (except the PCs) have been slain or dragged off. Unless the PCs had the foresight to take a slain Skaven with them, the corpses have been removed by

other Gutter Runners. Without proof, it is unlikely that anyone will believe the PCs' story that Chaos Ratmen are attacking the city.

In the predawn hours, a thick damp fog rises helping those battling the fires to succeed in their endeavours. Almost all the fires have been extinguished when the fog gives way in the early afternoon to overcast skies. The darkening clouds to the north indicate that a storm will likely be arriving by evening.

Those that need medical help can obtain a referral from the Suiddock Watch or one of the staff at their one-time local, the Shipwrecked Tavern. Those in the Watch usually see Doktor Rudolf Haamhand on Luydenhoek Isle near the Nederbrug Bridge. Doktor Haamhand usually gives a discount to members of the Watch (1 Gu per visit paid by the Watch Captain) and those they refer (1 Gu, 10 shillings). His office is reasonably clean and his student, Birgitte van Westenmoeras, assists him.

The staff of the Shipwrecked Tavern will send their customers (mostly those who have the misfortune of being within the reach of Olaf when he explodes) to the local herbalist, Halfling Samuel Branmuffin. Located just a couple of blocks upriver on Sikkeleiland Isle, Sam maintains an immaculate workshop filled with aromatic herbs and spices.

During the afternoon, rumours begin to circulate the Suiddock regarding the previous night. The PCs will pick up some of the following throughout the remainder of the day:

- "I hear that the fires were set by ORDESA to cover their uprising."
- "Did you hear that the ORDESA leaders fled to Bretonnia to escape the Black Caps? Bloody cowards!"
- "I tell you, you can't trust anybody. I heard that the ORDESA leaders have

reached an agreement with the Directorate to stop the bloodshed."

- "I'll wager you five shillings that members of the Ward Council secretly belong to ORDESA and fled with them."
- "I've heard that mansions north of the Rijk were torched and the guards slain."
- "Believe me when I say that anarchists from Bretonnia were behind the fires. They're no doubt in league with the Sigmarites in Altdorf."
- "I'll tell ya what I think. It was the Fen Loonies who snuck across from Doodkanaal. They've sought revenge on Marienburg for years."
- "Smugglers will be happy. Word has it that the River Watch lost several vessels during the fire."
- "Several Black Cap barracks went up in flames and a number of Black Caps slain, so my brother-in-law tells me."
- "Listen, looting occurred all over the city during the fires. Makes it unlikely that you'll be caught, don't it."
- "At least we weren't the only ones to suffer. I've heard tales that a number of the Stadtholder's own men were slain. Most likely ORDESA or some gang killed them."
- "The joke is that the garrison has been moved to the richer districts to help the Black Caps there restore some order. That'll be the day. All other Wards and their Black Caps are left to their own devices. Lucky for them."

If the PCs have shown no interest in heading to the White Shoal Café, a young girl runs up to the PCs sometime late in the afternoon of Bezahltag. "Ere, sirs, a woman paid me to give this to you." The letter is folded twice on rather non-descript, but well-made paper. The cloth is actually a silk handkerchief with a stylised "R" surrounded by a bed of tulips embroidered in royal blue thread. The lass knows



nothing of the design of the handkerchief, but does stay awaiting for some payment. Five pennies will do. She doesn't have a description of the woman since the woman had a dark cloak and her hood pulled well over her eyes and her hair was hidden. If asked where she met the woman, the girl points back a few streets, "Over there." There is no one standing there at the moment. Any attempt by the PCs to track down the elusive woman will fail.

The note (Player Handout Seven) states the following:

*Did you realise that Walewijn Droomer, leader of ORDESA, had an appointment to meet an important individual tonight? Are you interested? It is to be at the White Shoal Café on Hightower Isle near the foot of the Hoogbrug Bridge at dusk. Don't be late.*

### The White Shoal Café

PCs arriving at the White Shoal Café, located at the waterfront near the foot of the Hoogbrug Bridge, will notice that the place is closed tight. Closer inspection reveals that the windows are shuttered and the doors locked.

Should the PCs ask around, the White Shoal was closed a couple of days ago by the nervous owner who decided that a holiday was in order. Things have also been slow on Hightower Isle as the 'Change has been virtually shut down by all the recent troubles. Only the Watch patrols have been in evidence in their attempts at keeping the peace. If any are asked about van Rugkil, the only response the PCs will get is that van Rugkil is one of the merchant families who lives across the Hoogbrug with "the rest of his kind."

Shortly before dusk the rain begins to fall. Any PC with a background as a Ranger or Cleric of Taal will realise the storm is going to last all night with only an occasional respite. The rain will steadily pour and reduce visibility to about 10 yards during the remainder of daylight. The PCs can find a sheltered area where they can observe the café and remain fairly dry or they can break into the White Shoal and await van Rugkil's arrival.

Assuming that the PCs choose the first option, they will see no activity from within the White Shoal until minutes before seven. At that time the door to the café will open from the inside. Within the White Shoal are three Clan Eshin Night Runner assassins waiting for the PCs - whom the Skaven

believe to be Walewijn Droomer and his escort - to enter.

The Skaven were sent by van Rugkil's associates to capture the ORDESA leader and his woman as well as exterminate his associates. Since Humans closely resemble one another to Skaven eyes, the Night Runners will try to capture the male PC who most resembles Walewijn and any female PC with dark-coloured hair. If that task is too risky for the Skaven, they attempt to kill everyone. Should they be losing the battle anytime after three rounds, the Skaven will use any means of escaping. In the event they capture a PC, the Skaven will drag their captive through the secret door near the cellar to the adjacent canal. From there, it's a small walk to a sewer outlet, which leads (after several twists and turns) to one of the few Skaven openings into Marienburg's sewers. Should the PCs try to flee, the Skaven will not give chase. The Night Runners' response would be to toss poisoned throwing stars into the PCs' cowardly backs. They could then follow the PCs at leisure and slit their throats.

Any attempt to set up their own ambush inside the White Shoal is doomed to failure unless the PCs first check out the layout of the café. The front door leads to a dining area where the tables and chairs are set as if the café was ready to open. Most of those along the wall are partitioned from one

another for added privacy. A podium stands next to the door upon which a book labelled "Reservations" sits closed. Anyone with knowledge of the upper crust of Marienburg society will recognise several names (van der Kuypers, among others). As the book only covers the previous month, there is no mention of van Rugkil on any page. The pages with the previous two days and the next five have a red slash across each and are marked 'Cancelled'. On the far wall is a double door (middle) and a single door (to the far left). The single door is marked 'Latrine'.

The double doors lead to a large kitchen area. Everything is clean and in its proper place and there are enough spices to make a Halfling pause. Two other doors exit the kitchen. One in the rear wall is locked from this side and opens to a balcony with a staircase leading to the docks below. The right door leads to a staircase. Upstairs are the living quarters of the owner, his family, and several employees (nothing of interest or much value there). Downstairs leads to a landing before continuing down to another closed door. Through this door is the cellar that is cut into the bedrock and serves as a meat locker. At the landing is a secret door leading to the adjacent canal. It is through this door that the Skaven enter.

If the PCs have not discovered the secret door before the Skaven enter, then the Night

### Skaven Clan Eshin Night Runner Assassins

**Alignment:** Chaos (Horned Rat)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	63	55	4	4	13	70	4	54	44	44	38	49	34

**Skills:** Concealment Rural, Concealment Urban, Disguise, Follow Trail, Marksmanship, Prepare Poisons, Scale Sheer Surface, Shadowing, Silent Move Rural, Silent Move Urban, Specialist Weapon-Net, Specialist Weapon-Parrying, Specialist Weapon-Throwing Knives, Specialist Weapon-Throwing Stars, Strike Mighty Blow

**Possessions:** Mail shirt under dark clothing, sword, Skaven assassin dagger (If wounded, victim must make an immediate **Poison** test or be paralysed for 2D6 rounds), 2 Skaven throwing stars (R 4/8/20, ES C, Rld 1 round. Poison as dagger), Garrotte

Clan Eshin Night Runners are the Skaven assassins who are often active at night. Their main role is to slay foes in dark places, infiltrate enemy cities, sow fear in their enemies, and prepare the way.



## PART THREE TIMELINE

Adv. Day	Week Day	Event	Section
9	Bezahstag	Proposed Meeting between Droomer and van Rugkil	"The White Shoal Cafe" "At the Great Library"
10	Guilstag (Konistag)	Small fire at the Great Library during the early morning. Man found slain in the stacks. Skaven bands attack Marienburg from the sewers and hidden tunnels during the foggy night. The whole city is on fire.	"Confrontation"

Runners achieve surprise and the fight proceeds. Should the PCs discover the secret door (on a successful **Search** test), they may conclude that something unpleasant could come through there. Even if the Skaven are surprised, they will still try to complete their mission.

### Into the Sewers

No matter which exit the Skaven take they will try to cross the adjacent canal. This means that they must descend the patio stairs to the docks below (unless they left through the secret door) and proceed over a footbridge crossing the canal. Fifteen yards from the canal is the sewer opening.

Chasing after the Skaven in the rain creates some problems. Modification to the chase rules (See WS23, pg. 32) should include applying a modifier of -10 to any **I** tests in order for quarry and pursuer to maintain their footing, as the cobblestones are wet and the footing treacherous. Thirty yards within the sewer is the opening of the Skaven tunnel. As it's set a few feet above the 2ft wide sewer walkway, the tunnel is dry and the modifications to the **I** tests no longer needed. The other considerations for the chase are:

- Heavily wounded Skaven and those burdened with a captive (if any) will be slower (-2 generally) than their base **M** score. Any burdened Skaven will be easier to keep in sight (+10 modifier to pursuer's **I**).
- The rain limits visibility (-10 modifier to pursuer's **I** if pursued moves further than 15 yards).

Once they've entered the sewer, the PCs need light. With light they see a number of small (3ft wide) sewer lines emptying into this major line. Most of these drain right beneath the walkway while a few drop from above. The main sewer is anything but straight causing the effluent to pool during drier times. With the rain, most of the sewage is washed away.

At other times, the secret door of the Skaven would be unnoticed by any wandering through the sewers. Due to their haste and wounds, the Skaven do not take the time to properly close the door. PCs have no trouble finding it. They find the 6 to 7ft high tunnel roughly cut in the bedrock and of shoddy workmanship. Support beams are thrown up in a number of places with an occasional one looking as if it may give at any moment. Anyone with the *Mining* skill may test vs. **Int** (+20 for Dwarfs) to recognise that the tunnel is descending deeper under Marienburg as it twists and turns.

After several minutes, the PCs hear angry voices around the next bend. Any PC sneaking will hear the conversation on a successful **Listen** test (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) for normal sound. Those who sneak a peek see a large man in dark clothing speaking to the Skaven who recently fought the PCs. The man is Oldrick Sterkarm, one of van Rugkil's men. He can be seen holding a lantern in one hand while the other remains at the ready. The PCs may spot a royal blue "R" on the back of his brown gauntlets on a successful **Observe** test (+10 for *Excellent Vision*).

If the Skaven captured a PC (or two), then the captive will be bound at their feet. The argument between the man and one of the Skaven will generally be as follows:

"Damn your rat-eyes! This is not the one you were sent to capture. He (or she) doesn't remotely resemble the description you were given."

"Manthings looklook same. It closest! No others!"

"My boss and your boss made a pact regarding the man (and woman) you were sent to bring in. You didn't get the job done. Now there's going to be hell to pay."

"Manthings too tough. Needneed more Skaven finish them. What about this one? Taketake your master?"

"Won't do any good. Just kill them and be done with it."

Any delay on the PC's part, like planning the rescue, will result in the captive's death. If the PCs insist on taking their time, a few loud screams of pain from the captive(s) may bring them to their senses. Otherwise, the man turns to leave while the Skaven slowly and sadistically kill their prisoners.

If the Skaven failed to capture a PC, the following is the course of the conversation:

"Damn your rat hide! Where are the ones you were sent to capture?"

"Manthings too tough. Needneed more Skaven to capture one and killkill others."

"My boss and your boss made a pact regarding the man (and woman) you were sent to bring in. You didn't get the job done. Now there's going to be hell to pay."

"Manthing wantwant other manthings? You do."

“No time to show you how to get it done right. I have to report this failure. Make sure you closed the way in here.”

The man turns to leave further down the tunnel while one of the Skaven stares at his back and makes stabbing motions. The Night Runners then turn and head back towards the secret door and straight into the waiting PCs.

Should the PCs attack at any point, Oldrick and his Skaven allies will try to retreat down the tunnel. Their objective is to reach a nearby, hidden lever with which to trigger a cave-in blocking the tunnel between them and the PCs. The Skaven tactic is simple: block the PCs from going further down the tunnel until their Human ally and one of the Night Runners succeed in triggering the cave-in. Once the passage has been effectively blocked, those Night Runners still alive will try to flee past the PCs to the safety of the sewers. If the PCs get past the Skaven, or target their Human ally with some sort of spell, they will get a chance to meet van Rugkil's champion, Oldrick Sterkarm. Oldrick's primary goal at this point is to elude capture. If that possibility is denied to him, he will do all he can to eliminate his foe. No matter what happens, Oldrick or one of the Skaven will succeed in triggering a cave-in to block the PCs.

### Warning

After battling the Skaven, PCs may seek the Suiddock Watch to warn them of the Chaos Ratmen's involvement. They have a 5% cumulative chance per round of finding a patrol. Given that it's night, raining, and many places are in ruins, the City Watch may not be in the mood for wild stories of creatures invading from the sewers nor talk of hidden tunnels. Without any direct proof, PCs must pass a **Fel-30** test to convince the Watch patrol that something serious is going on. A failure by more than 30 results in the Watch believing that the PCs are either paranoid fools (at best) or troublemakers (at worse).

Nevertheless, all Suiddock Watch patrols have been told to keep an eye out for the PCs and escort them to the Watch Barracks. Their presence has been requested - and that is all this patrol knows.

Soaking wet from the rain, the PCs enter a Barracks in disarray. A number of Suiddockers are at the front desk demanding that the duty Watchman and his fellows do

### Oldrick Sterkarm

**Judicial Champion, ex-Mercenary, ex-Protagonist**

**Height:** 6 ft 3 in

**Weight:** 210 lbs.

**Hair:** Black

**Eyes:** Brown

**Age:** 34

**Alignment:** Neutral (None)



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Ban

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	66	41	4	4	11	52	3	39	44	43	54	37	44

**Skills:** Ambidextrous, Animal Care, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Public Speaking, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle Tongue, Specialist Weapon-Fencing, Specialist Weapon-Fist, Specialist Weapon-Flail, Specialist Weapon-Lasso, Specialist Weapon-Net, Specialist Weapon-Parrying, Specialist Weapon-Two-Handed, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun

**Possessions:** Mail shirt under tunic, vambraces, sword, gauntlets embroidered with the van Rugkil "R", and purse (20 Gu, 40/4).

Tired of spending days patrolling the Grey Mountains for the Imperial army, Oldrick returned to Marienburg in hope of securing more suitable and pleasurable work. At first, he enjoyed picking fights with those upper class snobs who slumped in the Suiddock with their bodyguards. Money was easy then, but soon he became too well known and most people shied away from him. With the loss of income, the foul-tempered Oldrick took out his frustrations on the Suiddock low-lives. His reputation as a troublemaker became well known to the Suiddock Watch and he spent many a night in jail. During one such night, Alfons van Rugkil arranged for Oldrick's bail and hired him to be his personal champion. Since then, he has become a confidant and close personal friend.

more to protect them and their businesses. There are few Watchmen here to contain the group should they become more than just boisterous.

The PCs are then escorted to a back office. Seated behind the desk is a man in a dark brown trench coat with an aquiline nose, icy blue eyes, and receding brown-grey hair. Upon their entry, the man removes his wide brim hat from the desktop and, if they have a Skaven body, motions them to place the corpse there. The man then introduces himself as Reiner Derschakal. Before he answers any of the PCs' questions, Reiner asks each of them their names and how they came to be involved with the current situation in Marienburg. As he obtained access to Kuilstier's files (though he may reluctantly reveal that fact), Reiner does know everyone's names already, but needs to put a face to them.

The PCs may be unwilling to confide in Reiner without more information. All Reiner divulges is that he has been hired by "someone influential" to determine whether

the PCs could be trusted with sensitive information and act with utmost discretion. Reiner does not respond to further questioning until the PCs answer all of his questions.

Reiner's job is to get a detailed, exacting account of the PCs' actions, suspicions, and understanding of the situation. Intelligent, Reiner quickly leaps on any inconsistency in the PCs' story with further questions. After a grilling interrogation, he tells the PCs that his employer has authorized him to hire them for a specific task. Reiner refuses to give details at this time. His only stated concern is whether or not the PCs are interested. As a matter of fact, whatever the PCs divulge of their knowledge is more than Reiner thought they could achieve. He knows that he will need time to come up with a plan and make the proper arrangements to eliminate the threat the PCs represent.

If they are interested, Reiner tells them to be in the basement area of the Great Library of Verena furthest from the stairs at



noon tomorrow (Guilstag). There they can discuss the details regarding the task and their compensation. Reiner then tosses the PCs a glove with an "R" surrounded by a bed of tulips, all of which is embroidered in royal blue. He informs the PCs that the glove was found at the scene of a fire in the warehouse district on Luydenhoek Isle. He then instructs the PCs to bring the glove with them. Reiner closes the meeting by asking the PCs to excuse him and motions to them to exit.

If the PCs recognise the royal blue "R" as being the same that they observed on Oldrick's glove, they might be inclined to mention this little fact to Reiner in the Watch Barracks. Reiner will express interest and urge the PCs to tell him everything they know about the man who had the glove. He re-iterates his desire to meet with the PCs at the Great Library with more information. At this point, Reiner concludes the meeting and leaves. He will discourage the PCs from accompanying him, should they ask. If need be, Reiner will tell them that he has made other, personal arrangements for the evening.

There is a small chance that the PCs might decide to attack Reiner if they assume that he's more involved than he is letting on. This is not a good idea and  $d6+2$  Watch will appear in the next round to break up the fight. Reiner should be able to survive the altercation that long. On the other hand, the PCs might decide to deal with Reiner outside the Barracks where they will have room to manoeuvre. If the PCs decide to shadow the elusive Reiner then he easily shakes them off.

If the PCs return to the Watch Barracks and ask about Reiner Derschakal, only the Duty Sergeant knows of him. All he knows is that the man arrived around 7:30 PM with a demand from the House of van der Kuypers that anyone reporting an unusual story about mutant abominations walking the streets of the Suiddock should be led to the van der Kuypers' representative immediately. The demand letter is a clever forgery, and the story of being van der Kuypers' representative is just a cover for Reiner. This type of request is unusual, but not unheard of in this city. The Sergeant will be able to recall the seal, which was blue wax with an "R", surrounded by tulips and the van der Kuypers name. Characters with the *Heraldry* skill will recognise that the seal is not one associated with the House

of van der Kuypers.

As the PCs turn to leave, the Duty Sergeant tells them that "a hooded lady" had asked about them when they were in the back room. When told that the PCs were meeting with someone, the lady quickly departed without another word. If the PCs ask the Sergeant for a description, he replies that she did not take her hood off but she seemed young and had dark brown hair. She also had a Bretonnian accent.

