

# ARTSTONE



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Issue 29  
£8.50

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE FOR  
WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY

ISSN 1465-6604

ISSN 0-146566-04-1



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THORGRIP

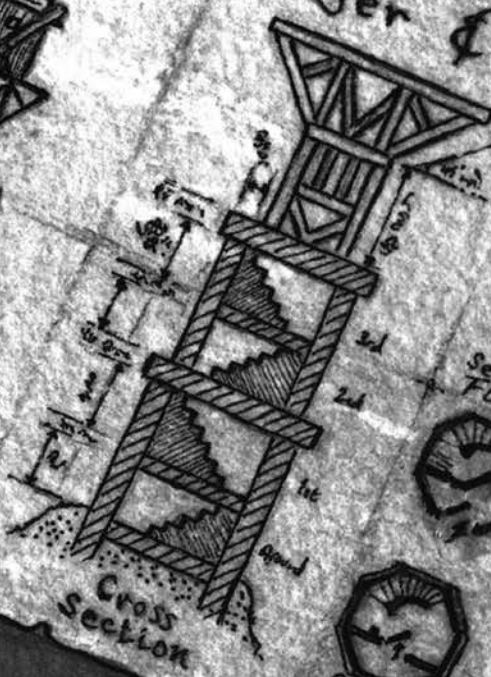
SOUTH ELEVATION



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Cross Section



Signal Room



Second Floor



Third Floor



Ground Floor



First Floor

BERGER

THORGRIP

## EDITORIAL

By John Foody

Just one more issue to go and as you can see we are trying to squeeze in as much as we can in the last two issues. The downside of this is the price increase.

As we pulled this issue together an Undead theme emerged. These articles and scenarios are underpinned by two articles (Womb of the Gods and Dead Man Walking).

These both give explanations as to the nature of undeath in the Old World. There is an argument that such things should not be explained but I believe that giving GMs a firm understanding of the mechanics of the world can only help produce stronger background. Of course, such rules can always be broken by individual GMs.

Next issue's editorial will look to the future, so this one will look at *Warpstone's* past. To celebrate thirty issues and thirteen years of the fanzine we are hoping readers will send us their thoughts and comments on *Warpstone*. This could be comments on a favourite article or illustration, how a scenario grew into a campaign, what *Warpstone* got right or what it got wrong, and so on. It can be anything *Warpstone* related – each subject should have a title and a maximum of 150 words (but you can send more than one). We hope to publish in *Legion* shortly after issue 30 is released (hopefully later this year). Send us your comments to the usual e-mail address (right). Here are mine:

**My ten favourite *Warpstone* articles:** (this was really hard to get down to ten and so many excellent pieces were missed out) in no particular order:

1. Clerics of Shallya (WS10) - Bringing life to a cult many saw as boring and difficult.
2. A Touch of Evil (WS16) - Surprisingly popular and always roundly disliked by some.
3. Talabheim (various) - Everything came together well for this. So much so that it influenced the official version.
4. Eight Tribes (WS17) - Showing how the history of the Old World is important to the present.
5. Sea of Claws (WS19) - An excellent example of how to describe a whole region with style.
6. Lowest of the Low (WS20) - Showing how the oft-ignored half-Orcs can be incorporated into the setting.
7. Going Underground (WS22) - A fresh look at adventuring underground and how it can be brought to life.
8. The Firim (WS25) - An example of true fan work - made with passion and brilliance. Shockingly underrated.
9. Unfinished Symphony (WS28) - A scenario where the various elements are perfectly balanced.
10. A System of Complex Signalling Machines (WS29) - Taking a small element of the background and running with it.

Just missed out – Cold Warriors (WS24), If We Build It, They will Come (WS20), Templars (WS3 to WS5), The Trust (WS18), Guilds within the Empire (WS18), Unveiling the Lady (WS28)

My favourites among my own pieces (forgive the indulgence); Whaling in Marienburg (WS9), A Hundred Years of Trade (WS3) and Noble Blood (WS11).

**My favourite pieces of artwork** (another hard task); Doktor Theodor & Otto (WS3, pg. 29), Necromancer (cover WS10), Noble Blood portraits (WS11, pg. 26-27), Champion of Chaos (WS12, pg. 30), Theodor Brandeur (WS13, pg. 33), Ghost (Cover WS15, also this issue pg. 27), Headhunters, Player Handout (WS15, pg. 31), The Dwarf Guards (WS20, pg. 51), Amon in Flames (WS21, pg. 40), Ghoul Tree (cover WS22), Niki Bibi (WS25, pg. 23), Balor (cover WS25), Kasper von Jüdel (WS29, pg. 59)

**What *Warpstone* got right:** Over 1600 pages of WFRP. Loads of great ideas and background for the game. *Warpstone* was proud to give many artists and writers the chance of being published for the first time and hopefully encouraging them to do more. Help the game's visibility when there was no official publisher.

**What *Warpstone* did not get right:** We could have done more to publicise the magazine and embed it in the hearts of WFRP fans. Failed to really get a good letters page up and running. Art in issue 25 (bad printing let it down).

That's it. We look forward to hearing your thoughts.

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Thanks to: Peter, Adam and Anthony.

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

## ORDERING BACK ISSUES

The following back issues are still available:

Issue 12 (Last few!)	Issue 24
Issue 15	Issue 25
Issue 17 (Last few!)	Issue 26
Issue 18 (Last few!)	Issue 27
Issue 20	Issue 28

Prices are at [www.warpstone.org](http://www.warpstone.org).

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## REPORTS FROM THE HEART OF CORRUPTION

## I Am Not an Adventurer!

6

An argument for having groups of PCs from related careers. Something we always thought worked well in WFRP.

"Building a scenario for a group of careers requires some consideration to make stronger scenarios."



## Dangerous Ingredients

43

Panic on the streets of Middenheim as Wizards are targeted for their suspicious ways. Seems reasonable enough.

"Wizards have a lot more freedom to do ill with their power and may or may not have the interests of the Empire at heart."



## The Collapsing Empire

8

A history of the infamous Drakwald Emperors and a look at their Empire during a reign of 215 years.

"The first millennium Empire had also grown complacent since its wealth, power and culture reached its zenith in the sixth century."



## Complex Signalling Machines

59

The popular signal towers of *Death on the Reik* get the full treatment here.

"Subversives captured a signal tower in the nearby village of Gluckshalt and used it to send false news of the Emperor's death."



## Womb of the Gods

13

An area of WFRP that really should have been sorted out before. Just where do the gods come from and where do souls go?

"The world of Warhammer is a place full of gods, magic and a wide variety of supernatural creatures."



## Beneath the Surface

67

Something stirs beneath the everyday calm of life in the village of Elbing.

"If you chew an oakleaf from an oak near the old stone circle with your right molars while you are saying a prayer to Mórr you will be able to put the living dead to rest!"



## Dead Man Walking

23

"The bats have left the bell tower, the victims have been bled". Thoughts on the Undead. Answers the question "Why don't they just burn the bodies, then?"

"I believe the logic of much game activity starts to look shaky."



## Joust for Fun

75

Welcome to the Great Nuln Tournament! Fun for all - whether they be low or high born.

"The tournament is open to any man, noble or common, who carries their plated armour and weapons upon their war-horse."



## Ghost Stories

27

Who you gonna call? An in-depth look at ghosts in WFRP and how to get the best out of them. No mention of rent-a-ghost though...

"Hitting ghosts hard and repeatedly with enchanted objects will get rid of them."



## The Haunting of Westenseite Mine

85

Troubled spirits, angry half-Orcs (yes, half-Orcs!) and a bunch of other nasty folk mean trouble for the PCs. You'd be surprised if it didn't really.

"He would not like to see them massacred - what would be the point?"



## Saint Olaf's Shrine

38

On the rocky shore of the Sea of Claws stands the shrine of the Verenan saint and his holy skull.

"Messner suspects that something lives deeper inside the woods."



## Zoats

99

Robin Low's follow-up to the Fimir. A look at background, culture and intentions of one of WFRP's most enigmatic and sidelined races.

"There existed a horrific race of creatures known as the Tyranids."



## ABBREVIATIONS

A	Number of Attacks	FP	Fate Points	IP	Insanity Points	RotIQ	Realm of the Ice Queen	W	Wounds
Ag	Agility	gc	Gold Crown	M	Movement	S	Strength	WFB	Warhammer Fantasy Battle
AP	Armour Points	GM	Game Master	Mag	Magic	SB	Strength Bonus	WFRP	Warhammer Fantasy
BS	Ballistic Skill	Gu	Guilder (Marianburg Coinage)	NPC	Non-player character	SW	Specialist Weapon		Roleplay (Second Edition)
Cl	Cool	GW	Games Workshop	OWB	Old World Bestiary	T	Toughness	WFRP I	WFRP First Edition
CN	Casting Number	IC	Imperial Calendar	PC	Player Character	TB	Toughness Bonus	WP	Will Power
Fel	Fellowship	Int	Intelligence	R	Range	ToS	Tome of Salvation	WS	Weapon Skill

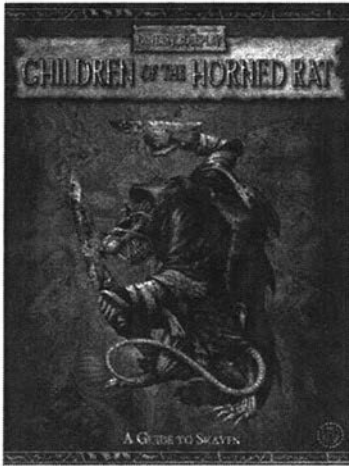
# REVIEWS

## Children of the Horned Rat

By Gary Astleford, Steve Darlington, Chris Pramas, and Robert J. Schwalb

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by Toby Pilling



This sourcebook for the Skaven comes twenty years after the race was first introduced to the Warhammer World by Jes Goodwin in 1986. In that time they have almost become the definitive Warhammer race, and it is fitting that they receive a publication devoted to them. Though it is not without its faults, I will say from the outset that I like this book.

Physically, it is a hardback of 128 pages, with plenty of artwork sprinkled throughout, most of it in colour. Perhaps it is just me, but I think the art of WFRP is at its best when depicting twisted creatures of Chaos - including these rat men.

The first chapter comprises a series of quotations and clippings from Old World characters regarding the Skaven. Readers of WFRP will be familiar with this style and I find it rather atmospheric and entertaining. It clearly shows common knowledge, which is often forgotten by the omnipotent GM. Certain snippets can easily be paraphrased for use by NPCs, which is also useful. The second chapter provides the historical background to the race. Although this is fairly comprehensive, it is here that I have my first issue with this sourcebook.

The influence of WFB is not always baleful, but the need to produce pitched battles for the Skaven to take part in above ground has always seemed at odds with the desire to promote them as the big, secret threat below. This dichotomy is not satisfactorily solved through the simplistic invention of a grand conspiracy. Either the Skaven are hidden, biding their time, or they are not. *Children of the Horned Rat* wants to have it both ways.