#### At the Great Library

PCs will head to the Great Library following up on one of many leads or arriving to meet Reiner and his employer. If they arrive after Guilstag, then see below.

One of the largest libraries in the Old World, the Great Library is located next to the Cathedral of Verena. It is opened during daylight hours for the general public. Clerics of Verena can access the Library at any time of day or night. Those who are not followers of Verena must donate at least 1 Gu to gain entry (less well-to-do individuals, such as students, are only required to donate 5 shillings). An initiate sits at a desk near the large double doors to ensure that the proper donation is made and information regarding the name of the individual and the purpose of their visit is recorded. Heavily armed PCs will not be allowed to enter.

Just browsing the title of books will take over two weeks, as there are three floors (including the basement). The initiate can direct them to the part of the Library where information regarding the Great Merchant Families of Marienburg can be found. There are volumes of books on the topic and it will take  $d6+4$  hours to quickly scan them.  $D3+4$  hours of subsequent research yields the following information on the van Rugkils:

- A coat of arms with a royal blue "R" on a silver field of tulips was registered to the newly influential van Rugkil family four years ago.
- Edward van Rugkil's business skill greatly improved the family fortune.
- The van Rugkils moved into the old van Rijksbodem mansion in the Goudberg district seven years ago.
- The van Rugkil House threatened to displace one of the Great Merchant Families on the Directorate until tragedy struck the family.
- Four years ago, eldest daughter Caroline

and her husband Herman Bokherder brutally murdered her father and mother, Edward and Anna van Rugkil, as well as her younger brother Willem. The youngest daughter Elisabeth went missing, presumed dead. Only the eldest son, Alfons, escaped their tragic fate.

- Caroline's death sentence was commuted to life on Rijker's Isle while her husband was executed by hanging.
- With Alfons at the helm, the van Rugkil family fortune began to wane. His petition to join the Directorate was denied unanimously.

By Guilstag morning, the rain clouds have cleared. By late afternoon, a mist begins to rise about Marienburg. Natives know that the city will be shrouded in fog throughout the night. If the PCs arrive at the Great Library before noon, they will find a couple of Watchmen standing on either side of the door, barring anyone from entering.

If the PCs approach the door of the Great Library, one of the Watchmen tells them, "Sorry, but the Library is closed until noon. Come back later." Unless the PCs can prove that they are in good standing with the Suiddock Watch, they are unlikely to get any response other than "move along." Should the PCs prove their connections, the Watchmen will tell them that one of the library's clerks died of a seizure in the early morning hours, while working. The Verenan priests are currently busy clearing the damage made by the old man's death throes.

The fact of the matter is that Reiner Derschakal slipped into the library before dawn and slipped a narcotic in the old man's tea, which then caused the seizure. This enabled him to freely scout and set up the location where he is to meet the PCs without interference. Unfortunately for Reiner, his actions have not gone unnoticed.

Dimly lit, the basement is stacked with books on a large number of subjects. Interspersed among these stacks are small desks with chairs and unlit oil lamps (unless the desk is otherwise occupied). Aisles criss-cross the stacks at irregular intervals. PCs without the *Orientation* skill and travelling alone need to make periodic **Int** tests to avoid getting lost.

In the far corner is a desk with an open book and a dimly lit oil lamp. Behind the desk is a man dressed in black apparently asleep. The PCs recognise the man as Reiner and realise that he is nit breathing. Examination of the cold body reveals a thin



### Reiner Derschakal, Assassin, ex-Mercenary, ex-Bounty Hunter

**Height:** 5 ft 9 in

**Weight:** 160 lbs.

**Hair:** Brown-Grey

**Eyes:** Icy Blue

**Age:** 42

**Alignment:** Neutral (Mórr, leaning towards Kháine)

**Traits:** Broken teeth, aquiline nose



M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	61	60	4	5	12	59	4	64	51	51	54	54	36

**Skills:** Animal Care, Concealment-Rural, Concealment-Urban, Dance, Disarm, Disguise, Dodge Blow, Drive Cart, Follow Trail, Marksmanship, Prepare Poisons, Ride-Horse, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Language-Battle Tongue, Shadowing, Silent Move-Rural, Silent Move-Urban, Specialist Weapon-Blowpipe, Specialist Weapon-Fist, Specialist Weapon-Flail, Specialist Weapon-Lasso, Specialist Weapon-Net, Specialist Weapon-Parrying, Specialist Weapon-Throwing Knife, Specialist Weapon-Two-Handed, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Stun

**Possessions:** Mail shirt under tunic, sword, garrotte, 4 throwing knives, pair of manacles, dark brown trench coat, wide-brimmed hat, and purse.

Cold-hearted, unemotional, and efficient, Reiner was once a rising star in the Middenheim-based Schwarzmantel, a small organisation whose goal is to ferret out and discreetly remove hidden cultists and other enemies of Middenheim and The Empire. One day, he became involved in a power struggle within the organisation. The ensuing scandal cost Reiner his position and made him a marked man. Knowing his days were numbered, Reiner faked his own death, covered his tracks, and fled to Marienburg. Unfortunately, money was short, so he needed employment. Reiner managed to gain an interview with Alfons van Rugkil (who was looking for someone who could perform unsavoury acts with discretion). Reiner is paid exceptionally well for his talents, which ensures his loyalty.

red garrotte line across his neck.

Searching the area reveals two clues. The first is a lady's glove with a delicate "R" embroidered in royal blue surrounded by tulips on the back of it. The pattern matches exactly with the glove that Reiner gave them earlier. The second clue is a note in the book. It reads (Player handout 8):

*You waste time. This lackey's intent is to lead you astray or kill you. The real problem resides in the Goudberg district. Meet me at the Gullible Gull Tavern on the northern side of Luydenhoek Isle an hour after sunset. Ask the barkeep for Private Room ten. He'll escort you there for a 10d tip. A friend*

Though the PCs have no way of knowing, Reiner Derschakal had intended to send them to the Tilean quarter with the message "We were sent by your friend Pierre to do a job" to deliver to the local crime lord there. The local crime lord, Benito Gatti, had already been warned through Reiner's

connections that brazen assassins hired by the Bretonnian crime lord, Pierre Chirac, would come to kill him after uttering those words.

The PCs may wonder whether their "friend" is truly so and who it is. The PCs have to decide what they want to do about the murdered Reiner. If they take the note and body to the local Watch, there is a risk that the Tempelwijk Watch may not recognise the PCs' association with the Suiddock Watch as having any official standing. Alleged murderers are usually locked up until the Watch can check their stories.

If they leave the dead man where he is, there is a risk that Priestess Mirjam could identify them as the last ones in the basement should Reiner's corpse be found. If not hidden, someone will discover the deceased Reiner within three hours. Luckily, there are a number of places among the stacks to hide the corpse should the PCs just

take a moment. Hidden, Reiner will be discovered in five hours.

If the PCs take the course of informing the Priestess about Reiner's death, Mirjam requests the PCs to stay put while she seeks the Watch ("After all, they'll probably have lots of questions...").

### Where Did the Time Go?

Whether through their efforts or by accident, the PCs may have obtained the name of van Rugkil and the fact that he lives in the Goudberg district. Other than staking out the merchant's home [see **Confrontation** below], PCs may try to learn more.

Information will be hard to get in the short period of time the PCs have. What follows are some of the sources the PCs might wish to try.

**Other merchants:** Most of those with personal experience of the van Rugkils can be found in the Guildveld district. Many of the merchants are those who make enough profit to live comfortably with the well-to-do. Unless one of the PCs come from this class, information will be hard to come by and a -20 modifier to any **Fel** test would be appropriate. The merchants know the official story of the tragedy that befell the family years ago. They know Caroline is languishing on Ryker's Isle and that Alfons does not have the talent to last much longer.

**The Watch:** Except in the Goudberg district, the typical Watchman knows nothing of the van Rugkils and their deaths four years ago. The Goudberg Watch is unlikely to talk about the subject unless they are well bribed (five or more Guilders) and they meet in private. Despite the low opinion the average Watchman has concerning the rich, they realise that a less than diplomatic response to questions could land them in serious trouble. Most of the older Watch know some details about the murder of the elder van Rugkil and his wife, and that the perpetrators were convicted and sent to Rijker's.

**The Courts:** Unless the PC is a lawyer in good standing in Marienburg, prying information from the Courts could be very expensive (minimum bribe would be 10 Gus). The information that the PCs can glean from research in the Great Library (see above) can be obtained from the Courts, except the current status of the van Rugkil fortune.

**Employees:** This would be a difficult

avenue to pursue, as one would have to know where to look. The Guildervelt district might be a good start, as would the 'Change in Hightower Isle. Unfortunately, the latter is closed. Should the PCs be lucky to find an employee of the van Rugkils, that individual refuses to speak openly. Given the petty vengeance the "boss" will likely seek, employees are only willing to speak in private and for a sizeable bribe. Unfortunately, the information they have only paints van Rugkil as having little business acumen, given to periodic bouts of paranoia and delusions of grandeur.

**Friends:** These are tougher to find than employees as van Rugkil's greed and incompetence has ruined any friendship that his father cultivated. Most merchant houses are waiting for van Rugkil to fall into total ruin so they can pick up the remainder of his mercantile interests cheaply.

**Caroline van Rugkil:** The PCs would have to be very well connected to be able to interview Caroline at Rijkjer's Isle at such a short notice. Requests to talk to the convicted generally take anywhere from one to six months just to get a response from the Warden of Rijkjer's Isle. The speed of the reply is directly proportional to the size of the bribery (starting price is 10 Gus). Should the PCs succeed in this endeavour, they will find Caroline bitter and broken. She can barely hold a civil conversation without breaking down in tears. Any mention of Alfons will be met with unrelenting anger. Caroline is certain "that pig is behind it. He was always a schemer and a worthless slime. If I could, I would kill him with my own two hands." Exhausted by the outburst, Caroline is reduced to sobbing and muttering to herself.

### **With a Little Help from My Friend**

The Gullible Gull is a typical Suiddock dive where the low-life denizens of the area congregate throughout the day. The atmosphere of the low-ceilinged common room is smoked-filled with an unpleasant "tangy" odour and the floor is covered with sawdust to soak up the various fluids pooling on the floor. Unless they are native Suiddockers who frequent such dives, the PCs are well advised not to order the rotgut that passes for whisky in this establishment. Many of the (surviving) patrons have built up a tolerance for the vile drink over the years. They have also developed the ability to ignore the crusted tankards in which

drinks are served. Although potent, the ale is among the worse tasting brew in the entire ward.

The proprietor of the Gullible Gull, Adriaan Aardappelneus is a huge, sweaty beast of a man who has a disgusting habit of working the bar naked from the waist up. His back and chest are covered with matted black hair and his body odour repulsive. Still he thinks himself a ladies man and will openly flirt with any female.

When asked about Private Room ten, Adriaan will scoff and hold out his hand. There it remains until the PCs have given him at least 10d. Once tipped, Adriaan will bare his yellow teeth in a smile and point to a door in the far corner saying, "So yer 'ere to see da young, sweet lass wit' 'ard steel in 'and, eh? Mark me, she's a crafty one, she is. Mind yer manners or I'll deal wit' youse personally. By da way, she left me dese ta give youse." He then hands them a note and key. The note (Player handout 9) states:

*You've been careless. Since early afternoon, those seeking to overrun the city have followed you. They are in league with another who craves power and will resort to vile means to achieve that goal. This key will permit you entry into the nest of corruption, if you do so with stealth. I cannot be any clearer than this nor dare I risk any further contact with you. Of course, my employer may deem otherwise should you eliminate the first obstacle mentioned.*

Any PC who has a previous career as a Locksmith or who has the *Pick Lock* skill will realise that the key is for a more complicated lock than what one would normally find in a district like the Suiddock.

Once on the streets, the PCs will most likely want to confront those following them. Any credible plan to ambush their pursuers will work, especially given the cover of fog. From their vantage point, the PCs will see two figures in long trench coats and wearing wide-brimmed hats emerge from the direction they just came. At first, all the PCs can see is that both figures are somewhat hunched over. Both then stop and tilt their heads as if listening for something. If the PCs stay silent, the two move swiftly in an attempt to find their missing quarry. This is the point for the PCs to spring their ambush on the two unsuspecting Skaven Gutter Runners.

The PCs' attack may surprise the two Skaven, but only momentarily. The

Ratmen's task was to follow the PCs to determine whether they would be obstacles to the unfolding scheme. If the PCs were a potential problem, the Skaven assassins were to eliminate however many they can. Only if the PCs were too strong would the two Skaven seek to escape to the sewers below. Under no circumstances will the Skaven allow themselves to be taken prisoner, as they fear that their Warlord might think that they have squeaked the Skaven's intent to the manthings. In the unlikely event that the PCs wish to speak with the Skaven instead of attacking, the Gutter Runners will retreat to the sewers, baffled by such a reaction.

Once the Skaven have been removed, a figure wearing a hooded cloak steps out of the shadows of a nearby doorway. Pulling off her hood, the plain-looking young woman says in a Bretonnian accent, "My name is Giselle Bouvier. My employer, Mademoiselle Blaubloem, wishes to make your acquaintance. As time is of the essence, I will lead you to her. Please follow me."

The PCs may demand some proof that Giselle is not leading them into a trap. "Non, good people, my Mademoiselle means you no harm. She has some information that she believes you'd want to know. Mademoiselle was the one who contracted Monsieur Boekarts to hire you".

This may not be enough to placate the PCs. If they persist in questioning their guide, Giselle simply says, "I appreciate your concern. I can assure you that I am unarmed (other than with this paltry dagger) and am entirely at your mercy. So, if I can trust you with my safety, surely you can trust me. If this is difficult for you to accept, then I'll be on my way so I can report this disappointment to Mademoiselle at the Ravenswing Inn." Without looking back, Giselle heads towards Hightower Isle. If the PCs follow her, then all is well. If not, then they're on their own.

### **Plot Revealed**

The Ravenswing Inn is located in the part of the Paleisbuurt district closest to the Goudberg district. The PCs should be able to get across the Hoogbrug Bridge within twenty minutes or so after leaving the scene where they fought the Skaven. Even on foggy nights such as this, the nightlife in the Paleisbuurt district is lively. Finding someone to give directions to the Ravenswing Inn is easy if the PCs had opted



to come to this part of Marienburg without Giselle Bouvier. The difficulty for the PCs is to give the appearance that they have legitimate business here. Looking like they have just come from a fight will only arouse suspicion and probably a call to the Watch (or Garrison as they are helping the Watch in the wealthy districts) to toss these “low class scum” out.

The PCs find the Ravenswing Inn a brightly lit, three-storey white building with light blue trim. Its grounds are well maintained and surrounded by a low wrought iron fence. The Ravenswing’s location on the thoroughfare leading to the Oostenpoort Gate (and hence the Middenheim Road beyond) is ideal for attracting fairly wealthy guests.

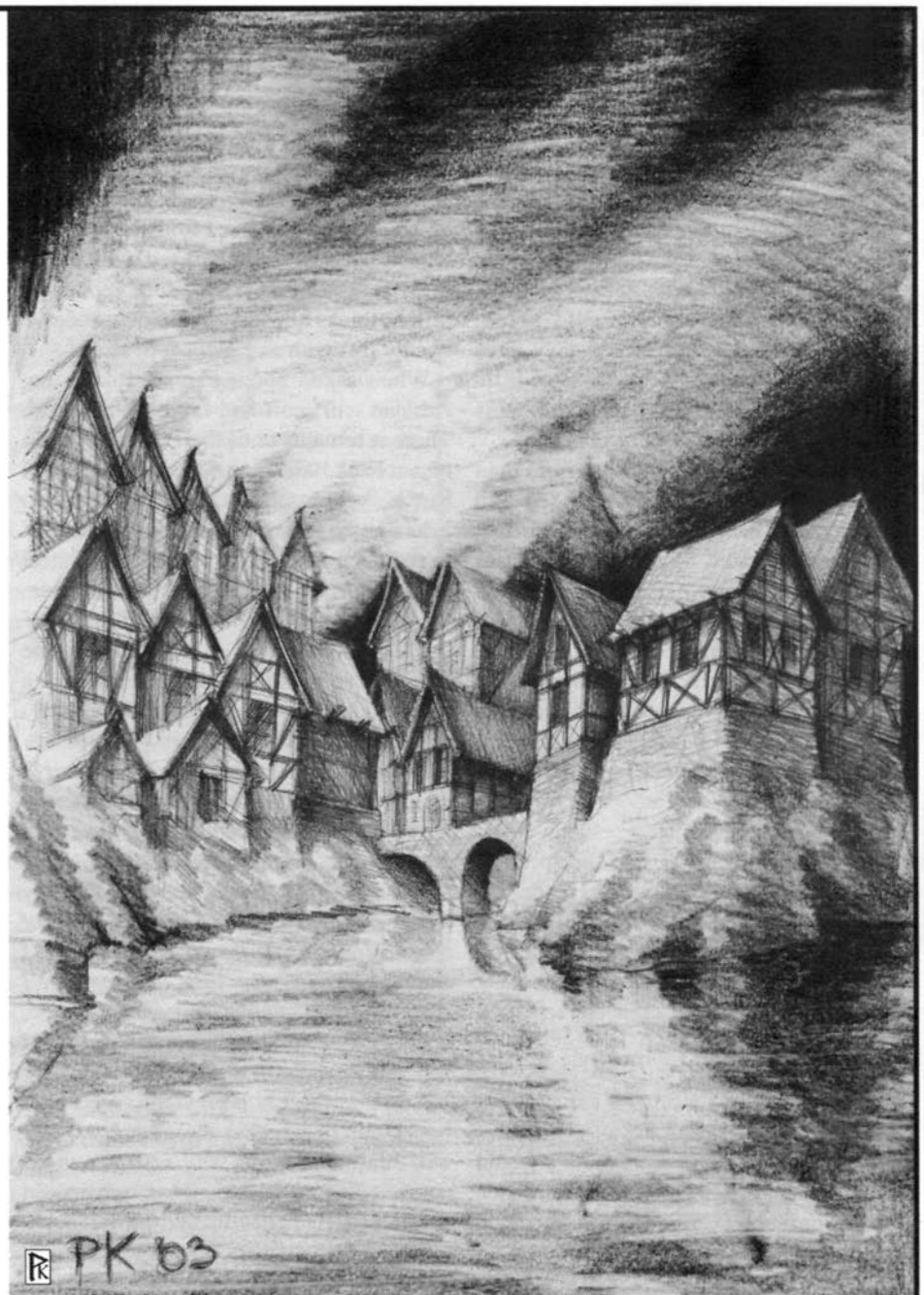
If the PCs are with Giselle, she knocks on the door. Innkeeper Corine Blijhuis greets Giselle who states that they have business with Mademoiselle. At the top of the stairs she knocks on the door before opening it to admit the PCs.

If the PCs came alone, then they must satisfy Corine’s inquiries. Once they have done so, the Innkeeper escorts them to Juffrouw Blaubloem’s room. Corine knocks on the door to announce the PCs before permitting them to enter.

The PCs enter a sitting room. There is a door located on the right wall (presumably to a bedroom) and a window on the far wall. The room is furnished with a couple of couches and several small tables. Decanters of a brownish liquid and glasses sit on the tables. In the far left corner sits a young and attractive woman with dark brown hair and blue eyes, and wearing an elegant dark green dress trimmed with white lace. Giselle will conduct the introduction of the PCs to her mistress before inviting the PCs to be seated and asking if they would like a glass of brandy.

“No doubt you are wondering why I wanted to meet with you, not to mention who I am and what I know. If you will indulge me by withholding your questions, I hope to address most of your concerns as I relate my tale. If I do not, feel free to inquire after you’ve considered what I’ve said.

“Suffice to say, I’m someone who is very concerned about what’s happening to my city. The fact that you’ve had an encounter with Skaven supports my view that something nefarious is afoot. An overly ambitious merchant, one Alfons van Rugkil,



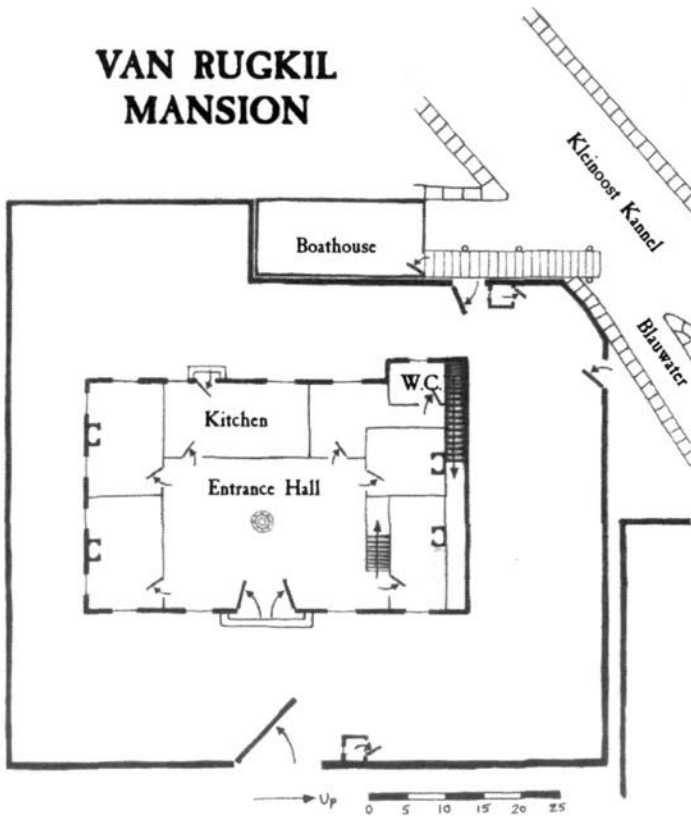
has entered into an unholy alliance with those foul creatures for the sole purpose of acquiring wealth, power, and position. I have learned that his first nefarious act was to have his father and other family members eliminated so that only he would inherit the family fortune. His ambition was nothing less than gaining a position on the city’s Directorate. Unfortunately, his mercantile and political skills were far less than his father’s and his bid failed.

“So, van Rugkil has turned to the Skaven once again to assist him. Most likely, the fool believes he can control the forces he helped unleash. As you’ve no doubt surmised, it is only a matter of time before

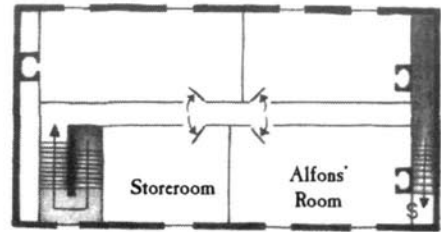
the Skaven burst through hidden tunnels. Who knows how Marienburg will weather such an invasion?

“You’re probably wondering, ‘why didn’t she go to the authorities?’ Simply put, they wouldn’t believe such a tale to be true: too incredible to their way of thinking, after all. They’re far more concerned with something more frightening, closer to home. Namely, the lower classes that radical demagogues like (the late) Walewijn Droomer can easily sway. Oh yes, I do know about your hand in the demise of the anarchist ORDESA organisation. Let’s just say that I have my sources. You might be interested to know that van Rugkil provided financial support

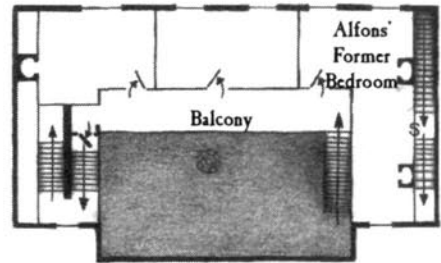
# VAN RUGKIL MANSION



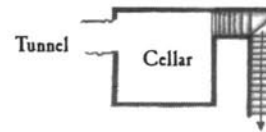
GROUND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



CELLAR

to ORDESA for reasons I have not fathomed.

“One of my employees, Mijnheer Boekarts, hired you to delve into some of the unusual events that have plagued this city of late. He also believed that you would be capable of completing a task for me when the proper time came. I assure you that I have the means to reward each of you handsomely. The task is simply to put an end to Alfons van Rugkil’s schemes in whatever manner that you see fit. All I ask is that you be discreet and bring me back evidence of your effort. The key I had provided for you earlier opens a little used gate on the side canal to the old van Rijksbodem mansion. That’s van Rugkil’s residence on the middle island in the Goudberg district.”

As this point, vigilant PCs looking out the window will notice a couple of men armed with crossbows taking up positions on the ground outside Emma Blaubloem’s flat. If the PCs wait, they will hear the front door kicked in a few moments later, followed by a scream cut short from Corine Blijhuis and angry voices. Ever suspicious, the late Reiner Derschakal had followed

Giselle the night he met the PCs to the Ravenswing Inn. He did not have the time to determine what her connection to the PCs was and didn’t care. He had a short time to arrange the elimination of any potential threat, so he arranged for a number of mercenaries from van Rugkil’s force to attack the Inn and capture the two women living in the room in the back corner of the top floor.

Not taking a chance of any slip-ups, the mercenaries have arrived in numbers. There are four positioned outside the inn while the other eight move to capture the two women they are seeking. They will kill all who prevent them from carrying out this task. Fortunately for Corine Blijhuis, the mercenaries only saw fit to knock her out.

## Mercenaries

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
4	43	40	4	3	9	39
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
2	29	39	29	39	29	29

**Equipment:** Sword, Leather jack. Those outside also have crossbows.

Unknown to the PCs (and the late Reiner Derschakal), Emma Blaubloem is really Elisabeth van Rugkil. While her concern for Marienburg is real, her true motivation is vengeance against her brother and she will use any means possible. Fate brought the PCs to her attention. Elisabeth has been discreetly observing them for some time before she instructed Thijs Boekarts to approach them. Elisabeth decided to take a more active role in communicating with the PCs as they battled with ORDESA. From leaving clues to offing Reiner to sending her servant to guide them to her flat, Elisabeth has brought the PCs to this point.

In fact, this diversion serves Elisabeth’s plans very well, assuming she can find a way to disappear unnoticed. Failing that, she may well find a way to get herself captured in the hopes that the mercenaries leave the PCs unharmed. After all, Elisabeth needs them to be in fighting shape to take on her brother’s lieutenants.

There are several ways for the GM to accomplish the task of separating Elisabeth

from the PCs. If none of the PCs are keeping an eye on her as they are fighting off the attackers, Elisabeth will try to slip out one of the windows and climb to safety (hoping that the PCs will assume she has been captured). Of course, the trick for her is to do so without getting shot by the crossbowmen. This is easily done as a mercenary is hardly likely to shoot an unarmed woman when they have other uses. The crossbowman might well find himself killed if he lets his guard down.

An alternate tactic would be having Elisabeth surrender if the attackers promise not to harm her maidservant and her bodyguards (the PCs). She would try this approach if it looks like the PCs may be overwhelmed or they look like they will succeed against the odds.

Another, less obvious method is for Elisabeth to do something apparently foolish such as get herself caught and used as a shield so that the mercenaries would leave with her in tow.

Elisabeth's goal is to use whatever means possible to separate herself from the PCs (as well as leaving Giselle safely behind) in order to lure them to van Rugkil's mansion to rescue her. Elisabeth has confidence that she'll be able to find a way to escape her captors on the way to her brother's domain. In fact, the eruption of the Skaven onto the streets of Marienburg will provide Elisabeth with the distraction she needs.

Then again, the GM might well decide that for all Elisabeth's scheming, she will be taken to her brother as captive. The result of the manner in which she comes into confrontation with her brother is detailed below.

Within minutes of Elisabeth's departure, chaos erupts on the fog-shrouded streets of Marienburg. From their place of deliberation, PCs with *Acute Hearing* will hear distant screaming and the clash of weapons (several Skaven raiding parties have come across Watch patrols).

When she comes to, the hysterical Giselle pleads for the PCs to rescue her Mademoiselle. Even if the PCs think otherwise, the Bretonnian maidservant is certain that van Rugkil hired the kidnappers. She will make this point abundantly clear if the PCs give Giselle any indication that they are unlikely to attempt to rescue Elisabeth.

Meanwhile, the Skaven raid is now under

way making the streets all the more dangerous. There are small squads of Gutter Runners scouring the city in search of small groups opposing the Skaven incursion – such as the PCs – to eliminate.

### Confrontation

PCs may reconnoitre the van Rijksbodem mansion in the Goudberg district at some point before the Skaven raid during the night of Guilstag. The PCs find Goudberg a wealthy district with clean streets and canals. Streetlamps are placed at regular intervals on the main thoroughfares, ensuring that most areas are well lit during the night. The homes and buildings are solidly built (lots of stone and stout oak doors) with gardens behind their walls. The atmosphere of Goudberg is a far cry from what the PCs experienced in the Suiddock.

The van Rijksbodem mansion is located

on the far side of the middle Goudberg Island. The Rijksbodem enclosure has two main gates: the front one is large enough to permit passage of a carriage and the rear gate leads to a boathouse and adjacent launch on the Kleinoost Kanaal. Both main gates have an attached guardroom on the inside of the surrounding wall (the top of which can be clearly seen over the wall). A coat of arms with a royal blue "R" surrounded by a bed of tulips on a silver background is placed above the two main gates. The PCs will only find a little used and unguarded side-gate on the Blauwater Kanaal if they approach the Rijksbodem by boat. The lock on this gate is rather intricate (CR 20), but can be opened by the key left for them earlier by Elisabeth.

The van Rijksbodem mansion is a three-storey building painted light blue with Royal Blue trim. Unlike the nearby homes,

### Elisabeth van Rugkil (a.k.a. Emma Blaubloem), Assassin, ex-Initiate, ex-Duellist

**Height:** 5 ft 5 in

**Weight:** 120 lbs.

**Hair:** Dark Brown

**Eyes:** Blue

**Age:** 21

**Alignment:** Neutral (Manann - not devout)

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	64	63	4	5	11	65	3	58	52	66	66	57	55

**Skills:** Acting, Concealment-Rural, Concealment-Urban, Disarm, Disguise, Dodge Blow, Etiquette, Marksmanship, Prepare Poisons, Read/Write (Breton, Estalian, Reikspiel, and Tilean), Scale Sheer Surface, Scroll Lore, Secret Language-Classical, Shadowing, Silent Move-Rural, Silent Move-Urban, Specialist Weapon-Fencing Sword, Specialist Weapon-Fist, Specialist Weapon-Parrying, Specialist Weapon-Pistol, Specialist Weapon-Throwing Knife, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun, Theology

**Possessions:** Mail shirt under tunic, rapier, left-handed dagger, pair of duelling pistols with powder and ammunition for 10 shots, garrotte, 4 throwing knives, and purse.

While awaiting the arranged marriage that her father talked so much about, Elisabeth began studying at the Temple of Manann. Over four years ago, black-clad Skaven came into the van Rugkil mansion. Elisabeth spied them talking to her brother Alfons. Before she could scream an alarm, a blow to the back of her head sent her spiralling into darkness. When she next awoke, Elisabeth was in tattered clothing and chained to a ship's hold. From the malicious grin of the greasy man before her, Elisabeth knew that this was no pleasure cruise. The pig of a man told her that she was bound for service to an Arabian Emir. Suddenly the ship lurched and screams followed. The greasy sea dog tried to reach the upper decks, but a sword stopped him cold. Rescued by men in the employ of the Duc du l'Anguille, Elisabeth became a guest at his chateau. Consumed by hatred of her brother, Elisabeth persuaded the Duc to help her avenge herself. For his own reasons, the Duc arranged for Elisabeth to be trained by his finest. When she was ready, the Duc arranged for her return to Marienburg.

the Rijksbodem has a plain solid wooden gate (with a small shuttered opening through which a guard can see who might be knocking). The building itself has wrought iron bars covering the ground floor windows with a large oak front door leading to the interior.

Glass and metal shards are embedded on the tops of the ten foot tall walls to create problems (one S3 hit) for those without thick gloves or some other protection. There is a large tree two houses from Rijksbodem that can be used to observe the grounds. A short observation (between five and fifteen minutes) reveals that the grounds are patrolled by a group of five men-at-arms (mercenaries) while another four guard the front gate. Observing by daylight further uncovers the torn-up and trampled condition of the garden. The mansion blocks the view of the rear gate.

Those observing for longer periods (up to two hours) see additional activity within the enclosure. Movements seen through the ground and first floor windows indicate that there are a number of people inside the mansion. There isn't any apparent movement at the upper floor windows. Moreover, there is a sergeant of the guard who checks on them within fifteen-minute intervals. While alert, the guards also seem fairly relaxed.

Observing for a good part of the day (over two hours) shows the guard detail changes every two hours and that the enclosure resembles a military encampment. Should the observation take place during the afternoon hours of Guilstag, the activity becomes one of preparation and anticipation. Conversations seem more animated and several guards take the time to periodically check their weapons.

The PCs may attempt to enter the Rijksbodem enclosure through the side gate. Once they have opened the gate, the PCs will quickly notice that the grounds near the house are nothing short of a military camp. If the PCs are not careful, they will be spotted by one of the patrols. If they are careful, the PCs should be given about 30 minutes or so of observation before one of the patrols spot them. The PCs must either slip out without bringing attention to themselves or be prepared to **Bluff** their way onto the grounds. The latter may be successful if the PCs can convince the guard that they are one of the hired mercenaries. The GM may have to apply negative

modifiers to this encounter if any of the PCs look unconvincing as a soldier.

The guards are aware that some "mercenaries" might actually be spies from the other merchant houses. Should the PCs not be able to name any of the van Rugkil lieutenants - Oldrick Sterkarm, Manfred Eigilshwert and François Richard Vaniteux du Parravon - the guard unit will attempt to detain them. If they name one of the lieutenants or describe him in enough detail, the guards will point out where that band of mercenaries is encamped. This should give the PCs another hour or so of observation time before they are challenged again. If the PCs are able to **Bluff** successfully a second time, then they will be able to stay in the company of the mercenaries until it is time to move out (see below).

The PCs may decide to observe the rear of the mansion from the Ostmuur district. In time, they will notice that the activity at the rear gate and boathouse is considerable during daylight hours. In the days leading up to Guilstag, van Rugkil's unladen boat frequently makes its way north in the direction of the Handelaarmarkt district. It usually returns hours later fully stocked with barrels and crates. Boats from other mansions in Goudberg are making the same trip using the safety of daylight to stockpile provisions and supplies (each has their own men-at-arms). However, none of the other mansions send their boats as often as van Rugkil's. By mid-afternoon of Guilstag, van Rugkil's boat is secured in the boathouse while the other boats continue their activity.

Unless the PCs have access to a boat, following the van Rugkil boat will be difficult. There are too many winding, narrow streets crossing canals laid out in the same haphazard fashion to make following on foot a practical matter. Searching the Handelaarmarkt is also difficult, although not impossible, as it is extremely busy during daylight hours. If they so choose, the GM may allow the PCs to encounter some of van Rugkil's men purchasing food and other provisions.

Stealthily entering the Rijksbodem enclosure is difficult due to the number of mercenaries within. The PCs may resort to sneaking up to the enclosure wall to eavesdrop on the guards' conversations. Most conversations are about mundane things such as complaining about the rain during the night of Bezahitag, who heard

what of whom, the boredom of guard duty, complaints about officers (which will reveal their names) etc. The only worthwhile information the PCs will overhear does not occur until dusk on Guilstag. At that time, orders are issued to all the guards "to be prepared. We're moving out at midnight." PCs successfully passing a **Listen** test for a soft noise (+10 for *Acute Hearing*) will overhear the guards talking about the orders and speculating who the opponent will be. Most will expect a raid on some of the other merchant households as most have heard of the Directorate's opposition to van Rugkil's attempts at obtaining membership.

By late afternoon on Guilstag, a mist begins to rise. Native Marienburgers recognise the signs that fog will cover the city throughout the night. An hour before midnight, activity greatly increases in the Rijksbodem enclosure. The gates open and scores of armed mercenaries enter the streets and muster into fighting units. As these manoeuvres are nearing completion, shouts and the clash of arms can be heard from other parts of the city. A tall man with medium-length dark brown hair and trimmed beard, wearing blue robes appears on the balcony overlooking the grounds. This is Alfons van Rugkil.

He addresses the mercenaries arrayed before him. "The hour of need is upon us. What you hear from the surrounding islands are the sounds of battle; a battle between our fellows and an evil, enslaving force of Ratmen. These Skaven are not just the stuff of scary bedtime stories told to the young. No, they are flesh and blood creatures that can fall to the sword and axe just as easily as marauding Goblins.

"How do I know they're Skaven? I, Alfons van Rugkil, came upon a secret plan months ago that called for an alliance between the corrupt Directorate and these spawn of Chaos. It seems that taxing the people to pay for their excesses wasn't enough and they feared that plots were afoot to expose them to the people. Thus, an evil plan was hatched to use the Skaven to remove those who would seek to bring the Directorate to justice."

"I could not permit this plan to go unchallenged. I did, however, have to wait until they showed their hand so that all could see how deep their corruption ran. In anticipation of this day, I assembled all of you, the best mercenary companies in Bretonnia and The Empire, to be the



vanguard to save the city, stop the Skaven horde, and topple the corrupt Directorate. Your leaders have your orders. Once the Skaven and the Directorate are defeated, you will be richly rewarded! You have my word on that! Now go forward and prove your prowess against the enemy!"

With that, the mercenaries let out a cheer and then move towards the western bridges and the sounds of fighting now issuing from the Paleisbuurt district. Even the guards have departed with the other mercenaries. Alfons von Rugkil slyly smiles at the backs of those marching to battle before he winces with obvious pain. He then returns into the mansion. The gates remain open. Looking about, the PCs now find the garden eerily quiet.

If the PCs look through the ground floor windows they will see a large empty kitchen and empty rooms, converted into sleeping quarters. Doors exiting these rooms are closed limiting any view into the mansion. A back door leading into the kitchen is locked (CR 5) with an iron bar on the other side, placed to prevent the mercenaries from breaking into the kitchens and stealing provisions.