I am not against the idea of a remote human town being lost to the ratmen, with eerily empty streets providing few clues to its fate, except for an overlooked survivor gasping, "they came from...beneath," before he croaks. However, armies of ratmen marching through the countryside of virtually every Old World nation stretches my credulity. Thankfully it is not hard for GMs to tone down or ignore much of this narrative, especially as, in game, most of it has supposedly been repressed by the authorities anyway.

Chapter three covers Skaven society, looking at life, customs,

religion and relations, and is both useful and comprehensive. I particularly liked the section on customs and behaviour, which includes that of bruxing - the distinctive sound created by the constant grinding of teeth, required to keep the length of Skaven incisors manageable. Once again though, I have a slight issue with some of this material.

WFB is not the only influence on this book. The writings of William King in his *Trollslayer* series featured a Skaven Grey Seer as an arch-protagonist. These stories depicted slices of Skaven society that have been incorporated into *Children of the Horned Rat*. The only problem I have with this is that the antics of the Skaven so portrayed were, as often as not, at least half comic. The shortcomings of ratmen scheming provoked amusement as their plans continually collapsed into farcical disaster. "Foiled again!" their leader would refrain. Though such characters were wicked, cunning and villainous, they were cartoon-like rather than truly evil. This theme has definitely been continued and amplified in this sourcebook.

Tongue-in-cheek black humour and a sense of the ridiculous has always permeated WFRP. Orcs and Goblins have also had their fear factor reduced through the ridiculous cockney bovver boy accents they have been lumbered with. But you rarely see Chaos so mocked.

The menace of the Skaven has been neutered by them becoming amusing caricatures of cowardice and betrayal. This may make them easier to role-play, but robs them somewhat of their ability to inspire awe and terror.

The fourth chapter provides information on Skaven settlements and the Under-Empire. This is useful for GMs, and provides some details on famous locations like Hell Pit and Skavenblight. I particularly liked the more detailed glimpses of Under-Delberz as it gives GMs something concrete to work with. From the Big Squeak (Town Square) to the docks, though this is mostly just a dark mirror of the city above. It could have done with the more powerful Skaven being named, and maybe even given the odd stat line.

Chapter five is the most rules heavy as it explores Skaven warfare. Magic, Warpstone, and the instruments of death of Clan Skyre are observed in detail; the nuts and bolts here should satisfy detail hungry GMs.

The tactics of the Skaven are also outlined, and though most of these will please GMs who want more subtle foes to face their PCs, the last of these refers to strength in numbers. Swarming one's enemy heedless of losses is a common strategy, because any deaths can quickly be replaced through the extreme fecundity of the race. Once again, this seems somewhat at odds with their supposed secretiveness.

Chapters six and seven are two of the most interesting, as they outline the possibilities for utilising Skaven in WFRP adventures, and not only as villains. Now, role-playing Skaven is an option. Several adventure seeds are provided, along with a bestiary of various Under-Empire critters.

There is much that could be written about the moral aspects of evil campaigns, but these chapters generally focus on the practical aspects. Not only in the sense of careers for Night Runners and the like, but in the difficult task of getting a team of Player Characters to work together, given the back-stabbing reputation of the race. I foresee an ongoing battle for the GM here, as actual violence is likely to break out within most Skaven parties sooner or later. At least the comedic stereotypes I have already mentioned should ensure that such betrayals are unlikely to be taken personally by the players, though I doubt they are conducive to campaigning for any length of time. Scenarios with Skaven, I imagine, will probably be one-off adventures - an amusing interlude between serious adventuring. Whether it should be amusing at all, is another matter.

The supplement is rounded off with the adventure *Slaves of Darkness*. This is meant to be adaptable, so that it can be used both by a conventional party or a Skaven one. However, it works far better with normal adventurers. As it is a good little scenario this is not a problem, though I am surprised the publishers did not take the opportunity to present their take on a true Skaven adventure.

*Slaves of Darkness* revolves around a hamlet under threat from Skaven, and the PCs have to deal with both notable villagers and outsiders in order to maximise their chances of success, in a bit of a Seven Samurai finale. Not an original plot perhaps, but fun nonetheless.

So there you have it. *Children of the Horned Rat* does exactly what it says on the tin, and as long as you accept or are willing to work on its flaws, it is a worthy addition to the range of second edition supplements.

## Terror in Talabheim

By TS Luikart, Gary Astleford and Eric Cagle

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by Steve Moss

*Terror in Talabheim* is a 96 page, black and white hardback book. The vast majority of the interior art features the sketches of Black Industries regular Tony Parker. His art for the WFRP books has improved since the early books but these drawings are cluttered and it is sometimes hard to make out the details of the illustrations. *Terror in Talabheim* is divided into two main sections. The first is a sourcebook for the city of Talabheim and the second contains a scenario.

The sourcebook section begins with a short history of Talabheim from its founding by Kruger, chief of the Talabec tribe, to the present time in the aftermath of the Storm of Chaos. There is information on the area known as the Eye of the Forest. This consists of the port town of Taalagad and the city of Talabheim which is located in a very large crater with a diameter of 30 miles. Inside the crater there is a city, villages, a forest, a spa, a gunpowder depot and a seemingly bottomless lake with crystal clear water. Some of the descriptions of the inside of the crater are not very realistic. In particular, the inclusion of the gunpowder depot felt too conveniently placed and I believe it was included to provide the players with a solution to a situation found in the main adventure.

Fortunately the description of the port of Taalagad is more

realistic and I enjoyed reading about its rat-infested streets and decaying wharfs. Taalagad has its fair share of seedy taverns, gambling dens and a fish market that sells tainted fish. The port is dangerous, lively and there are plenty of interesting and challenging locations for GMs to incorporate into their games. From Taalagad, a road known as the Wizard's Way runs through the western wall of the crater to the city of Talabheim itself. This section is well written and I particularly enjoyed the piece about the bureaucratic entanglements that visitors need to negotiate before they are allowed to enter the city. Talabheim is a very crowded city, its narrow streets congested with beggars, merchants, nobles and the influx of refugees caused by the recent Chaos incursions.

There are also descriptions of the various sections of the military, authorities, and Talabheim's bizarre laws and taxes. There could have been a lot more information about the laws and taxes and I think this was a missed opportunity to describe an archaic system that is unique to Talabheim. There are a number of new careers including Exciseman, Litigant and Horned Hunter (zealots of Taal with ranger skills). A map of the city is included in the sourcebook section and it is obvious that Andy Law spent a lot of effort creating it. Unfortunately a lot of the detail is lost because this is printed at too small a scale. It looks more like a cross section of a pickled brain than a map of a city. The use of small, white text on a light grey background also makes the map difficult to read.

The adventure mainly takes place in Taalagad and the city of Talabheim. The Skaven are the main protagonists and they cause the situation in the city to rapidly deteriorate. Plague, invasion, super weapons, Warpstone and subterfuge are employed to bring Talabheim to its knees. The PCs will have a lot of difficult decisions to make as they attempt to survive in a city under attack by the foul and resourceful ratmen. The PCs get the chance to interact with lots of well thought out NPCs and find themselves facing a number of interesting and challenging situations. There are many twists and turns and the PCs could find themselves in the position of refugees, sewer jacks and even resistance fighters.

*Terror in Talabheim* is a fairly complex adventure and there is a lot going on across the city and some GMs may find it challenging. I would recommend that GMs are familiar with the city map and descriptions of the various districts before starting play. There are also some useful resources for GMs: The adventure section offers advice on what to do if the PCs decide to leave the city or avoid helping the authorities battle the Skaven and there are also various sidebars of behind-the-scenes information and a timeline.

As the fabric of Talabheim society begins to unravel, the PCs will spend a fair amount of time reacting to the various events. They will need to have their wits about them if they are to survive. It is only towards the end of the scenario that the PCs will have the opportunity to take control, not only of their own fates but of the entire city. The Warpstone-wielding Skaven could potentially wipe out an entire party and there is a danger that the PCs may be out-gunned during the later scenes. The hordes of Skaven troops are memorable opponents but GMs should be careful when using them against the PCs.

I recommend this book for GMs and players who want to try

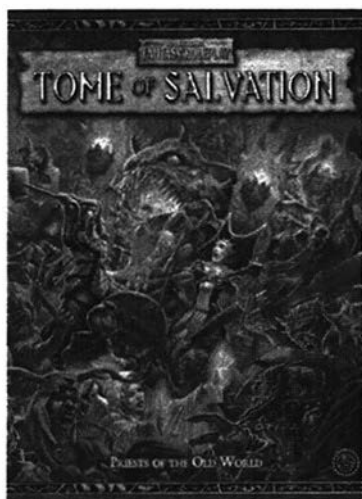
something different. There are plenty of opportunities for investigation, daring escapes, sabotage and resistance fighting. It is a fun and lively challenge to GM the apocalyptic events that befall Talabheim. There is good advice for GMs about tailoring the adventure to their own styles. Much thought has been given to the needs of the GM and I commend the authors for the interesting and useful advice that is offered throughout the book. *Terror in Talabheim* is an epic, deadly, wartime adventure that will stretch both players and GM alike. This excellent WFRP adventure is suited for experienced players and, particularly, experienced GMs.

## Tome of Salvation

By Eric Cagle, David Chart, Andrew Kenrick, and Andrew Law

Published by Black Industries

Reviewed by Dan Wray



This book was extremely well received by the WFRP community upon its publication and with good reason. Covering a major part of the setting, and one that has not been given this kind of in-depth coverage before, *Tome of Salvation* provides a wealth of information within its covers. Extra careers, additional clerical miracles, sacred relics and texts, venerated souls (saints to you

and me), holy sites and pilgrimages, religious festivals, a huge array of minor deities, folk worship, major and minor sects, a sample monastic seminary, templars, crusaders, radical religious beliefs, heretical beliefs, false beliefs, and even priestly hand signals: a list such as this can only provide a glimpse of the wide scope this book encompasses. Rather than attempting vainly to cover everything I will focus upon the most important elements and on those issues worth querying. If you are only reading this review to find out whether or not you should buy this book then you can stop here. The answer is yes, you should.

The first chapter is probably the best. Written in the form of a scholarly tome giving an academic's views on the history and development of the Empire's religion, it does that and so much more. Whether truth, myth, rumour, or outright lie, the material not only complements the historical background but develops it and fleshes it out, adding depth whilst stirring the imagination with the many possibilities it presents. The text provides the essential outline whilst numerous sidebars proffer more direct sources. There may not be an adventure in this book but GMs will find plenty of material here from which to craft their own. The pre-history of the Empire's tribes and the impact of the southern Old World's cults is especially enjoyable. Of particular note is the return of Druids. Whilst they are not detailed in this publication they are officially restored, not only to the Empire's past but to its present as well. Great as that

chapter is, the following one is undoubtedly this publication's true heart.

Introducing the Grand Conclave to distinguish the Empire's major deities from lesser idols, it deals with each of the recognised cults in turn. Each section expands considerably on previously published material and details of sects and minor orders within their organisations really add to the established vision. Further material on the individual cults is spread throughout the book as it adopts a thematic approach. The mostly excellent material is therefore quite disparate and readers may need to scour for it. Separate chapters for each God's devotees, containing all of the relevant information, might have been more practical. The handy material on Templar Orders attached to the cults is an obvious instance of this as are the sections dealing with radical sects and beliefs that will, no doubt, be very useful for PC Zealots.