When the PCs open the unlocked front door, the PCs see a large entry hall with a vaulted ceiling. Single doors appear on each adjacent wall near the entryway. Stairs to the right lead to a balcony, which covers the entire length of the far wall with three doors evenly spaced and an alcove in the left corner. There is an unseen door on the near side of the alcove leading to stairs ascending to the upper floor. Below the balcony are two doors on the adjacent walls and two doors at opposite corners on the far wall. The one on the left leads to the kitchen. A large chandelier and wall candle lantern lights the entire hall.

Once the PCs have all entered the mansion, the middle door on the balcony opens and out steps three armed men with loaded crossbows (two, if Oldrick Sterkarm perished earlier). The first one – either Oldrick or Manfred states, "Whether you realise it or not, you have been most annoying turning up at the most inconvenient times. You probably thought you could end this game by having 'a word' with Mijnheer van Rugkil. You perhaps had at least a smattering of hope that he'd be alone so your 'conversation' would be private. Alas, that is not meant to be. You see, in order to have an 'audience' with Mijnheer van Rugkil, you will have to go through us. Quite frankly, I don't believe you're skilled enough to do so. I'll make you an offer. Leave and we'll let you live. Should you decide otherwise, well, let's just say that you need not worry about what happens this night. So, what are you waiting for?"

If the PCs hesitate, the men on the balcony fire their crossbows. If possible, they target wizards. Oldrick (or Manfred) intends to meet the first PC at the top of the stairs and keep the advantage of higher ground while the others continue attacking with missile fire. François





will fire his pistols at any subsequent PC on the stairs once they come into short range. The battle will be fierce, as those in the employ of Alfons van Rugkil give no quarter, but only Oldrick fights to the death. The other two are primarily concerned with surviving to fight another day.

Within moments of the fight ending, the PCs hear the sounds of items breaking and something thumping above them. It takes little to realise that something, like a fight, is happening on the floor above them. Should they decide they'd rather check behind the doors on this floor, they find nothing other than large bedrooms. The noise continues above them until a woman's screams are followed by a thud, then silence. Looking behind the door in the alcove, the PCs find an ascending stairway. At the top is an unlit hallway that heads off to the right. Four doors, two on each side, exit from the hall. Three are closed, but the furthest on the right is slightly ajar with a light coming from the room. Assuming the PCs approach the room quietly, they hear the following in a hoarse, rather hissing, voice:

"...lovely to ssee you again. Dear sssisster, how long hasss it been? Lassst time I sssaw your delicate and sssmooth featursss, it wasss on your way to that ssship bound for Araby. I don't know how you ecsscaped, but I'm sssso thrilled to behold your beauty again. You don't realissss how much I have dreamed of you in my..."

There is a pause and a sniffing sound before the voice continues:

"How thoughtful of you, my darling sssisster. You've brought your friendsss. Were thesssse the onesss that sssaved you, or are they just sssome hirelingsss? Come in, come in. It isss time for you to pay homage to your new king. Come and kneel before me."

As the PCs enter the room (Alfons is not so stupid as to come out to them), they see a huge man covered in long blue robes hunched over an unconscious Elisabeth van Rugkil in the middle of the room. His face is hidden in the darkness created by a cowl and the lamp on the desk behind him. On the adjacent left wall is an unlit fireplace with mantel and there is a large window on the far wall. An orange glow radiates in the fog outside. The rest of the room has been trashed.

### Manfred Eigilshwert & François Richard Vaniteux du Parravon Mercenary Captains

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
4	66	62	5	5	11	54	3	41	75	42	64	46	50

**Skills:** Consume Alcohol, Disarm, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Heraldry, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Battle Tongue, Specialist Weapon-Flail, Specialist Weapon-Lance, Specialist Weapon-Parrying, Specialist Weapon-Two-Handed, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun

**Possessions:** Helm, Mail Coif, Mail Shirt, Mail Leggings, Shield, Sword, Crossbow and Ammunition, and Purse.

#### Alfons van Rugkil, Merchant, ex-Student, ex-Trader

**Height:** Originally 5 ft 11 in, now 7 ft 2 in

**Weight:** Originally 165 lbs., now 315 lbs.

**Hair:** Medium Brown

**Eyes:** Originally Blue, now Red

**Age:** 32

**Alignment:** Evil, with increasing Chaos tendencies (none)



M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	51	22	5	5'	15	44	2	22	44	37	43	45	18

**Chaos Mutations:** Blood Substitution-Maggots (T+1', stream of maggots shoot out from each wound, 50% chance of landing on attacker and causing one S1 wound. Wounds continue with 20% chance per round that the maggots are sated and stop attacking), Halfbreed (take on some characteristics of a Rat Ogre [included below]: M+1, WS+10, BS-20, S+1, T+1, W+6, I-10, A+1, Dex-20, Ld-20, Int-20, Cl-10, WP-10, Fel-20), Huge Fists (negates penalties for unarmed combat)

**Skills:** Arcane Language-Magick, Astronomy, Evaluate, Haggle, History, Law, Magical Sense, Numismatics, Read/Write (Breton, Reikspiel, and Tilean), Ride-Horse, Secret Language-Classical, Secret Language-Guilders, Speak Other Language (Breton and Tilean)

**Insanities:** Frenzy, Hatred (towards attractive, personable people, i.e., those with Fel scores of 45+), Megalomania

**Possessions:** Heavy blue robes with hooded cowl, tattered clothing underneath.

Alfons is an overly ambitious man whose talents do not measure up to his conceit. He allied himself with the Skaven to remove his family and inherit his father's wealth and position. His petition to join the Directorate rejected, Alfons initiated a plan to use his Skaven allies to drive Marienburg to the edge of ruin. In the ensuing chaos, Alfons would unleash his mercenaries to save Marienburg and restore order. In his megalomaniac state, Alfons truly believes that his deliverance of the city would propel the people to throw out the corrupt and ineffectual Directorate and proclaim him King. Unfortunately, Alfons never suspected that dealing with the Skaven carried such a heavy price. As his plan reached its climax, Alfons began to mutate into a creature as foul as his soul.



The woman is bruised and battered with her clothes torn and in disarray. Her attire is not the dark green dress they last saw her in, but a charcoal grey tunic (with a mail shirt underneath), black trousers and black boots. A rapier lies behind the large man, near the desk. Elisabeth had the foresight to hide her "assassin" gear in a safe location, the late Johann van der Groot's home, in case she was forced to flee the Ravenwing Inn. (If Elisabeth did not escape her captors, then she will be wearing the same green dress – though far more shredded than before.)

If the PCs are expecting a measly merchant they are in for a shock. With his plans reaching fruition, Alfons' extensive dealings with the Skaven finally took their toll. He began to quickly mutate and what was left of his sanity disappeared. Before the PCs can act, Alfons pulls back his cowl and reveals his ruined face: nose elongating into a muzzle and skin crawling in different directions (resulting from his blood congealing into living maggots). Each PC must take an immediate **Fear** test.

Should Alfons survive two rounds of combat with the PCs, he will let out a cry of agony and stoop over. Before the PCs' very eyes, Alfons' back will ripple, shudder, and then split as a scorpion's tail sprouts from his body. PCs witnessing this transformation must take a **CI** test immediately. Failure results in the PC gaining 1 **Insanity Point**. The quickly recovered Alfons now has an additional, poisoned attack.

Assuming the PCs are victorious, the PCs can turn their attention to Elisabeth (or Emma as they will believe her name is). Any PC with the *Heal Wounds* skill can determine Elisabeth has several broken ribs, a dislocated right wrist, and a swollen, severely sprained left ankle. It does not take much to conclude that whatever her intentions, Elisabeth will be unable to fend for herself for some time. Reviving Elisabeth is an easy task and, after a few moments to clear her head, she will be able to answer questions.

Depending upon what is asked, Elisabeth can reveal her real name is Elisabeth van Rugkil, younger sister of Alfons. The Duc du l' Anguille rescued her from enslavement and he arranged for her to learn certain skills to avenge herself. She had only recently (six months ago) returned to Marienburg to stop her brother.

She knows that Alfons was in league with

the Skaven to murder her parents and remove all obstacles to inheriting the family fortune. He was a greedy, power driven individual who had not the talent nor instincts of their father.

It was she who had been leading the PCs to a final reckoning with Alfons in hope of stopping his mad scheme. The attack on the Ravenswing Inn was not her doing, however, though it did serve to bring the PCs to this place.

Elisabeth had intended that the PCs occupy Alfons' personal guards' attention while she dispatched her brother. The change in Alfons caught her by surprise. By the time she regained her wits, Elisabeth was injured and the battle lost.

Elisabeth also surmised that the Skaven attack was imminent, but thought it was one day away at the very least. Her assumption that Alfons' removal would unravel the Skaven plan was without merit. The only avenue left is the removal of the Skaven leaders. Elisabeth tells the PCs to look for a scrawny Skaven with greyish-brown fur and rather crazed looking eyes (Rantok) who is usually accompanying a larger, dark brown furred Warlord. She does warn the PCs that the smaller Skaven carries a strange looking pistol. If asked how she came to know about the Skaven leaders, Elisabeth forces a smile and simply says that she has been reconnoitring the situation for quite some time.

Elisabeth tells the PCs that the Skaven probably entered the mansion through one of their tunnels into the basement. In this manner, they were able to enter and leave without detection by the Goudberg Watch. She also tells them that a staircase hidden within the walls is the only way to reach the cellar. One of the two entries is a secret door behind the fireplace in this room (the whole fireplace pivots open). A loose flagstone just above the mantel hides the opening mechanism. The other secret door is found in Alfons' old bedroom (the door nearest the top of the stairs leading to the ground floor).

The orange glow coming from the window indicates fire in the Paleisbuurt district. Elisabeth urges the PCs to use the secret stairway to reach the Skaven tunnels. "The Skaven will surely not expect an attack from that quarter," Elisabeth advises. Acknowledging the PCs' condition (no doubt, a number will be injured from all the fighting they have recently endured),

Elisabeth tells them that she left three potions of healing in the room across the hall. These were a reserve in the unlikely event that Alfons' thugs defeated the PCs and she had to deal with them in addition to her brother. Now that she is in no condition to continue, Elisabeth offers this aid to the PCs so that they can accomplish what she can no longer do.

### Into the Breach

One might assume that the PCs, eager to end this affair, would leap at the opportunity to deal with the Skaven once and for all. Unfortunately, there are those who may decide that they have had enough and are willing to take their chances either on the streets or on the road out of Marienburg. This and the following section will detail the consequences of the two choices.

Deciding to carry on in the hope of saving Marienburg, the PCs must prepare themselves for the final assault. They have limited time as they have no information regarding the bloodshed on the streets. Fires raging across the city and the periodic din of battle give some indication, but not much.

Opening the secret door is easy. As the fireplace pivots, the PCs find the stairs descending to the left into the darkness. Heading down, they soon come to a landing that marks the second secret door. From there the stairs continues in a downward, counter-clockwise spiral. In time, the PCs reach a cellar, empty save for the table in its centre and an eight-foot high, six-foot wide opening in the far wall leading to a tunnel beyond. Anyone with *Mining* skill can also determine that the tunnel is solidly built, though the workmanship is shoddy, and that it descends at a slight angle. A character with the *Follow Trail* skill has an **I+10** chance of picking up indications that several creatures passed through here earlier in the day (about 10-12 hours earlier). PCs without the skill have only a 10% chance of finding any sign.

The passage is by no means constructed in a straight line. It twists and turns, thereby making accurate mapping next to impossible. After some thirty yards, the slope of the tunnel becomes very steep. Characters will need to free one hand to help with the descent. Any PC who does not must make an **I** test to avoid sliding down the passage. After twenty feet, the tunnel levels off and soon there is an intersection where

*Continued on page 66*

**Warlord Skweech, Skaven Warlord**  
**Alignment: Chaos (Horned Rat)**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	63	55	5	5	13	60	3	34	64	34	48	39	34

**Skills:** Dodge Blow, Specialist Weapon-Two-Handed, Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun

**Possessions:** Warpstone armour shirt, helm, vambraces, leggings, shield, sword with serrated blade (35% chance of infection).

A formidable warrior in his own right, Skweech clawed, scratched, and murdered his way up the rungs of power in Clan Scruten until he reached the top. He could not rest on his laurels, however, as Skaven are duplicitous by nature and there were many who eagerly sought his position. Skweech knew that only battle would divert the attention and schemes of so many would-be successors. One day, the Horned Rat delivered a Manthing with great influence and prestige unto him. The Manthing proposed a ridiculous plot to obtain, then usurp power in the Mancity that included the Skaven as his agents. Seeing an opportunity for paying off a debt to Clan Skryre, Skweech agreed to a pact with the Manthing that the Warlord intended to turn to his own advantage without the Manthing's knowledge. Through contact with Clan Skryre, the Warlock Engineer Rantok arrived on the scene. Mistrusting the Warlock Engineer came naturally to Skweech and the Warlord intends to keep an eye out for any treachery on Rantok's part.

**Rantok, Clan Skryre Warlock Engineer, Level 2**

**Alignment: Chaos (Horned Rat)**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	43	35	4	4	10	60	1	34	34	34	28	39	24

**Skills:** Arcane Language-Dark Magic, Arcane Language- Skaven Magic, Cast Spells-Dark Magic 1, Cast Spells-Skaven Magic 1- 2, Evaluate, Herb Lore, Identify Plants, Magical Awareness, Magic Sense, Scroll Lore, Secret Language- Skaven  
**Magic Points:** 25

**Spells:** 1st Level: (Dark) Dark Hand of

**Destruction ;**  
 (Skaven) Shadow's Companion, Vermintide, Warp Lightning

**2nd Level:**  
 (Skaven) Scorch, Shrivel Tongue

**Possessions:** Leather Jerkin, Sword with serrated blade (35% chance of infection), Warpstone Flintlock (R 8/16/50, ES 3, 2 rds to load, 1 to fire) with (refined) warpstone ammunition (see *Realms of Sorcery*, page 128 for details regarding the effects of refined warpstone) for 10 shots, and Pouch (containing nine pieces of refined warpstone).

Rantok was dispatched by Clan Skryre to the lair of Clan Scruten beneath the Mancity called Marienburg. The Clan Leaders divined that some machinations were about to occur there that needed observation, as well as the collection of a debt owed to Clan Skryre. Rantok arrived just as Warlord Skweech reached a pact with a soft manthing. The Warlord was hesitant about Rantok's questions as if the Warlock Engineer intended to take over the operation (an attractive prospect on one paw, but too risky on the other). There was some potential in the Warlord's plan, so Rantok limited his role. Of course, the presence of Gutter and Night Runners from Clan Eshin were of some concern.

One night many moons ago, a manthing breeder surprised Rantok as he lurked about the city devising possible escape routes should Warlord Skweech's plans go awry. Fearing that he was about to be exposed, Rantok began to conjure a spell

when the breeder's sharp knife touched his throat. The manthing had a proposition for him: tell what he knew of Skweech's manthing's plans and she would let him live. Rantok only needed a moment to agree, realising that Skweech's failure might be the opportunity the Warlock Engineer needed to show his mettle and gain admittance into the company of Grey Seers. With this in mind, Rantok revealed what he knew.

**Skaven Clanrats**

**Alignment: Chaos (Horned Rat)**

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
5	33	25	3	3	7	40	1	24	24	24	18	29	14

**Skills:** None

**Possessions:** Sword with serrated blade (35% chance of infection), 50% chance of Mail Shirt, 50 % chance of Shield.



their passage ends. PCs with *Acute Hearing* may take a **Listen** test for normal noise to hear a Skaven patrol approaching from the left. Failure means that both sides surprise one another, while success gives the PCs surprise. Not expecting intruders, the Skaven unit commander is leading his unit of five clanrats on a patrol so as to avoid the fighting on the streets above. Unless the Skaven can overcome their surprise and seize the advantage, they will seek to escape by retreating.

Checking all three sides of the intersection, PCs with *Follow Trail* skill can determine that the direction from which the Skaven patrol came was the more heavily travelled. Should they go in the opposite direction, they will follow a meandering passage that eventually rises and enters into an abandoned sewer line. Both ends are blocked by rubble that fell long ago and the bottom is knee deep in sewage that has somehow seeped into here.

If any Skaven escaped from the earlier confrontation, the noise will be minimal as the Skaven are preparing a reception for the PCs. Otherwise, the PCs hear chattering noise that can be safely assumed to be Skaven. Unless they blunder badly, the PCs should be able to achieve surprise as they enter a large cavern. Unfortunately, the Skaven are not located near the entrance, so charging into the cavern gives the PCs no advantage. Creeping ahead will allow the PCs to survey the layout for d6+4 rounds without being noticed.

The size of the lit damp cavern is around fifteen feet high, eighty feet wide, and ninety feet deep. Although now encrusted with slime, engravings on the wall can be seen suggesting this may once have been a hall. There are three other exits from this cavern; two are in the corners at one end on an upward slope. The remaining is across at a third corner and leads to deeper levels. Near the centre of the cavern is a large, well-armoured black-furred Skaven (the Warlord Skweech) and a robed, greyish-brown furred Skaven with a rather strange-looking firearm (the Warlock Engineer Rantok). Six other armed and armoured Skaven accompany the two. The leaders are addressing two units of Skaven troops (2d6+6 per unit) armed with serrated blades. Each unit is escorting d10+6 Humans in chains. The prisoners are in pretty bad shape and hardly in a state to put up any resistance.

If the PCs attack, they will be facing

## NEW SPELLS

### Summon Children of the Horned Rat

**Spell Level:** First Skaven

**Magic Points:** 4

**Range:** Nearby

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Ingredients:** Rat pelt

This spell grants the caster the ability to summon and control a pack of either Giant Rats (2d6+4) or swarm of normal rats (100) to attack his enemies. They appear within 6 yards of the caster and will follow simple instructions (like "Kill" or "Maim").

### Spread Plague

**Spell Level:** Second Skaven

**Magic Points:** 8

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Ingredients:** Diseased slice of meat

The form in which the disease manifests can be either Black Plague or Red Pox (WFRP, pg 82-83), at the caster's choice. The victim is allowed a **T** test to resist the effects of the disease. If infected, the victim will feel weak and queasy (-10 to **WS**, **BS**, **Dex**, and **Int**; -1 to **S** and **T**) until the next day when they succumb to the full effects of the disease. There is also a 10% chance that the victim will pass the disease to anyone in contact with them in the first 24 hours of being infected.

## SKAVEN WEAPONS

### Warpstone Flintlock

Similar to Human pistols, the Skaven weapon uses an alloy of refined warpstone and lead as its ammunition. In most cases, warpstone bullets cause the same amount of damage as normal bullets. Unfortunately for the victim, there is a d6+6% chance that the Warpstone will cause d2 mutations to rapidly manifest in addition to the damage.

### Refined Warpstone

Though not as powerful as raw warpstone, refined warpstone is still very potent. Both Grey Seers and Warlock Engineers consume it in order to fuel their foul sorceries. There is a danger even to these warpstone-attuned creatures, however. Consumption may cause the Grey Seer (d6% chance) and/or Warlock Engineer (2d6% chance) to rapidly manifest d6+2 mutations (which may reduce them to Chaos Spawn).

### Mutations

These can be found in *The Enemy Within*, among other sources. There is also a suitable table contained within the supplementary material for this scenario on the Warpstone website.

difficult odds as all Skaven, save a few to guard the captives, will attack. There is a chance that these Skaven may even slaughter the battered captives so as to free themselves to assist their Warlord against the interloping Manthings.

Should the PCs continue to wait for their opportunity, the unit leaders bark out some order after several moments and each unit then departs through the third tunnel forcing the Human captives ahead of them. At this point, the PCs will have 2d6+8 rounds to act before the Skaven senses their presence (unless their actions dictate otherwise). Attacking with missile weapons gives the PCs three rounds before the Skaven warriors can close on them. The Warlock Engineer, unfortunately, needs only two rounds to recover from the surprise attack.

So long as the Skaven believe that they are stronger than the PCs, the Ratmen will press the attack. As the PCs gain the upper hand, the Skaven leaders (especially if the Warlord is killed) will try to escape down the tunnel that delves deeper into the earth

with each Skaven blaming the other for the failure of the enterprise. Once the Skaven leaders have fled or been slain, the rest of the Skaven will scatter. Those already on the surface will soon retreat (d3+1 hours) in panic when it becomes apparent that their leaders have disappeared. How quickly this happens also depends on the PCs. Parading the leader's head through the street will get a quicker response.

Should the PCs survive the battle with the Skaven leaders, they will need to leave the cavern. They are, after all, in the way of any retreating Skaven. The exit on the left eventually leads (after twenty to thirty minutes of travelling) to a sewer on Luydenhoek Isle in the Suiddock. The other tunnel is shorter (ten to fifteen minutes of walking) and leads to a sewer outlet in the Guilderveld district near Paleisbuurt.

Should the PCs opt to flee, neither Skaven leader will bother with the craven PCs. The cowards have clearly confirmed each Skaven's perception of the spinelessness of Manthings.

## Epilogue

By dawn, the fog lifts to reveal that a significant portion of Marienburg is in ruins. Large areas of the Paleisbuurt and Suiddock districts are smouldering and many people wander about aimlessly. Few signs of the Skaven presence remain and those that do are dismissed as Fen Loonies or mutants from the surrounding swamps. The retreating Skaven try to remove their own dead to cover their tracks.

The ugly job of cleaning up has begun. Members of the Carpenters' and Stonemasons' Guilds begin to negotiate contracts with merchants and landlords in the damaged areas. Rumours spread that the Directorate has convened to determine the parties responsible for the disaster. Other rumours say that remnants of renegade mercenary bands are being blamed for the destruction. Their leaders have not yet been uncovered. Indeed, a number of people have disappeared without a trace.

Crafty (and greedy) PCs may realise that there is an opportunity to extort money from Elisabeth van Rugkil. There is no sign of Elisabeth at the van Rijksbodem mansion but the corpses of those they've slain remain in the house. The PCs have little real evidence, other than the body of the mutated van Rugkil to support their story. Should they get caught red-handed, the PCs may need to get some help from the Temple of Mórr or Suiddock Watch.

With nothing but wounds to show for their effort, the PCs may return to their old haunts in the Suiddock. The Shipwrecked Tavern is still standing and a jolly Olaf welcomes the PCs. With little prompting, Olaf will recount his and Sergei's efforts to keep the rampaging fire away from his tavern. Last he saw of Manuel, the little Estalian ran screaming into the night as if he saw something in the shadows. No great loss, after all.

Olaf also says that a pretty young woman gave into his care a chest for the PCs. Olaf was well paid to deliver it intact. Using the key that Elisabeth gave them earlier (the one that also opened the side gate at the mansion), the PCs can open the chest, which contains five hundred Guilders and a sealed envelope with no insignia. Inside is an unsigned letter that reads:

Respected Associates,

*Given your resourcefulness and skills over the past week, I have little doubt that you've survived last night's events. These*

*same events have made it impossible for us to meet in person. Please accept the pittance I've included as a token of my appreciation for your efforts (whether intentional or not) on my behalf.*

*No need to search for me. For reasons upon which you may speculate, I no longer feel at liberty to make Marienburg my home. Instead, I seek a new start in a new land. Once my affairs are in order, I may send for you. Without any doubt, I am sure that I can put your considerable gifts to good use.*

With their role in recent events largely unknown, the PCs may believe that their task is over. But, is it? Any Skaven who escaped - especially the Warlord or Warlock Engineer - will identify the PCs to those who may secretly seek revenge. If the Mercenary Captains survived the encounter at the van Rijksbodem mansion, they will

want to extract their own brand of revenge as they lost a very rich patron and many men.

Other possibilities may include Elisabeth van Rugkil informing her patron, the Duc du l'Anguille, of the PCs' exploits. One might want to consider whether the PCs leave any evidence of their involvement that any agent of the Directorate might misconstrue as proof that the PCs were conspirators. Perhaps, one of the Great Merchant Houses might learn of them and seek to employ such resourceful and scheming operatives.

## Experience Points

As the GM see fits. Award a Fate Point for successfully stopping van Rugkil and the Skaven.

Player Handout 8

*You waste time. This lackey's intent is to lead you astray or kill you. The real problem resides in the Goudberg district. Meet me at the Gullible Gull Tavern on the northern side of Luysdenhoek Isle an hour after sunset. Ask the barkeep for Private Room ten. He'll escort you there for a 10d tip. A friend*

Player Handout 7

*Did you realise that Walewijn Droomer, leader of ORDESA, had an appointment to meet an important individual tonight? Are you interested? It is to be at the White Shaal Cafe on Hightower Isle near the foot of the Hoogbrug Bridge at dusk. Don't be late.*

Player Handout 9

*You've been careless. Since early afternoon, those seeking to overrun the city have followed you. They are in league with another who craves power and will resort to vile means to achieve that goal. This key will permit you entry into the nest of corruption, if you do so with stealth. I cannot be any clearer than this nor dare I risk any further contact with you. Of course, my employer may deem otherwise should you eliminate the first obstacle mentioned.*

# MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS

A Scenario by Chris Hahn & Richard Iorio

Five hundred years ago, residing in her tower high on the eastern slopes of the Grey Mountains, Astrid Ladengast ruled Axe Bite Pass. Her legend grew with each advancing year and some said Astrid was capable of destroying cities with a wave of her hand. Some claimed she fought two dragons, and even survived a battle with a liche but of course the truth is no longer known. From her tower she gathered ill-gotten gains to fund research into the dark arts. Her wealth was legendary, and she is said to have had a love for items of great beauty. At the apex of her power, Astrid mysteriously disappeared. It is speculated that she died in an explosion during one of her experiments, but some contend that she met her end summoning a daemon.

The truth about Astrid's life and death revolves around the *Schwärzung Durchstreift*, her bodyguards, but not always her devoted servants. When Astrid disappeared it was they who were at the centre of a foul plot. Swearing oaths of undying loyalty, the group's duty was to protect not only Astrid but her plans as well. As the operation grew in size, new and less devoted members joined. It was this group of scoundrels who hatched the plot to murder Astrid so they could lay claim to her wealth. The original members of *Schwärzung Durchstreift* uncovered this plot, but too late to prevent Astrid's murder. They did avenge her but in the years that followed their loyalty to their oaths wavered. As time slipped by the *Schwärzung Durchstreift* disappeared with the treasure. Eventually the tower became an empty ruin. One hundred years ago, settlers arrived in the area and began building Gletscherpunkt. Hunters and shepherds exploring upper alpine pastures discovered the set of ancient ruins. However, after three unfortunate members of the settling party were killed by a collapsing wall, many swore the ruins were haunted and everyone avoided them. The ruins eventually attracted the attention of two people, one being the Breton Marcel Moreau.

Marcel arrived in Gletscherpunkt three years ago claiming to be interested in studying the ruins. The villagers warned him that the area was haunted, but Marcel laughed off the stories as superstitions. In truth, Marcel was a wizard and practitioner of dark arts. Discovering old records in his native Bretonnia, he learned of Astrid Ladengast whose daemonic cat-like servants robbed and devoured Bretonnian merchants travelling into the Empire. Believing Astrid was a practitioner of such magicks and yearning to find her tower and unlock its secrets, he began researching her further. Finally Marcel discovered the location of the tower and soon he was seen travelling north. Some swore that they saw a strange shadowy shape trailing in his wake and a small clay figure

mysteriously walking alongside him. Some state that they saw nothing out of the ordinary when Marcel went up into the mountains. That was the last any sane man would see of Marcel Moreau.

The reason for his disappearance, and many more like it, is the maniacal hunter Franz Krunz and his rag tag band of cannibalistic trappers and shepherds. In their wanderings, they discovered the ruins of Astrid's tower and decided it would be a good place to honour their god. Offering his services to Gletscherpunkt as a professional hunter, the village welcomed him warmly. Such a warm welcome was due to the gruesome injuries the village's former hunter, Adolph Hildenbrandt, had suffered.

Adolph appeared in the village one morning with both of his eyes missing and his throat gruesomely slashed. Near death he was nursed back to health, but his wounds left him mentally shattered and unable to speak. Unknown to the village, Adolph received his wounds at the hands of Franz and his worshippers. He had been abducted while hunting in the upper pastures, and was to serve as the main course for a feast honouring Khaine. Thinking that a foul monster was loose in the area, the villagers asked Franz and his men to find it and slay it. Unfortunately, the hunters were unable to find any evidence of the monster.

Since this time, shepherds, trappers and hunters have slowly disappeared in Gletscherpunkt's upper pastures. Others have spent increasing time in the wilderness vaguely stating they must help Franz "gather meat." All the while, Franz and his men continue to provide meat for the village and try to look into the disappearances. Since last month, Franz stopped appearing in the village. This is because Franz and his men have begun to change. The years of cannibalism have begun to transform him into one of Khaine's favoured. His appearance is such that the residents of Gletscherpunkt would know that Franz is not the nice man he seems to be. He now sends one of his original fellow hunters to the village to buy supplies and to sell their fresh meat. Franz's sudden reclusion prompted Hannes Sagebrecht, the local priest of Rhya, to venture forth into the upper pastures to meet with Franz. It has been three weeks since Hannes left, and he has yet to return.

## Enter the Wizard

Meanwhile in the town of Bögenhafen, the wizard Gerd Ladengast was busily organising a collection of family papers. Hailing from a long line of wizards, Gerd had no clue of his famous relation. While going through the papers he discovered he was related to the legendary Astrid, a distant cousin on his father's side.



Questioning his father, he learned that no one had any knowledge about her fate. Gerd, who loved challenges, spent the next few years searching through the family papers for any information he could find.

While visiting his parents in Nuln, he was in his father's library when an ancient journal literally fell on his head. Gerd discovered that a relation recorded visiting Astrid in her tower. Though the journal contained no map, the detailed entries provided enough information to pinpoint the location. Ecstatic that his search was near completion, Gerd bid his family farewell and raced to Bøgenhafen where his mercenary company was wintering.

Two weeks later, Gerd told the group of his research, and revealed his desire to locate the tower. His companions were underwhelmed by the news, and the prospects of looking for a dusty tower bored them. With this, Gerd decided to find his own way and announced that he was taking a year's sabbatical. Gerd and his family are wealthy and besides, once he found the tower, he would have enough wealth to retire.

Gerd thinks Astrid was a powerful sorceress, but is wrong. The record of his distant cousin, unbeknownst to Gerd, is based upon the account of an elderly minstrel who looked to turn a crown or two with a story he could match to the Ladengast name. Though Astrid has become a legend, few accurate details of her life can be found. Gerd's work has uncovered much, but with the access to Astrid's papers and journals, Gerd hopes to uncover much more. While the truth may disappoint, he believes he will be able to find untold magicks and possibly a forbidden formula or two.

However, things have not been going well in Gletscherpunkt. Franz's hunt of trappers and shepherds is taking its toll. The origins of these attacks are believed to lie with an unusually active group of mountain cats. Others whisper that the no-good traveller Marcel must have stirred something up in the ruins in the upper pastures. Some even fear Franz's disappearance is actually a cover, and that the good priest Hannes is secretly a thrall to some foul god. In truth, Franz has reached a state of ghoulishness that prevents him from encountering any outside of his court of madmen. He wears a dead skin mask at all times (ironically, it is the mask of Marcel) and seeks just one more blood sacrifice to complete his transformation. His followers seek more meat, and are contemplating taking action closer to the village as no one will risk a trip alone to the upper pastures anymore. It is at this point that Gerd and his party of wayward travellers descend on the tiny village.

**GM Summary**

The PCs are to be contracted by Gerd to take him into the upper pastures to sift through the remains of his ancestor's tower. Once there, they will learn of the ghoulish nature of the tower's new inhabitants. Upon returning to the village, the PCs will have to explain this to a mob of angry and confused peasants.

**Starting the Adventure**

Getting the players involved in the adventure can be done in a number of ways. One is to have the PCs meet Gerd in a Bøgenhafen inn. Faced with the reality that his former mercenary company wants nothing to do with his personal quest in discovering a long lost relative, the wizard has the task of hiring some much-needed muscle.

Gerd offers the PCs fair terms of twenty crowns each, as well as transportation to the village of Gletscherpunkt. The only caveat to this is that the PCs must sign, or make their mark, on a legal document stating that they have no claim or right to any family possessions found. PCs refusing to sign find that their services are not needed.

No matter how the PCs meet the wizard, they will find him to be a very trying employer.

**The Employer**

**GERD LADENGAST**

**Career:** Journeyman Wizard (ex-Apprentice Wizard)

**Race:** Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
25%	25%	33%	41%	49%	49%	42%	39%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	4	4	2	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Magic+10%), Academic Knowledge (Heraldry), Channelling, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Magical Sense, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Ride, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Additional Language (Classical)

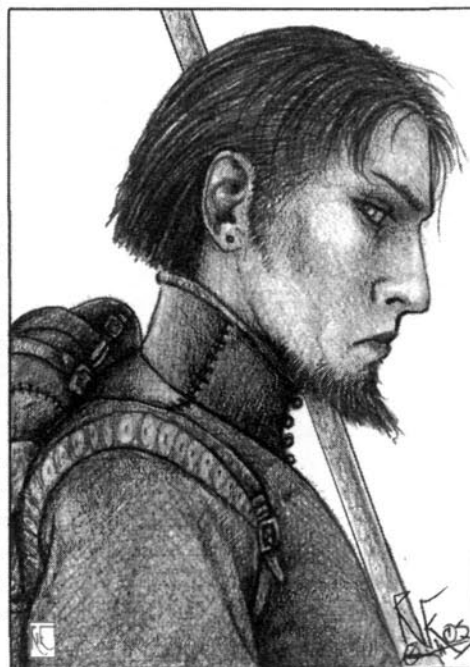
**Talents:** Aethic Attunement, Arcane Lore (Heavens), Coolheaded, Petty Magic (Arcane), Savvy, Strong Minded

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 0, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Dagger

**Trappings:** Staff, backpack, journal, spell book, writing kit, *Nature of Wind and Magick*, by Antonius Scholasticus, flask of wine, 1 lb. of tea, teapot, pouch containing 18 gc 12/6



Gerd loves magic and is obsessed with it. He will do whatever it takes to lay his hands upon anything of a magical nature, especially anything with a direct link to the Ladengast name. However, no one ever said such persistence would come without a suitable degree of badgering. He cannot help but stress again and again the important nature of recovering these priceless family heirlooms from such a historic site as the Ladengast family tower. When he sees the current state of said tower, the players may see Gerd change his tune.

Beyond this, Gerd is something of a nuisance when travelling over rough ground. While he has experience, no one

ever said that such experience has clicked with Gerd. He is the most likely to fall and twist an ankle or sprain his wrist when climbing through the pastures. He pays well, and PCs may feel obliged to keep their mouths shut. Any sort of monetary sum is not important to Gerd. It is the books and family papers he is after. The PCs can claim even the works of art in the tower as far as Gerd is concerned (once he sees the rundown state of the tower). Be sure to play Gerd as an intrepid adventurer who does not quite have the physical presence to overcome the forces of nature. He has an overbearing sense of family history that may be annoying, but knows his way around the battlefield and understands the rigours of overland travel.

For the past two years his genealogy has consumed him, and he has built up many assumptions about Astrid. He has traced any story and legend he has found, and he feels that Astrid is the most powerful wizard that ever lived. Sadly, the truth about Astrid will shatter Gerd. He has visions of a tower full of monetary and magical riches. Gerd is pompous beyond belief, and feels that the tower is an omen marking his accession to greatness.

Astrid was nothing more than a petty wizard who formed her own group of highwaymen. The *Schwärzung Durchstreift* were feared in the Axe Bite Pass region, and were a nuisance to many travellers and merchants. Because Astrid knew a number of minor spells, many thought she was more powerful than she actually was. Astrid's tower was nothing more than an abandoned ruin she had found. The ruin was fixed up, and she used it as a hideout for her and her men.

Astrid's death was due to many of the *Schwärzung Durchstreift* growing tired of answering to a woman. As new members joined they rankled at taking orders, and they became disloyal. The group plotted behind her back and led a take-over of the *Schwärzung Durchstreift*. Though unsuccessful, the group did kill Astrid and a number of her loyal followers. Those who survived the takeover attempt tried to keep the *Schwärzung Durchstreift* active, but in a few years the group disbanded.

### The Village of Gletscherpunkt

Gletscherpunkt is a small village with a population of seventy-five shepherds, hunters and croppers. Nestled at the base of the Grey Mountains, it is located fifty miles south of Axe Bite Pass. The high mountain pastures are ideal for raising sheep, and the wool this area produces is some of the best in the Empire. The village dates back some hundred years and has stayed relatively unchanged.

From the top of the hill the PCs can see a bridge spanning a river flowing from north to south. North of the bridge, a water wheel slowly turns and moves the grindstone inside the main mill. A few yards past the bridge a wooden wall fifteen feet in height surrounds the village. An open gate allows easy access to the village during the day and the gate is closed each night sharply at dusk. South of the village lies the stockyards, which currently are empty. Near the river a wool mill can be seen.

It is late afternoon when the PCs arrive in the village, and the coach (which passes through once a week) takes them to a medium size two-storey stone building. Called *Tumbledown*; the inn is the local gathering place for the villagers. The common room is large and dimly lit with a massive stone fireplace along the west wall. Numerous bear, boar and deer heads line the walls. The room has the feel of a hunting lodge, and the food offered consists of mutton and home brewed ale. The inn is run by Didier la Fort and rooms can easily be obtained for a fair price (6s for a private room, 11s

for a double room, 4p for sleeping in the common room), but meals are not included. There is a pot of stew on the fire and the PCs can help themselves for a cost of 3s. The stew gives off a mouthwatering smell and those who taste it find the meat to be excellent.

Didier is normally quick to welcome visitors, but he is currently busy talking to two rugged-looking men. A **Perception Test** lets the PCs notice the men carry packages wrapped in a stained cloth tied with twine. PCs making a successful second **Perception Test** notice: one of the men wears an extremely supple, nicely cured pair of leather pants, and the other man seems incredibly uncomfortable, especially for being a hunter. He is sweating profusely and licking his lips continuously.