For the background as a whole the Conclave is probably the most significant innovation, providing a rationale for the primacy of the Empire's central cults. Coverage of their structural organisation is a little perfunctory in some cases. The cults of Sigmar and Ulric are well established in this respect and those expecting more of the same may be a little surprised, particularly in the cases of Verena and Morr. An extended hierarchy is pretty much non-existent and temples are run locally without dioceses or ecclesiarchs. As a result the clashing of manipulative hierarchies that the game thrives on is not as evident as it might be. Whilst this approach does actually reflect the historical reality in many polytheistic societies, its suitability to a renaissance setting or to organisations containing numerous sub-sects could be questioned. A major exception to these ruminations is the section on Myrmydia which is nothing short of a revelation and will transform how that cult is portrayed hereafter. It also provides more insight into the politics and history of the southern Old World than any previous WFRP product (and quite possibly any Warhammer product). Sadly the Mourners Guild fails to appear in the section on Morr and its real presence appears to have been overlooked. The cult of Ranald remains problematic and its inclusion in the Grand Conclave has only exacerbated the paradoxical relationship between its shadowy nature and official status. Its presentation has never been very satisfactory and rationalising this will continue to challenge GMs.

Whilst an enormous number of other deities are mentioned in the text it is only Handrich, Khaine, and Gundred that receive substantial attention. The God of Merchants and the Lord of Murder certainly deserve such treatment and their inclusion is most welcome. Handrich's importance in the Empire, despite not being part of the Grand Conclave, is rightfully stressed. This book covers human religion in the Empire, not the Old World as a whole. Other subjects receive cursory treatment, if any. Whilst Liadriel is absent, all of the major figures of the High Elven pantheon are given brief attention for the first time outside of WFB army books. The similar treatment of the Halfling deities is an epiphany in spite of its brevity. Oddly, considering the extensive treatment in *Dwarfs: Stone and Steel*, only the three foremost Dwarven gods (Grungni, Valaya and Grimnir) are given any coverage here.

A notable section deals with religion's impact upon the

Imperial populace's daily life. Along with some colourful local festivals, thoughts on marriage, divorce, pregnancy and other life-changing experiences are well worth the attention they receive and atmospherically enhance the social backdrop. Mention is also made of the distribution of temples and shrines but, sagely, this remains largely at the GM's discretion. The routine of clerical life is also given due attention, divulging the idiosyncrasies of the individual cults. Suggestions for roleplaying penances and for going on pilgrimages should also provide colour to character development. Furthermore, details on priestly training and progression mirrors similar material found for wizards in *Realms of Sorcery*.

There are, unfortunately, a few misleading errors, such as the definition of monasteries as places where priests are trained, or that of monks as 'mendicants,' but whilst disappointing these cannot detract significantly from this book's undoubted worth.

Providing solid and occasionally outstanding insight on a subject of fundamental importance to the game, this book's only drawbacks of real significance are flabby organisation and some vagueness about cult structures. Stoically keeping the faith, this is probably the best of all the supplements that deal with the truly crucial elements of the background. Like its more obvious market, even those who play the game's first edition exclusively should find its subject extremely useful and its quality satisfactory. Worthy of its beatification, this is an essential purchase.

## Pfeildorf

By Alfred Nunez Jr.

Reviewed by the dark knight of the twisted moon

Alfred has written this city sourcebook with the intention of providing a setting for GMs of both editions of WFRP wishing to base an urban campaign in the southern Empire. The sourcebook is written assuming that the GM is setting their campaign after Mad Alfred's *Empire at War* adventure, which forms his alternative finale to *The Enemy Within* campaign.

For this review, I used the .pdf version available from *Strike-to-Stun*; it is also available as a Word document from Alfred's own site. The text has some spelling, grammatical and typographical errors which are more easily corrected in Word.

The forty page document is split into six sections as follows: thirteen pages of background including History, The People, Politics/Government, Economics, Crime/Law, Religion (including new gods), Feastdays, and Transportation; eleven pages on the city's six districts; one page on the four nearest villages; two pages for two adventure hooks; a one page Gazetteer of the Barony of Toppenheim; and, to round the document off, nine pages of maps of the Barony of Toppenheim, GM and Player versions of Pfeildorf, the six districts and corresponding villages.

The history of Pfeildorf begins with the founding of the hillfort of Alderhorst in the time before Sigmar. The names Pfeildorf and Alderhorst are often used interchangeably in this section, which I found a little confusing. Alfred continues this history past the events of *Empire in Flames* and his *Empire at War*, to the timeline of WFRP2. Pfeildorf is now a Freistadt, with the rest of the former Electoral province of Sudenland ceded to

Wissenland under Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Leibewitz. The reason given for this is a series of rumours circulating about the immoral activities of Baron Olaf Sektliebe, heir to Sudenland. However, and unfortunately for GMs running a post-*Empire in Flames* campaign, Baron Sektliebe dies at the Battle of Wolfenburg, in the official finale to *The Enemy Within* campaign. The provincial government of Sudenland is still based in Pfeildorf, and comprises five councillors drawn from the nobility of the province plus a Pfeildorf Guildsman and a bureaucrat. There is also a council for the Freistadt of Pfeildorf, comprising three Guildmasters, an Alderman from each of the city's six districts, a representative on rotation from the cults of Morr, Sigmar and Verena, and the commander of the Garrison. Whilst, somewhat counter-intuitive, this does pay homage to the somewhat chaotic political systems in place in WFRP1, the removal of which is one of my criticisms of the 2nd Edition.