PCs watching this scene, or specifically indicating they have an interest, see Didier and a young lad from the kitchen carry five packages to the kitchen area. Didier then completes the transaction in candles, wine, and a small amount of coin. The men avoid eye contact with anyone. PCs watching them leave see that they are heading off into the mountains, even at this late hour. Once his business is complete, Didier is happy to collect the PCs money and point them to a meal and bed.

The night is quiet and the major topic of conversation deals with missing people. From what the PCs can hear, monsters are plaguing the area. Once the PCs start to talk to the locals, the GM should set whatever test he deems appropriate. Once they get the locals to talk they learn that monsters have been plaguing the higher pastures for about nine months. These creatures have been seen only briefly and Sheriff Baer seems unable to do anything about them. The PCs hear conflicting stories about the monsters' appearance. Some say that monsters resemble huge black cats, while others say they are transparent ghostlike apparitions. They all state the monsters emerge from the shadows, killing sheep, shepherds, and trappers.

Inquiring about the missing people, the PCs get an earful. The disappearances began in earnest six months ago, and at first no one noticed. Now it seems a shepherd or trapper disappears in the mountains almost weekly. The villagers blame Baer for failing to stop this, and also blame him for what happened to the village's former hunter, Adolph Hildenbrandt.

Adolph appeared one day with his eyes missing and his throat badly wounded. No one has been able to discover who attacked him because he has lost the ability to talk. Even Franz Krunz and his band of hunters could find no trace of the attacker. Krunz, a well-respected local hunter, and his group of men, live up in the mountains and supply the village with a lot of freshly caught game. Franz has not been seen in town for over two months. The meat is still delivered, but it is delivered by two of Franz's loyal men.

They can also learn that Hannes Sagebrecht, a local priest of Rhya, was angry over the disappearances. He argued that no one was doing enough to stop the monsters or find the missing people. He disappeared three weeks ago when he went up into the mountains to investigate what was going on. The attacks began with the vicious wounding of Adolph. His experiences with the horrors in the pastures have left him blind and mute. If the PCs inquire, they learn that his large family who live to the south of Gletscherpunkt is caring for Adolph.

Asking about Astrid's Tower, no one in the room knows what the PCs are talking about. No one has ever heard of a tower and villagers flatly state that nothing like that exists in Gletscherpunkt. PCs making a **Gossip Test** learn that if it exists, Old Mila might know. Mila is a very old woman, who knows much about the area. She has lived in Gletscherpunkt her whole life and has helped many



with her cure-alls and everyone thinks very highly of her. By midnight the common room is empty and the innkeeper has sent everyone home or to their rooms for the night.

With the new morning the PCs are free to explore the village. Outsiders are a rare sight in Gletscherpunkt, and though curious the villagers avoid the PCs as much as they can.

Gerd will happily allow the PCs to do the appropriate investigations, while he studies in his room. He will expect full and regular updates and can be used to prompt the PCs in any direction the GM wishes.

### Old Mila

Old Mila's house is near the north end of the village. A skilled herbalist, her simple one-storey cottage has numerous plants and flowers growing in the yard. She spends most of her days working in her garden and when the PCs visit they see her tending her plants. Seeing the approaching PCs, she stops what she is doing and greets them warmly. Mila is old, walks with a hunch, and is very polite. A trusting soul, she is friendly to everyone and always eager to help. She has never heard of Astrid's Tower, but she states that there are strange ruins to the northwest. Many years ago while harvesting plants, she felt a sense of evil emanating all around. Since that day she has never been to the ruins. Asking for the location Mila gives it freely, but warns that spirits haunt the area, and monsters most likely inhabit it. She mentions the story of the collapsing wall, and uses this as a warning. The story, according to Mila, deals with the time when stone was first quarried from the site. Stone from the ruins was being used to build a mill and once it was finished a wall collapsed killing the miller inside. The stone from the ruins is cursed by an evil spirit, and that is why everyone avoids the ruins to this day.

Claiming she has not seen them personally, Mila knows the monsters exist. She states they arrived in the region about nine months ago. First plaguing the sheep and goats, the monsters now seem more interested in trappers and shepherds.

If asked about Hannes, Mila states that two weeks ago the priest went up into the mountains. Sheriff Baer thought nothing was wrong and that these monsters were nothing more than large wolves or mountain cats and that Baer felt that the noble stranger, Franz Krunz, could deal with the problem. Mila says that Hannes did not trust Franz and he decided to personally look into the matter. Mila says that she does not know why he distrusts him.

Questions about Franz reveal he is a local hunter who hunts and traps with two other men. In recent months some local trappers have joined Franz's band in the high pastures to help find the cause of the disappearances which now puts their numbers at about ten. These men are well respected by the villagers and have done much to protect Gletscherpunkt. Franz seems to be a nice man who is sometimes quick to anger, though Mila has dealt with him personally on only one occasion.



## VILLAGE NPCS

### Old Mila

Mila was born and raised in Gletscherpunkt. Her mother was a herbalist and taught her the trade. Since she was nineteen, Mila has created herbal remedies for the villagers and served as a midwife. She is deeply religious and close to Hannes the local priest to Rhya. Mila knows much about the surrounding area. Mila is grandmotherly and well loved in the village.

### Sheriff Baer

Baer worked as a mercenary for many years. He was signed up as a caravan guard when it was attacked by a pack of Beastmen. He survived the fight but lost his nerve to continue the mercenary life. He came to Gletscherpunkt ten years ago to escape the horrors of the world and hide in relative isolation. Baer has no interest in anything but the village. He is harsh in his justice, but the village is safe. Baer is a direct no-nonsense man who speaks plainly and directly.

### Edmund Gildenson,

A simple country farmer who loves his family and is deeply hurt by what has happened to his brother-in-law. He does not like to burden others with his problems but feels he must grab the chance if anyone remotely appearing to be a physician would pass through Gletscherpunkt. He will even suggest that the PCs move on rather than traipse around like fools in the upper pastures, baiting the gods-know-what into making them into a meal. If they insist, however, he will aid them with Adolph's possessions, which serve as a catharsis to him.

### Sheriff Baer

The Sheriff is easy to find; he spends most of his time at his house. Baer is a no-nonsense man who has lived and worked in the village for ten years. Baer is suspicious of everyone and in order to stay on his good side the PCs need to pass a **Charm Test**. If they fail Baer threatens to arrest the PCs if they do not move on. He will attempt to carry this out if they cause further problems. Passing the test, the PCs find Baer to be lacking in conversation skills, stating only the facts.

Asking about the monster, Baer says he agrees with Franz that these "monsters" are nothing more than mountain cats. Those who claim to have seen them describe them in the same way: big black cats that appear only at night. These cats are silent, and have not bothered anyone but sheep. Baer adds he has personally asked the local hunter Franz Krunz to look into this and the hunter has found nothing. Baer trusts Franz and wishes that these rumours would go away.

If asked about the missing people, Baer grows angry. If the PCs fail to calm him down he throws the PCs out of his house, telling them that if they do not leave he will arrest them. A **Gossip Test** lets the PCs learn that the rumours started about six months ago, when a few shepherds disappeared, but soon changed when other people began disappearing. The latest disappearance is Hannes Sagebrecht who went up into the

mountains two weeks ago.

Baer is quick to point out that Hannes has done this before, and regularly leaves for a few weeks without telling anyone where he is going. Hannes has been angry lately because no one has been doing anything about the monsters or disappearances. Baer states that Hannes does not believe that wolves or cats are responsible. In whispered tones, Hannes said he believed that an evil walks at night and only human blood slakes its thirst. Asked if this is true, Baer states that he does not know. He will say he likes Hannes, but he does have a tendency to exaggerate.

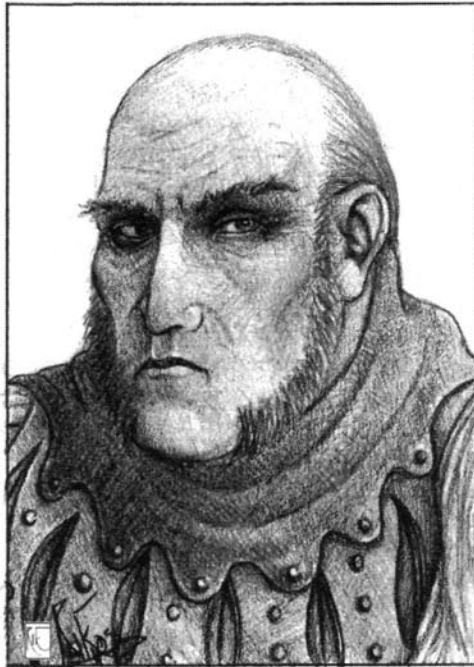
Questioning Baer about Astrid's Tower, the PCs learn nothing but Baer helpfully tells the PCs that Old Mila or Franz Krunz might be the ones to ask.

#### Adolph Hildenbrandt - Hunter

The final person the PCs can visit is Adolph Hildenbrandt. Asking around the village, the PCs learn he was a trapper and hunter who lived to the south of the village. Finding the house is easy; it is a large wooden cottage that has numerous animal pelts curing in front. A man can be seen working in front of the house, scraping a rather large bear pelt. He is wary at first, but a successful **Routine (+10%) Charm Test** brings an invitation for the PCs to step inside and join him for dinner. After all, they have had a bit of a hike from the village. He is eager to share his table, and will be doubly eager if any PC in the group appears to be of an academic background.

The man is Adolph's brother-in-law, Edmund Gildenson. The dinner table seats six others, including Adolph's mother, wife, and Edmund's four children. After a simple meal of bread and stew, Edmund asks in a low tone if the travelers would be willing to see his wife's poor sick brother. If so, he takes them to the back room where, having excused herself earlier, Hilga (Edmund's wife) is feeding Adolph broth. Edmund relates to the PCs how six months ago the man before them was a hale and hearty hunter who freely roamed the upper pastures. Adolph is blindfolded (to hide the scarred remains of his eye sockets) and looks pallid and sickly. His hair is wild and unkempt, his beard is ragged, and his fingernails are long and claw like. Edmund tells the PCs that Adolph made it back from the upper pastures after being blinded, and the trauma of the experience rendered him mute. Neither Hannes nor Old Mila has been able to cure him.

A PC with the **Heal Skill** who asks to examine Adolph needs convince the family and Adolph. Examination suggests the damage to his eyes is



from two separate punctures. A claw stroke could not have done this and they are uneven. One puncture is almost surgical, while the other a bit hasty and jagged, leaving a scar across the cheekbone. An examination of the throat and mouth shows no sign of wounding or damage.

Questioning the family about the disappearances brings the sad tale of Adolph. Edmund advises the PCs to stay away from the upper pastures and get out of Gletscherpunkt as soon as possible. PCs making their intent of heading to the upper pastures known has Edmund offering the PCs Adolph's old gear (see **Hunter's Trappings WFRP** pg. 41). Asking about Astrid's Tower, Edmund and his family say they know nothing. PCs asking about a tower in Adolph's presence see he opens his mouth, looking as if he is trying to form words. He only moans and soon passes out. Troubled, the family asks the PCs to leave as Adolph is having one of his spells. As they leave, Hilga makes her way outside and tells the PCs that Adolph once mentioned a set of ruins in the upper pastures. She says they always gave him an uneasy feeling when

he pursued game there. With that, she wishes them good luck and heads back into the house.

There is nothing else to learn in the village. However, if the PCs have not talked to Mila yet, she may come to the inn to talk with them.

#### To the Ruins

The PCs should have enough information to get to the ruins. Mila can provide a crude map and she wishes the PCs luck. She also warns them that the entire place has an evil presence. The path that Mila points them to is a very old goat trail and it winds up into the mountains.

Much of the morning goes by uneventfully, and the PCs are traveling northwest through the foothills with the Grey Mountains

looming in front of them. Other than sheep and goats grazing in the pastures the PCs see little. Just when they are relaxing, a group of Franz's hunters who are hiding among the rocks fire one arrow each into the party and then flee. An **Easy (+20%) Perception Test** tells the PCs that the arrows came from the hills to the west and east, but they see no sign of their attackers. Franz and his hunters plague the party until dusk, and every so often there will be d10 arrows shot at them.

After four hours of hiking, the trail grows steeper as it passes through many smaller pastures. As the PCs travel upwards the ambushes stop, but the hunters have placed three animal traps along the path. PCs making a **Hard (-20%) Perception Test** or a **Search Test** can avoid the trap successfully. Failing, the trap



snaps at S3 and with a 50% chance the trap breaks an ankle (**Movement, Agility** and **Initiative** are reduced by half).

As the PCs reach a large alpine pasture at dusk they are likely to be bruised and battered. The pasture is deserted and the grass looks to have not been grazed for months. The pasture has many large boulders perfect for an ambush and GMs are encouraged to have their players think one will happen. The PCs may wish to spend an uncomfortable night on the slope, or a comfortable camp in the pasture.

Continuing their hike the attacks do not continue. PCs making a successful **Very Hard (-30%) Perception Test** have a feeling of being watched. Every time they turn around they see nothing. Play up the suspense; an occasional crunch of rock, or a stone tumbling down the mountainside, to frighten the PCs.

By midmorning the party arrives at another plateau. They can look east and see the tiny speck of the village below them. A successful **Search Test** yields the discovery of a carved wooden medallion in the shape of a disc with a spiral shape cut into the surface. A successful **Intelligence Test** or any character with **Theology** recognizes the medallion as a symbolic representation of the goddess Rhya.

The mountain trail becomes rockier and steeper the higher they go, soon becoming treacherous. Each PC must make a successful **Agility Test (+30% with Scale Sheer Surface)**. Failure causes the PC to lose their footing and start to slide back down the trail. The PC takes no damage, but there is a 50% chance of twisting an ankle (-1M, -10% appropriate Agility tests) or spraining a wrist (-10 WS, -10BS).

By noon the PCs arrive at a large flat plateau. Piles of rocks are everywhere, actually the remains of a wall in various stages of decay. The trail leads to a large opening that looks to have been a gate at one time. If they explore the area they can tell that a tower was once here, and they can make out the foundations of a few buildings. The old cobblestone area contains some racks, the type used to stretch animal skins. There are various tools lying about that would be used for cutting, scraping, or stretching skins. One skin stretching on the rack looks strangely humanoid. A successful **Routine (+10%) Intelligence Test (+30% with Surgery)** has the PCs see that no arms or legs are attached. The torso is of the correct proportion but the color is strange in that it is unlike that of any furred animal.

Searching the site the PCs find a small stone building. There is a single door in the east-side and it seems untouched by the ravages of time. Inspecting it closer a successful **Intelligence Test (+10% for those with appropriate Trade skill)** indicates that the door looks new. The wood is solid, the nails show no signs of rust, and the hinges are oiled. The door is not locked and opens to reveal a set of stairs descending into darkness. It is impossible to tell how deep the stairs go.

**Franz's Hunters**

These men have all begun to indulge in the depravity

of consuming human flesh. While this practice has made them cold killers when stalking their intelligent brethren and the wilderness experience has hardened them physically, the consumption is taking its toll on their minds. These men are slowly becoming animals with a streak of malice, like rabid dogs. They slake their bloody thirst without the guidance of Khaine and will soon become howling lunatics. They will defend their lifestyle with their lives and will not give quarter.

**CAREER: HUNTER**

**Race:** Human (ish)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
30%	39%	30%	31%	34%	30%	28%	25%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0



**Skills:** Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment, Follow Trail, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Search, Scale Sheer Surface, Secret Signs (Rangers), Set Trap, Silent Move, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Frightening, Hardy, Lightening Reflexes, Rover

**Special Rules:** These men are all beginning to show various stages of ghoulishness. Some have sharpened their teeth to points, others suffer patches of excessive freckling and atrophied skin, and some have grey or blue tinged flesh that is sloughing off at the joints.

**Insanities:** Early signs of The Beast Within

**Armour:** Light Armour (Leather Jack)

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Bow, Dagger, Hand Weapon (Axe or Sword)

**Trappings:** Dead skin mask, 20 Arrows

### The Ruins of Astrid's Tower

The stairs look to have been carved from the rock and they are devoid of seams and joints. The stairs wind down 100 feet and the air grows colder the deeper they go. Any Dwarfs who examine the walls believe construction was done by Dwarfs. As the PCs travel down the stairs they notice that it begins to get brighter as they near the bottom. At the bottom is a long hallway dimly lit by candles and ending in a door. There is also a foul smell of burned meat and oil. The floor is littered with numerous bones, and candles give off a bright smoky yellow light. This light is enough to see by, and it reveals an area that looks to have been lived in for months. Trash lines the floor and bones crunch with each step. If Gerd is with the PCs now, he will look around worriedly and they will hear him whisper that this might not be his long sought-after tower.

#### Area 1

Hanging from chains attached to the walls are two dead bodies. Both have been skinned and partly butchered. PCs must make a **Will Power Test**, and if failed gain an Insanity Point. One of these bodies is a missing trapper, and the second is the missing priest, Hannes Sagebrecht.

#### Area 2

This small room looks like it serves as a kitchen. There is a hole (a well) in the southwest corner and next to it is a wooden bucket with a long rope attached to it. In the northwest corner a fireplace has been built. On a table rests a knife and some small but well cleaned bones. A PC with **Surgery** can make an **Intelligence Test** to discover that these are hand and finger bones of humanoid creatures.

#### Area 3

This small room is used for nothing more than storage. Many items are very old and show signs of heavy use. There is a wine rack on the south wall, but it only holds a few empty bottles. Hidden behind a concealed wall (**Challenging (-10%) Search Test**) there are six locked chests that contain a total of 200gc. The locks on the chest are very old and

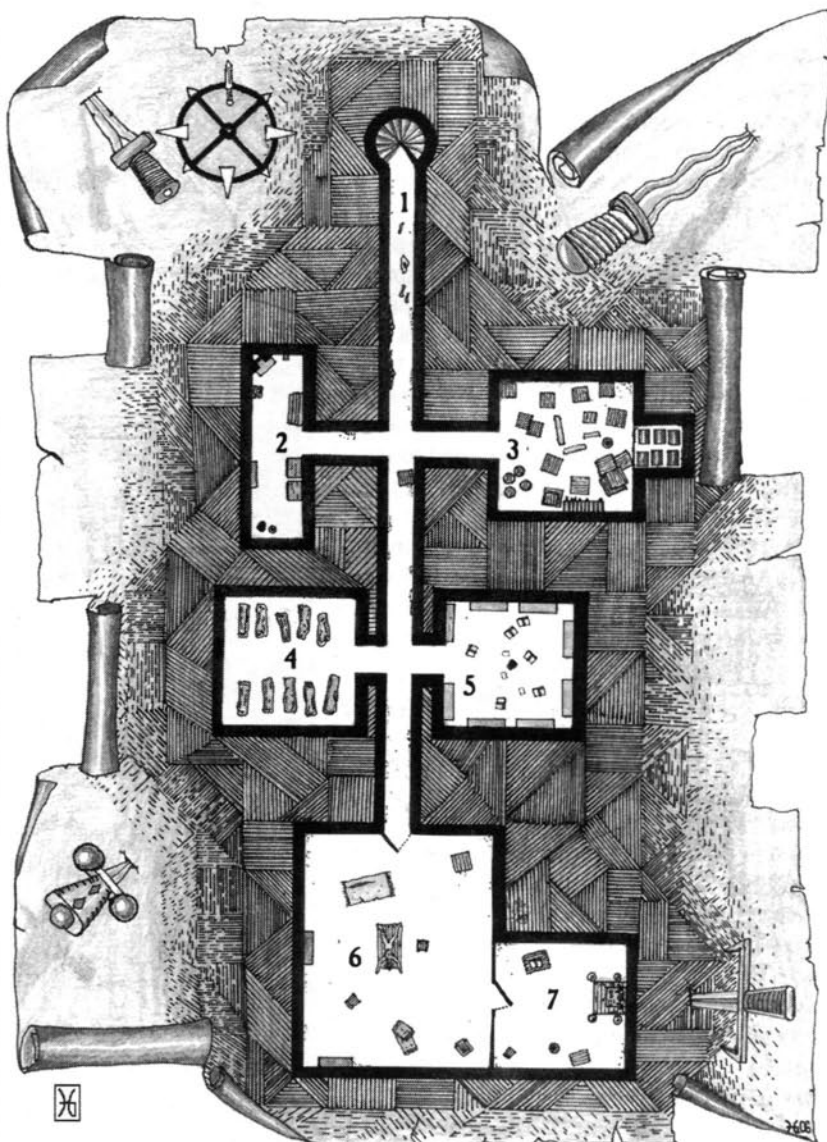
corroded. PCs who decide to smash the chests open have an angry Gerd to contend with. One of the chests is trapped with a poison gas that contains spores if the lock pick is failed, the lock is broken, or the chest is smashed. The spores have become more deadly over the years and anyone who breathes the spores takes the equivalent of Black Lotus Poison. Examining the coins the PCs notice that they are 500 or so years old, and by their markings the coins were minted in Altdorf, Nuln and Bretonnia. In one of the chests there is an old map of the area dated to the time of Astrid, along with her journal from the two years prior to her murder. This is all that remains of Astrid's wealth and once Gerd realises this he begins to whimper and mutter about losing his legacy.

#### Area 4

This large room looks to be a sleeping area of some type. Spread across the floor are ten bedrolls and many bones. Searching the bedrolls for more than a round, the PCs find a small leather bag made from soft leather. A **Hard (-20%) Intelligence Test** reveals the leather is of human origin. The bag contains 9gc.

#### Area 5

The first thing that the PCs notice when they enter this room is the



foul odour. In the centre of the room is a small hole, and by the look of it the room serves as an outhouse for the inhabitants. At one time this small room was a library and bookcases line all four walls. A quick study of the collection (four or more rounds) informs literate PCs that the subjects of history, anthropology, zoology and theology were covered. The collection is very old, and some of the books are titles that Gerd has never heard of. The new inhabitants of the tower have apparently found a better use for these books, as most have been defiled with faecal waste while others have been ripped to shreds for no apparent reason. When Gerd discovers this he begins to cry for five minutes straight. This was Astrid's private collection of books, many of which she kept simply because of the value illuminated texts carried. Searching the books for at least five rounds the PCs can find a few that have escaped destruction.

#### Area 6

A large room that was once Astrid's workshop, it is now in ruins. In the center of the room is a single table and chained to it is a naked man. He groans in pain as soon as the PCs enter the room. The man was a member of Franz's strange cult, but unfortunately for him he was the weakest physically. In recent days, there has been a shortage of human prey and Franz ordered that one member must give up their own flesh for the good of the group. Yesterday the man was beaten, dragged to this room and chained to the table. Franz cut out the majority of his liver and feasted upon it with the rest of his men. Since then, the man has remained chained to the table, awaiting death. Franz received word of a possible party of armed wanderers heading for this area, and he and his men evacuated immediately forgetting their victim. The man's sanity is gone and the only thing he can do is gurgle, "Kill me." PCs should make a **Willpower Test**, with failure resulting in 1 Insanity Point.

#### Area 7

This room contains a small ledger, a makeshift altar, four candles covered in a dark crusty substance, a vat, a full candle mould with wicks in it, and a small chest. The small ledger documents all of the humans killed and eaten, including the failed attack on Adolph Hildenbrandt and his subsequent blinding. There are also details about the man chained to the table and his communal sacrifice for the good of the cabal. The ledger also contains the sordid detail of the meat provided for the villagers and Franz's gleeful comments about them eating their own priest. The four candles have been coated in human blood. The mould contains human fat hardening into candles. The small chest is unlocked and contains a small amount of Imperial coinage (roughly 20gc), some quills made of human bone, and an incredibly sharp knife with an evil grinning skull carved into the hilt. The altar is made of bleached human bones, including a skull.

#### Back to the Surface

On the surface, Franz and his men are waiting for the PCs. A PC



making a successful **Very Hard (30%) Perception Test** will sense that all is not right. Franz and his band of men (number at GM's discretion) have taken up strategic positions along the perimeter of the camp so as to harass the intruders with a volley of arrows. Four of these men and Franz are set to do this for an indefinite period. One man waits at the goat trail in the brush. He will fire a single arrow then await the arrival of the first intruder. The other three men are concealed by piles of rubble around the area of a recently set trip wire that has been set along the most direct route to the goat trail.

PCs crossing this area must roll a **Hard (-10%) Perception Test**. Passing the test they see the wire and can leap over it in time. Failing, they crash forward onto the hard cobblestones, taking one S4 hit and counting as prone for 1d5 rounds. If this happens, or if only two PCs have not crossed the trip wire, the three attackers leap out and begin to attack with their swords. Once the PCs have begun to succumb, Franz and the archers leap forth with hand weapons drawn. Franz's rabid followers fight to the death and, in some cases after felling an opponent, begin to devour the closest

body (going for so long without human flesh has driven most of the party mad at the sight of blood). Franz, on the other hand, still has a sense of self-preservation and believes that since he was able to escape a similar situation before, he can do so again. If his followers are reduced by half or his Wounds are reduced to 3 or less, he will attempt to flee. If successful, the PCs have no chance of tracking him as he knows the area too well.

If the GM so wishes (if the party is rather strong, or the party actually feels sorry for Gerd), have the hunter lying in ambush by the goat trail fire the first arrow. This kills Gerd instantly (with suitable gurgling and/or scream of agony).

**FRANZ KRUNZ**

Franz Krunz was a normal, everyday hunter from a typical Reikland village. He was under the direct order of Karl-Franz to keep his woodlands safe from rabble-rousers (direct order meaning he had been hired by the local Marshall to act in his stead). One day, he met with a corpse-like figure roasting some strange animal over a spit. Seeing this, Franz flew into a rage and killed the man in one swift stroke. He took the man's strange yet very sharp blade, accidentally cutting himself as he did so. Upon investigating the spit, he was shocked to find a human child. Disgusted yet intrigued at the same time, Franz could not sate his curiosity. No one would know if he had just one little taste. Since that day, Franz has consumed nothing but human flesh. Being that his quarry is illegal, he had to find more ample pastures and Gletscherpunkt has been just the place. He never knew he would recruit such a following. Perhaps they would not be so eager if they knew he had begun to worship his lord Khaine. Regardless, Kranz is a cold-blooded killer and will do whatever it takes to sate his appetite and nurture the change that lord Khaine has blessed him with.

**Career:** Initiate of Khaine (ex-scout, ex-hunter)  
**Race:** Ghoul/Human

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
51%	58%	52%	57%	39%	26%	22%	29%
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	15	5	5	4	0	3	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Theology), Animal Care, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment +10%, Dodge Blow, Follow Trail +10%, Gossip, Heal, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception +10%, Ride, Search, Secret Language (Ranger Tongue), Secret Signs (Rangers), Secret Signs (Scout), Set Trap, Silent Move +10%, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Charm Animal, Frightening, Hardy, Lightning Reflexes, Mighty Shot, Orientation, Rapid Reload, Rover, Specialist Weapon (Longbow), Very Strong

**Special Rules:** Franz has a poisonous bite and clawed hands similar to that of a ghoul. Unlike his followers, however, he is not so eager to rend his victims with his teeth. If a victim becomes prone, Franz will pull aside his mask and bite the victim (this causes 1d4 Sanity points to the victim), saving the individual for later butchering. All opponents must make

a Fear test when first facing Franz, even if they have faced his men before. He exudes an aura of evil unlike any other.

**Armour:** Leather Jack

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 0, Body 1, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Bow, Dagger, Sword

**Trappings:** 20 Arrows, Leather Jack, Pouch with 5gc 3/15, Dead skin mask of Hannes Sagebrecht

**Aftermath**

Once Franz Krunz and his men are dealt with the threat to the village is over. The villagers are happy to know that the disappearances have stopped. The PCs are treated with respect and everyone is quick to hear the PCs recount their brave fight against monsters or evil spirits.

If the PCs attempt to explain to the villagers that Franz and his men were behind the disappearances and raise the spectre of cannibalism, the villagers react angrily at first. A PC with **Public Speaking** or any suitably rousing speech calms the villagers. With that, the PCs are asked politely to leave as soon as possible, with a room at the inn being offered free of charge for a single night, if need be. The village wishes to mourn the loss of their priest and so many good men in private.

If the PCs bring the journal of Franz with them and expose the whole village as cannibals, chaos ensues. Accusations fly against the PCs, against Sheriff Baer, and even against Old Mila who is called a witch. The PCs can either attempt to make order of this mess or leave the village quickly and quietly as soon as the fingers point away from them.

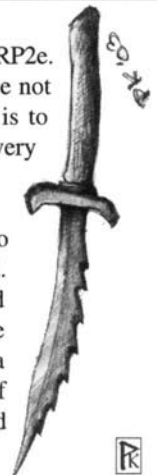
Another option to end this adventure (and lengthen it) is to have the PCs return to a village that is deathly quiet. A Witch Hunter and his band of zealots have arrived due to rumours of a village of cannibals subsisting in the foothills of the Grey Mountains. If the PCs have evidence of cannibalism, they may not wish to share it with a Witch Hunter who will surely find guilt by association and state that ignorance is no excuse for depravity. The PCs may also be guilty of such crimes, as defined by the Witch Hunter, if they ate the stew when they first arrived in town.

There are a couple of plot hooks to continue this adventure. The small sharp knife in Franz's altar room bears an inscription of a blade maker that could possibly be tracked. And who's to say that a clumsy PC handling such a sharp knife might not accidentally cut himself, just as Franz did...

**KHAINE**

Khaine has, so far, largely been absent from WFRP2e. This offers a brief summary to those who have not encountered him before. Another alternative is to have the Ghouls worship Khorne, or perhaps a very warped version of Mórr.

Khaine is the patron god of assassins and murderers. He is Mórr's brother and said to be jealous of his rule over the world of the dead. His worship is outlawed throughout the Old World. Khaine is depicted as a grotesque squatting being with four arms, each hold a dagger. Scholars argue that he is an aspect of Khorne. His symbols are the dagger and scorpion.



# A COUNTRY PRACTICE

A Short Story by Alice Stewart

Through his half-sleep, Theodor Grunbach could feel the tentacles slither across the flesh of his chest and legs. At the edges of his consciousness he heard the strange unnatural chattering of the beasts conspiring. He felt something sharp like fangs digging into his heart. Above him, he could just make out the daemonic features breaking into a mocking grin. Faintly, in the distance, he could hear the prayers for salvation, 'In the name of the most merciful Shallya, protect us...'

The nightmare ended suddenly. Grunbach's eyes snapped open and he tried to raise himself from the bed.

It couldn't have been much after midnight. Something sharp was jabbing into his chest and there was a wet sensation on his forehead.

'Sigmar, what the...,' he tried to speak as he began to focus through the gloom. He made out four pairs of eyes peering back at him. Grunbach recognised the old landlord, Lothar, who stood over him, behind his head. Lothar tried to avoid eye contact while nervously using his fingers to drip some sort of liquid onto Grunbach's forehead and face. He was muttering something under his breath, too, repeating the words over and over again, some Shallyan prayer of protection.

'Oi! Watch it. 'Ere 'e comes. We've woken the daemons,' said a high pitched and frail voice near Grunbach's right ear. Grunbach immediately recognised it as the landlord's mother's, Eva. She breathed in his ear and cackled. 'We've woken the daemons, quickly anoint 'im in the name of peace, quickly. Sha'n't 'ave none of us 'ere you blackhearted daemon, you. We've all ate our onions.' With that, the old woman stretched up and breathed as heavily as she could right into Grunbach's face. He could just make out the smell of onion among the many other stench in the hag's graveyard mouth.

Next to Eva was the red-faced Gustav. Gustav, who had earlier joined Grunbach in polite conversation about the weather, was now eyeing him suspiciously and prodding his chest with a small knife. 'Shall I test him? Shall I test him?' he cried excitedly, waving the knife around. 'How does it go? How does it go?'

Eva answered, 'Stick a needle in 'is eye, 't isn't right if 'e don't cry.' Grunbach instinctively shut his eyes tight. He had heard a number of variations on that nursery rhyme, none of them more pleasant than that particular version.

'We ain't got no needles,' complained another voice.

'In the name of the most merciful Shallya protect us from this spawn of darkness, hear our prayer,' Lothar continued, half under his breath, barely audible through the din of the others.

'Frau Hochzig's got a load of needles, she must have. Go and wake her someone.'

'It don't 'ave to be needles,' Eva interrupted, her fetid breath blowing into Grunbach's ear and across his face. 'You only 'as to cut 'im. That knife'll do nicely.'

Grunbach decided it was time to put an end to this nonsense. He would surely make these people pay for their stupidity and disrespect. He went to sit up, but only then noticed the leather thongs that tied his

chest to the bed. He struggled for a few seconds but it was obvious that he could not free himself that way. He tried to kick his feet but they were secured, too.

'Careful dearies, you're wakin' the daemons. They'll be up and at us soon.'

'In the name of the most merciful Shallya...'

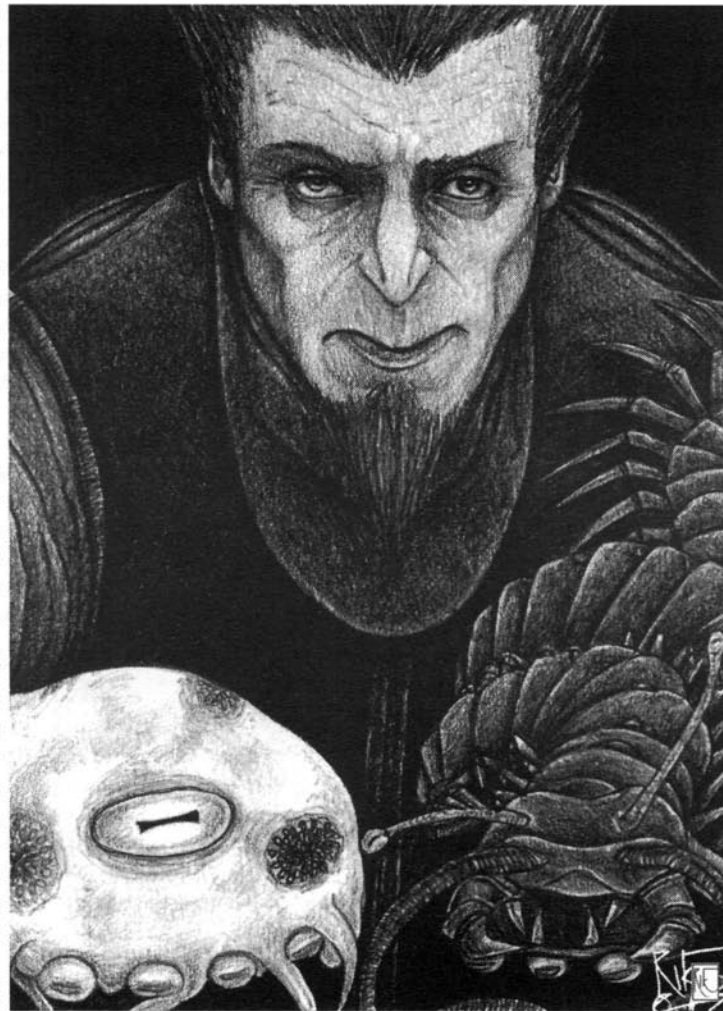
Grunbach tried to make his voice as clear and unruffled as possible. 'What is the meaning of this?' he demanded. Despite his compromised position he hoped that his tone was sufficiently commanding.

'Ooh, 'ark at 'im,' Eva cackled until she gagged and coughed up a mouthful of phlegm. Nervous laughter in the background followed. 'He's a feisty one.'

To Grunbach's left a voice joined the rest, a calm, commanding voice, quieting his fellows. 'Be careful,' it said thoughtfully. 'I heard they can call down their wicked minions to feast upon our innocent souls.' Grunbach recognised this voice too. It was Hans Stirbeck, Schalkenhof's physician.

Grunbach had arrived in the village a few hours after nightfall. He had made surprisingly good time on his journey from Bergsburg and decided to forsake a leisurely pace but instead press on into the night. He managed to arrive a day early. Most of the village of Schalkenhof was asleep, but there was still life in the inn.

Grunbach had thought it odd the way the innkeeper had stared at him dumbly when he had asked to see the mayor. Grunbach had got used to people viewing him suspiciously, but it seemed he was expected here and the people were terrified. The innkeeper, whom he later found



out was called Lothar, just fiddled with the lapels of his rough woollen tunic and waited for his mother to speak. She cackled loudly, rocking back and forth on her chair, dressed in ragged and filthy clothes that looked many years old. 'The mayor's asleep, young man. You won't see him tonight. Won't wake for Sigmar, that one, with all due respect to our gracious mayor,' she added, then laughed some more until she began to cough.

Grunbach had decided to take some brandy before retiring. It was cheap, nasty Talabecland stuff, but it still warmed him. The only remaining clientele were two men sitting at a table by the fading fire. They had been playing cards but had stopped now. The Bergsburger was about to take a seat on the other side of the room, when the two men stood. They faced Theodor with an air of confrontation, presenting a united front.

'Good evening to you, stranger', the tall one spoke. He sounded half educated, at least. 'Tis a fair night for travel.' The anxiety in the man's voice was plain.

Theodor nodded and sat. The two remained standing.

'I am Hans Stirbeck, the physician of this village, sir,' the thin-faced man lifted his black, leather case, the symbol of physicians everywhere, and continued. Grunbach barely acknowledged him. 'They say around here, when Mannslieb's bright, then travel all night. When Mannslieb's red, go early to bed.' He gave a short nervous laugh, more of a choke than a chuckle.

Grunbach grimaced. If this is what passed for sophisticated evening conversation in these parts, he would rather have silence.

'Some in the big city say country folk are simple,' said Hans nervously, sensing Grunbach's derision, 'but be assured, sir, that there is wisdom in our sayings and our saws.'

Grunbach took another sip of his brandy. He could see the two men working up their courage from each other's presence. It was all they could do to avoid running home. He gave a snort of contempt, 'And in the big city, physician, there is wisdom in our education and our sciences.'

There was silence for a moment; Grunbach decided that he would have peace after all.

'My name is Gustav.' The man to Hans' right spoke up. He was short and round and trembling. His pudgy cheeks were bright scarlet, surrounded by his messy shock of blond hair. 'I am the village butcher. May I ask what brings you to Schalkenhof, sir?'