The section on religion is perhaps the most interesting. Not only does it explain the place of the major imperial religions within Pfeildorf (notably those of Sigmar, Shallya, Morr, Verena and Taal & Rhya) but also introduces a number of older, local, and Tilean religions, which I feel add greatly to the Old World setting as a whole. The older gods include the Sun God, Oermath, and his wife the Earth Mother, Ishernos, who are commemorated in a shrine within the temple of Taal & Rhya. The local gods also fall into the category of older gods, and the descriptions of their rites are particularly resonant with ties to the older sacrificial aspects of their worship by the pre-Imperial tribespeople; these local gods include Nemieth, the goddess of the confluence of the Rivers Söll and Upper Reik; Haenoth, harbinger of the north wind; and Maianda, goddess of domesticated animals. The people of Pfeildorf have also adopted the worship of several of the Tilean migrants' gods: Deonosus, the god of wine; Panasia, the goddess of the arts; and Phaestos, god of crafts. This last is something I have long considered overdue, and not fully addressed by the assumption of saints into existing religions.

The sections on the city's districts and the surrounding villages give a number of key locations of likely interest to Player Characters, but the level of depth here is more akin to *Shadows Over Bogenhafen*, rather than either *Marienburg: Sold Down the River*.

In conclusion, Pfeildorf successfully achieves Mad Alfred's objective, and adds to the lexicon of WFRP City sourcebooks. The way that it has been tied into *Empire at War* and WFRP2 means that it is not a product that Games Masters such as myself, running campaigns post-*Empire in Flames*, can simply pick up and use. Instead, we must adapt the book, or our own settings to suit. However, this is more than made up for by the very useful section on Religion, especially the new gods – even if I feel a strong need to rename Deonosus. I will be making the effort to convert this book to better set my own version of the WFRP setting, and would strongly recommend any GM, even remotely considering a campaign in the southern Empire to buy this book. However, since it's free, everyone should download it, even if they aren't!

[www.strike-to-stun.net/downloads](http://www.strike-to-stun.net/downloads)

[www.madalfred.darcove.net/Articles.html](http://www.madalfred.darcove.net/Articles.html)



# I AM NOT AN ADVENTURER!

Writing scenarios for groups of careers by Francois Dube

One thing that struck me when I first read the WFRP rulebook was the sentence 'All Player Characters have one thing in common: they are adventurers.' My Player Character would clearly say: 'No! I am not an adventurer! I am a priest of Grungni, sent to rescue a stronghold.' There would similar answers from hundreds of Player Characters living in the Warhammer World. 'We are not adventurers! We have a career and we follow the path of this career. It brings us to war, to new lands, but we do it because it is our job and duty not because we are adventurers.'

WFRP has a wonderful career system providing exciting backgrounds for a wide range of colourful characters. Whilst the concept of bringing together characters with totally different backgrounds is fun, this is clearly not the only way to play the game. Worse, this philosophy of building scenarios can work against a career system that is so brightly built and even works against the background of a world we love to be, somehow, believable.

Why is this? Because on one hand we are told, 'You are a Roadwarden making sure the roads of the Empire are safe,' then immediately afterwards, 'But that's not what you will do in this campaign.' It is sad for players interested in roleplaying to always have to find reasons to do things they are not supposed to do. It is sad to roleplay against what our characters are.

Sad, but not hopeless.

It can be fun to roleplay Roadwardens trying to keep roads safe and facing all kinds of danger. Indeed, it can be fun to roleplay a Marine actually hired to protect a ship against pirates or a Battle Wizard trained to defend the Empire and doing that. This is in keeping with the roleplaying potential of such characters. Even better, it is in keeping with the career system on which WFRP is built.

It is possible to write scenarios that appeal to groups of careers without limiting their appeal. Building a scenario for a group of careers requires some consideration to make stronger scenarios. First, you have to build a list of the starting careers suitable for the scenario. Then, mixing basic and advanced careers in the same list, they need to specify the level of experience at which every career starts. Finally, it is best to provide background information for all the careers. This can include reasons to explain why and how Player Characters of a given career become involved. It can also give ideas for the normal everyday life expected from the character. Scenarios are likely to change the everyday lives of the characters but providing extra background for each career helps roleplaying and gives interesting tools to the Game Master and players.

As an example, it is possible to write 'sea adventures' and for this theme we have an interesting range of colourful careers available. Such starting careers could be: Envoy, Initiate of Manann, Marine, Seaman, Tradesman (Shipwrights), Engineer (ex-Tradesman (Gunsmith), Explorer (ex-Vagabond), Mate (ex-Seaman), Merchant (ex-Burgher), Navigator (ex-Fisherman), Physician (ex-Student (Science)), Priest of Manann (ex-Initiate) or Scholar (ex-Student (with a common knowledge of a foreign nation)). These careers can be included in a random table for the scenario or the Game Master can let their players decide which starting career they want from the list.

With regard to the scenarios themselves, sea based adventures have a wide range of possibilities. A lot can happen on a ship. The captain could be murdered, spies or cultists might want the expedition to fail, the ship can be attacked by pirates or sea monsters and the crew can face storms or weird magic. Similarly, a lot can challenge and interest the Player Characters when they reach their destination, from twisted cultures to dangerous lands to bizarre creatures. Scenarios can also be about diplomacy, foreign politics, trade, treasure hunts or just survival.

Scenarios built for groups of related careers are open to a wide range of possibilities. Limiting the possible careers to the most logical ones makes for more credible situations, easier roleplaying and removes the need to fudge background and rules to allow characters to do things they are not supposed to do.

Writing commercial scenarios for groups of careers does have drawbacks. Firstly, scenarios may only appeal to some players, but in some way this is the same for all scenarios; knowing your players is the key here. Another drawback could be the problem of finding reasons for existing Player Characters to join a scenario not designed for their career, but again that's a problem with published material.

Here are a few other examples of the themes that can be used for groups of careers:

## **Military campaigns**

In the same way that a lot can happen on a ship, a lot can happen in an army or mercenary group. Player Characters can face opposing forces but there are other kinds of challenges. They can recruit troops, buy weapons and supplies, deal with traitors, volunteer for scouting new lands or land occupied by enemies, or defend a position (a bridge, a small castle, a line in the sand).

Characters in basic careers will have to obey orders, perhaps those of an insane general who never really fights battles. A

setting where Player Characters are forced to obey orders can lead to interesting roleplaying opportunities and allow Game Masters to lead Player Characters towards specific objectives. This is very useful for players who are not proactive. On the other hand, many players may be reluctant to cede control of their options. In this case, this is a really good opportunity for advanced careers like Battle Wizard, Warrior Priest, Captain, Knight, Pistolier, Engineer and so on.

### Site-specific scenarios

Cities bring opportunities in the sheer variety of places and people. Colleges of magic, temples, universities, guildhouses and palaces are places for all kinds of twisted plots, hidden agendas and murder and horror stories. Site-specific scenarios are also interesting for exploring the life of official organisations of the Empire. All kinds of Player Characters can be hired to work for, or be a natural part of, such organisations. Possibilities exist outside cities, too. Another possibility is a campaign that is set in and around a large busy coaching inn on the junction of two major Imperial highways. Suitable careers at a coaching inn include Coachman, Entertainer, Innkeeper, Roadwarden, Servant, Toll Keeper, Tradesman (Blacksmith), and Watchman. Conversely, The Name of the Rose is almost a cliché these days, but it demonstrates the possibilities within an organisation that consists almost entirely of the same career.

### Witch hunts

In many published scenarios we find adventurers trying to find and kill Chaos cultists, or to stop dark rituals. Of course, this can also be done by specialised teams working for a secret organisation or working openly as witch hunters. Groups of witch hunters can include many careers from Initiates, Priests and Zealots to Interrogators, Scouts, Spies and, of course, Witch Hunters. This theme is well suited to horror scenarios, vampire hunts or all kinds of plots where twisted magic is important.

### Conclusion

It is possible to build exciting scenarios in line with the career system that WFRP offers and it is possible to build them for groups of careers covering a wide range of interests for different players and Game Masters. Building scenarios for adventurers is still an interesting option, but building scenarios for groups of careers can offer something different. The challenge is there. It is for us, Game Masters and writers of commercial material, to take it or leave it. I believe however, to leave it is a missed opportunity.



# FRAGMENTS

## BRIEF REVIEWS AND NEWS

### Warpstone 28

Last issue's cover was by Steve Punter. Apologies to Steve for not correctly crediting him.

### WFRP3

As we prepare to go to press the RPG forums are full of speculation about WFRP3. The talk of the last few months was given focus by a blog post saying that it was being play-tested. The mention of Action-cards and dice pools caused the main stir. We wait with interest.

Meanwhile FFG announced that many of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition books are available for the first time as PDFs. Available for purchase at [www.ipgnow.com](http://www.ipgnow.com) and [www.drivethrurpg.com](http://www.drivethrurpg.com).

On a more traditional front, FFG have released *The Career Compendium*, gathering together careers related information from across the various WFRP books, and *Shades of Empire*, a collection of secret societies.

### Timcon VIII

Taking place this year as part of Shadowcon, the latest Timcon was a great success. Its growth is only held back by a lack of GMs. Check out news of the next WFRP two-dayer at [www.shadow-warriors.co.uk](http://www.shadow-warriors.co.uk).

### Into the Sewers

Issue one of a WFRP e-zine is out now at [www.mediafire.com/?jzdzknneluo](http://www.mediafire.com/?jzdzknneluo). Creator Ben Scerri is aiming to publish weekly and starts the issue off with an interview with WFRP writer Steve Darlington.

### Strike-to-Stun.net

The WFRP website continues to add more material for WFRP fans. In recent months they have published Alfred Nunez's *Karak Hirn* sourcebook and *Get Your Glad Rags On*, Dan Wray's look at noble households. Both well worth checking out.

Other fan material worth looking out for in the coming months is a Tilea sourcebook and Liber Fantica's background on Wurtbad.

### UK Games Expo

After this year's successful weekend, the 2010 games convention has been announced for 4th - 6th June 2010 in Birmingham. Check out their Facebook page for more information. (Talking of Facebook, MadAlfred has set up a WFRP1 group.)

### Warpstone 29 Support

Check out the *Warpstone* website for supporting material for this issue. We will be publishing additional Ghosts for *Ghost Stories*, scenario seeds for *The Collapsing Empire*, more NPCs for *The Haunting of Westerside Mine* and more NPCs and the village map for *Beneath the Surface*.