'My business here is confidential,' said Grunbach abruptly.

'Be careful,' said Hans. It sounded for a moment like a warning, or a threat.

'What do you mean by that?' said Grunbach fiercely.

Hans smiled, conciliatorily. 'I only mean to say that country folk have their ways and sometimes they can get confused by the ways of the big city people. They don't have the experience of the wider world, if you see what I mean.'

'True enough, I suppose.' Grunbach thought of some of the ignorant peasants he had met in his time, some of the ridiculous superstitions he had come across.

'I would dare say there is more evil in the city than out here,' said

Hans. 'It's just harder to hide out here, where there are fewer people.'

'And are you talking from experience?' asked Grunbach. He could tell the physician had lived in the city before, and wondered what he was doing now, out in the middle of nowhere.

'No,' Hans said flatly and shook his head.

'Won't you join us for a drink?' Gustav asked holding up his mug.

Grunbach shook his head. He really didn't want to speak to these two any longer. He thought he might just finish this terrible brandy and go straight up to bed.

'Are you sure?' Gustav asked again. 'The brandy here is quite excellent don't you know?'

'Quite,' said Grunbach.

And so Grunbach had retired. He hardly remembered getting off to sleep, but then had awoken to these villagers and their utter stupidity.

'When I get out of this, I'm going to...' Grunbach felt the constricting bonds and realised that threats at this stage might not be wise. He decided to change his tack. He looked around the bed, through the

darkness, at the faces that peered back at him. Some still seemed frightened despite his obvious powerlessness. Eva was enjoying herself immensely. Lothar trembled as he dripped more ointment onto Grunbach's forehead and continued his incessant litany.

'Good sirs, won't you release me and then we can talk reasonably about the situation and any grievance you may have against me.'

'He's a devious one, isn't'e, 'e's tryin' a be our friend now, mind. What do they say young Hansie? Them's that fey and said to be friends, be only friends for their own ends? I say we prick his eyes, see if he cries.'

'In the name of the most merciful Shallya who protects all who show the strength of faith...'

'I assure you madam, that will not be necessary. Why don't you just ask me whatever it is you want to know?' said Grunbach as politely as he could manage through gritted teeth.

'Ooh, get 'im with all the talk,' cackled Eva. 'I'll 'ave you know, we gotta defend areselfes from the likes of thee. We gotta keep us safe and the forest folk

out. You won't be creepin' round the bushes after are young girls, nor eatin' no babies in Schalkenhof.'

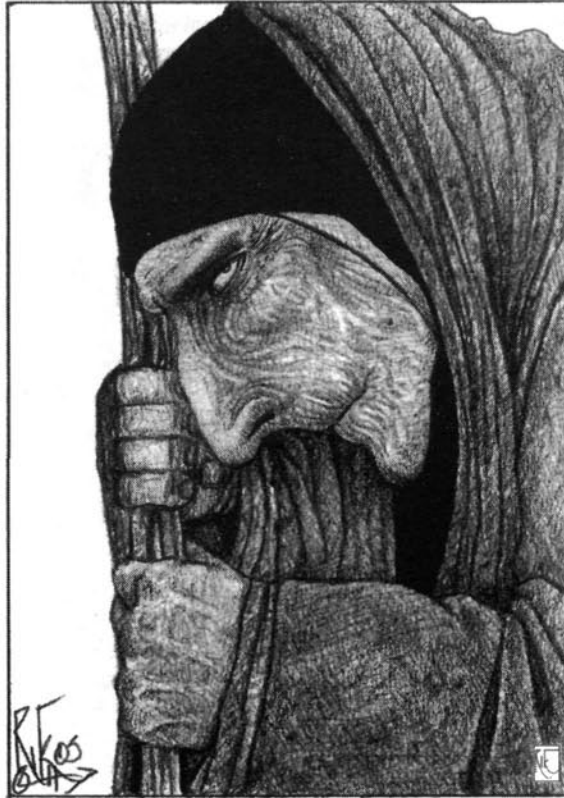
'Shh, Eva' interrupted Hans. 'You know it's said they can cast magical spells with their voices. Don't listen to him. His very words can play tricks. We need to shut him up. He might be able to call down his wicked minions to feast upon our innocent souls.'

'I'm jus' lettin' 'im know he aint got us beat, and none of 'is friends 'ave, neither,' responded Eva avidly. 'Listen gentleman-daemon, we's got a Witch-Hunter coming 'ere tomorrow and he'll get you and all your ilks. You know what they say, 'Witch-Hunter cometh, Daemons better runneth.'

The anger in Grunbach welled up suddenly at the woman's stupidity. 'You haggard crone, I am a...'

Before he could finish, Hans thrust a ball of rags into Grunbach's mouth.

Grunbach bit down trying to stop him but his teeth sunk into flesh and it was too late. Hans already had enough fingers in to keep the mouth wide and force more of the rags in.





'Oi 'e's drawn blood. Sharp teeth these dark creatures, like cats. Be sure to eat an onion, deary, by sunrise, or you'll be dead within the month. That's what they say.'

Grunbach thrashed around as much as his bonds would allow but Hans was tenacious and soon his mouth was full of the coarse, dry cloth. Grunbach began to worry he was going to choke, and it was difficult to breath. Admitting defeat to himself and in a state of humiliation Grunbach lay still and concentrated on breathing as best he could as the rags sucked the moisture from his mouth.

'There,' Hans declared, 'That will stop him from calling down his wicked minions.'

'Can I do 'im now,' Gustav asked, brandishing his knife.

'Yes, do 'im. Do 'im, now,' the chorus of approval went up.

Gus gripped his pocket knife tightly, trembling.

'In the name of the most merciful Shallya, protect us from this spawn of darkness, hear our prayer.'

Grunbach closed his eyes but knew he could not avoid what was to come. The sensation of utter pain grabbed his eyeball and seemed to thrust it up into his brain. Spikes of pure agony wrapped themselves around his head and lashed. Grunbach tried to scream and somewhere beyond the white line of pain, he considered that he was about to die.

Then he felt the blood dripping down the side of his face. He managed to open his left eye, but could barely see out of that, and closed it again. Despite his pain, despite his helplessness, Grunbach steeled himself and tried to concentrate on what they were saying; he knew it might be the key to his survival.

'There 'e goes. What did I tell you? Stick a needle in 'is eye, T'isn't right if he don't cry. T'isn't right I'll tell you that for nothin'.'

'Yes,' said Gustav, 'not a sound. He truly walks the slime covered path with the tentacled dark ones of nightmare.'

'Shallya protect us!' cried Eva, rocking back and forth excitedly. 'Something needs to be done before he can call down his wicked minions to feast upon our innocent souls.'

'In the name of the most merciful Shallya, protect us from this spawn of darkness, hear our prayer,' continued the landlord.

'No, it's not that at all,' Hans explained. 'Stick a needle in its eye. T'aint a daemon that don't cry. So he's not a daemon, I think we've proved that right enough.'

'Well,' said Gustav, 'we can't just let him go, can we. He might wreak vengeance upon the innocents.'

'Why would he wreak vengeance if he's not a daemon?' asked Hans.

'Coz I just stabbed his eye out with my rusty pocket knife, that's why.' Gustav held the bloodied blade up for Hans to see.

'Maybe he's a witch or something,' shouted Eva. She was still breathing her fetid breath all over Grunbach, but now this was strangely helping him. It was the only sensation pulling him away from the almost intolerable pain in his eye socket, and as such he was savouring every stale whiff. 'Maybe 'e's not a daemon, but a witch that's come here to summon a daemon to our village to wreak vengeance upon our innocent souls.'

'Yes,' said Gustav with relief, 'we have to keep him tied up, until the Witch-Hunter arrives. He'll know what to do with him.'

'Is that what you are?' asked Hans. 'Are you a witch come to summon a daemon to wreak vengeance upon our innocent souls?' He jabbed his own knife into the prisoner's hand. Grunbach gagged and tried to pull his arm away, but he could hardly move and he couldn't scream.

'What do they say about witches?'

'Witches be they who show ire, when thrown upon a burning fire?' Gleeful anticipation spread over Eva's features as she spoke this old rhyme.

'We can't do that yet, not here,' said Gustav. 'That would be too messy, with the bed and all. We can burn him tomorrow when the Witch-Hunter comes.'

'We could drop 'ot coals on 'im,' ventured Eva. 'That'll do the job nice. Lothar, deary, go fetch a bucket of embers from the great fire, will you now?'

Grunbach heard Lothar's slow steps recede as he walked away dutifully, still reciting the prayers to Shallya. At least the ointment was no longer being drizzled across his forehead and running down his face. 'May Shallya protect us through the strength of prayer. May she protect us through the strength of faith. May she protect us through the strength of innocence.'

'We can't just go on mutilating him,' said Hans. 'We should look for solid proof of his guilt.'

'Look,' said Eva, 'someone's worryin' the flock, right?' Hans nodded. 'Someone's bringin' down 'eavy rains for the time of year?' Hans agreed once more. 'Something's disturbin' the 'orses at night, right?' Hans could not disagree. 'An' Victor Grubber's sheep dog threw up a rabbit last week.' Hans nodded again.

'Someone's dancin' with mutant goats in blood drenched garb beneath the full moon, right?' Hans shrugged; Eva was the only villager to have claimed to actually have seen this.

'What advice did Mayor Reufig get back from the Witch-Hunter?' asked Eva, rhetorically.

'Beware strangers!' chimed in Gustav.

'An' this man is the only stranger we've seen round here for a month or so.' Hans nodded, as if satisfied with the old woman's reasoning.

'Then we must give him a proper trial,' said Hans, calmly. 'If he truly is guilty, which I suppose he must be, then the mayor has Sigmar's authority to convict him. Or, we can wait for the Witch-Hunter.' Hans paused, waiting for some support.

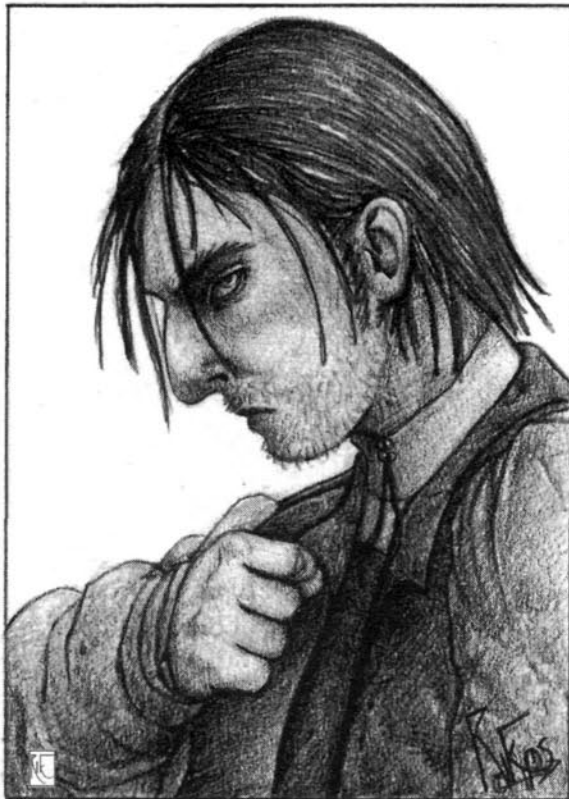
'Let's do him now. As soon as we can. Don't want no daemons lying around any longer than we must,' shouted Gustav excitedly, brandishing his knife. 'Do him now.'

Eva emitted her familiar high pitched cackle. 'Let's get ol' Reufig. Let's get the mayor an' 'ave a proper court, nice an' legal, like.'

'Go and get Reufig, then,' said Hans to Eva. 'Tell Lothar to come with you, just to be safe, and not to worry about the hot coals, yet.'

When Eva had gone, Hans and Gustav looked at each other across Grunbach's body. They were silent for a few moments. Gustav looked down at Grunbach's eye. The fluids had begun to congeal in a purple mess that cracked rhythmically with the man's slow breathing. He gripped his knife tightly. 'Shall we do the other one?' he asked. 'Just to be sure, you know?'

'Perhaps,' said Hans. 'We may need to act quickly when the time



comes. But that pocket knife is no good if we need to do away with him. Why don't you get your cleaver and a few other tools from your place?"

'Yes, yes my cleaver,' Gustav's enthusiasm was apparent. 'My cleaver and my big knife. Yes.'

'Go now, and get them,' said Hans. 'But don't forget to take a long time to clean them very carefully. Take a while to clean your things, remember. You never can be too careful. You know what they say. 'Daemon blood, t'is no good. Don't be fools, clean your tools.'

'Yes. Yes,' shouted Gustav and skipped away happily.

Grunbach heard Gustav's footsteps as he continued down the stairs. Then there was barely a sound. He was alone now with Hans. Hans was more considerate than the others. Perhaps he could reason with him. Perhaps, if Hans would just take the rags out of his mouth they could talk and sort this out before the others returned. All Grunbach would need, really, is a few moments in which to convince the man that he was the Witch-Hunter they were awaiting.

Grunbach opened his left eye. Through the pain he could see the physician rummaging around inside his black leather bag. Perhaps he had some medicines in there that might sooth his pain. Hans was a reasonable man.

Hans looked up and gazed straight into Grunbach's good eye. 'Hello, Witch-Hunter,' he said.

Those simple words were like a violent blow to Grunbach's body. If Hans had known all along that Grunbach was the Witch-Hunter, then why was he suffering the villagers their misapprehension? Why was he going along with their ignorant nonsense?

'Yes, Witch-Hunter Grunbach,' Hans said quietly. 'I know who you are. Fortunately, the villagers are simple folk. They will believe almost anything. If it rhymes, then so much the better: Tied up on the bed; soon to be dead. Don't you think?'

Grunbach made one last huge effort to wrestle himself free of the leather straps. He shook himself violently from side to side, wriggling for his life. The bed lurched onto two legs and crashed back to the floor again. One of the legs broke and the frame of the bed cracked.

But still Grunbach was tied fast. He could barely move a single limb. Now panic surged inside him. He knew he only had moments to live, unless he could think of a way to be free of his bonds.

'Do not worry,' said Hans flatly, 'soon you will be beyond mortal concerns. Now, does Mayor Reufig know you? Has he ever seen your face?' Hans took a long bladed scalpel from his bag.

Grunbach nodded as best he could. Perhaps that would save him. If he could convince Hans that the mayor (whom he had never actually met) could recognise him, then killing him as a daemon would do no good.

'Tell the truth, now. Be careful, yes. Because if he does know you, then I will have to remove your face before he gets here, and I will do it while you still live.' Grunbach shook his head, now.

'I hope you are not lying to me,' said Hans in measured tones. Grunbach shook his head again.

'You may be wondering why I have been forced into such an odd predicament.' Hans stated matter-of-factly. 'The truth is, however slow-witted and unsubtle you Witch-Hunters are; however ready to believe the hysterical ravings of a tortured captive, rather than use your brains and intuition; however disinclined you might be to put intelligence and reason to use; I just could not risk having one of your kind sniffing around my village. I was most surprised to learn that the mayor had sent for you. I may have underestimated the drunken, dithering idiot slightly, perhaps.' Hans put his hands into his bag once more.

'In addition, my babies do need their feeding. Don't you, my lovelies.' Hans pulled his hands from the bag. In one palm sat a diaphanous, fleshy blob, about a foot round. Through its sheer flesh Grunbach could see strange internal organs heaving and pumping. A number of long pinkish tentacles hung down waving slightly. A single, red eye looked unblinking at the Witch-Hunter and several mouths opened

and closed revealing rows of sharp yellow teeth.

'Ahh, Phl'ere'baal my darling,' sang Hans joyously and he made little kissing gestures at the gibbering mass. To Grunbach's horror, the blasphemous creature seemed to reciprocate and many of its mouths aped its master's kisses, humming with tiny, high-pitched ululations.

In Hans' other hand, a long, green centipedal thing was coiled. It spiraled round his arm several times and disappeared behind his back. Its eyes protruded on foot-long stalks and darted about avidly. Below that its mouth, wider than its body, hissed pink steam and gaped revealing four razor fangs. Its countless legs flicked and scratched as its length writhed. Shiny chitinous armour covered its head and body.

'And Erg'al'axs my love. Didn't daddy promise you din-dins soon?' The look of exquisite rapture on Hans' face was what most befuddled Grunbach as he watched the lunatic physician help the two abominations onto the bed. 'They just go for the heart, and the odd internal organ. No

one will ever know,' said Hans, smiling. 'I'll tell them it was a heart attack.'

Grunbach felt the creatures make their way up his legs and onto his torso. The myriad legs of the centipedal one dug roughly into his flesh, while the octopod slid its way up on a cold, strange slime.

The pinkish steam that the centipede was emitting found its way into Grunbach's lungs. Suddenly, despite the rush of fear, Grunbach felt oddly calm. Some mercy was making him sleepy and almost uncaring of the mad scene. Perhaps it was Shallya's will, Grunbach thought, or perhaps it was the noxious daemonic miasma, as he began to lose consciousness.

Through his half-sleep, Theodor Grunbach could feel the tentacles slither across the flesh of his chest and legs. At the edges of his consciousness he heard the strange unnatural chattering of the beasts conspiring. He felt something sharp like fangs digging into his heart. Above him, he could just make out the daemonic features breaking into a mocking grin.

At least the nightmare was ending.



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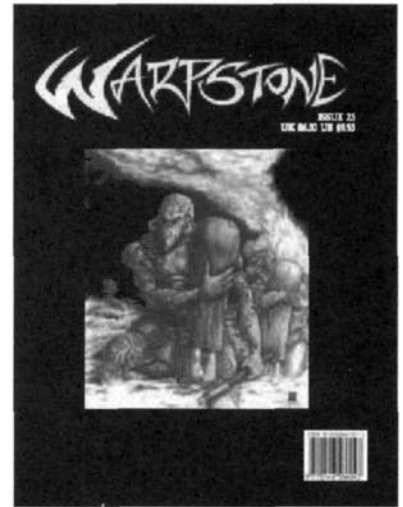
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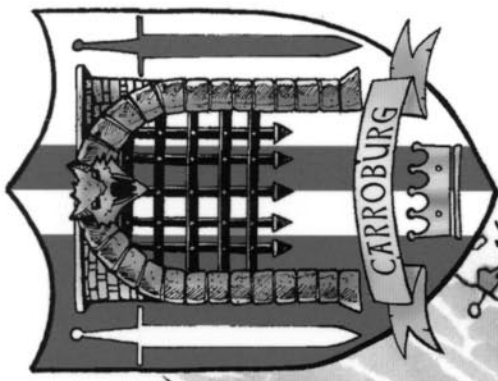
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2. Craft District
3. Schlaefanstieg
4. Guildhall
5. Temple of Sigmar
6. Temple of Verena
7. Temple of Ulric
8. Courts
9. City Hall
10. Naval Docks
11. Imperial Admiralty Buildings
12. Palace
13. Palace District
14. Famous Gate

### Out of Carroburg

15. Road goes South alongside Bogen to Weissbruk
16. To Schattenas & Furdienst
17. Small Road to the Mirror Moors, Punzen & Anseldorf
18. To Dunkelbid
19. Inn and track to Skaag Hills
20. To Weidmarkt

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