# THE COLLAPSING EMPIRE

THE PERSECUTION OF THE OLD FAITH, DWARFS AND WIZARDS BY THE DRAK WALD EMPERORS  
 BY ALFRED NUÑEZ JR. AND ANTHONY RAGAN

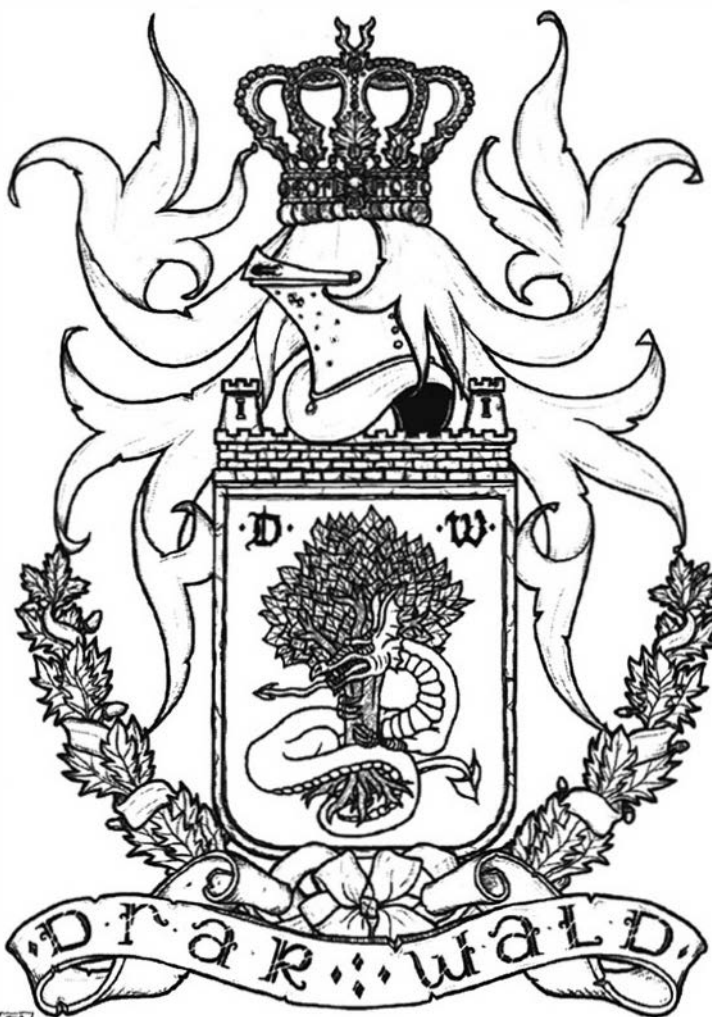
**The Drak Wald Emperors**  
 Imperial history has not looked kindly upon the Drak Wald Emperors and with good reason. Their reign began in the tenth century and is viewed by many as the ruling family whose decadence and greed brought the mighty Empire of Sigmar to its knees.

The fact of the matter is that the first millennium Empire had also grown complacent since its wealth, power and culture reached its zenith in the sixth century during the reign of Emperor Sigismund the Conqueror. At that time, the Empire stretched from the Bitter Moors and West Mark on the other side of the Grey Mountains in the west, eastward to the open lands east of the Forest of Shadows – now known as the Dobryrion – and the foothills of the Worlds Edge Mountains and southward to the province of Lichtenberg in the area now known as the Border Princes.

When Albert – one of the first of the Drak Wald Emperors – was elected to the Imperial throne, the Bretonni tribes to the west had not yet united into the nation of Bretonnia. Further, both Tilea and Estalia were divided lands, as they are in the 26<sup>th</sup> century, and the region called the Border Princes was an even wilder place than these lands are in modern times.

## The Fall Begins

Woven among the fabric of the first millennium Empire, but rarely noticed by its high-and-mighty, the descendants of the



Belthani people had lived in peace and even prospered, farming their lands, trading, and even mining. They had retained their own pantheon of goddesses and spirits (then as now known as the Old Faith), even while publicly worshipping the new gods of the Empire. Eventually, they began to agitate for equal status for their faith in the Empire's pantheon, seeing it as their right. They also began to openly refer to themselves as the "Belthani" in honour of their forebearers.

This was their big mistake.

By the year 950, decay and corruption was eating at the heart of the Empire. Wealth and power bred greed and avarice among the nobles and priests, and self-interest came ahead of the Empire's. When the leaders of the Belthani made their demands, the priests of Ulric and Sigmar put aside their differences and complained to the

Elector-Counts and the Emperor, Albert of Drak Wald.

Shoring up his failing position, Drak Wald Duke Ludwig Hohenbach bribed (in some cases blackmailed) the other Electors into electing him Emperor. The defeat at the hands of the Wood Elves and a series of disasters under his father's ill-fated rule had weakened the province so much that he feared that any of the neighbouring provinces – Middenland, Nordland, or Westerland – would absorb all or part of it. Emperor Ludwig I moved the Imperial capital to Carroburg. His reign and those of his successors were so corrupt that "Drak

Walder” became a byword for a greedy, grasping person. Offices and titles, favourable verdicts, and even permits for private wars – sanctioned murder – could be had for the right bribe. Thus, when the priests came to suggest that the growing prosperity and power of the Belthani and their cults made them a threat to the Empire, they found a receptive ear.

Driven by greed for the lands and rumoured wealth of the Belthani, and given an excuse by the lies of the priests of Sigmar and Ulric, Emperor Albert issued the Imperial Rescript “*Condemnation of the Idolaters*”, falsely condemning the Belthani for consorting with Chaos and calling for an Empire-wide crusade and inquisition. Those who abandoned their faith lost their lands, but their lives were spared; those who resisted met their end on the gibbet and the pyre.

The persecution continued for five years until the Belthani were overwhelmed in their last stand at Zollmüringen, a lost town reputed to have been in Solland, now part of either Wissenland or Averland. The survivors scattered into the woods for safety, while the Emperor divided their lands among his toadies and the priests toasted the defeat of a rival.

### **The Collapse and Disintegration of Sigmar’s Empire**

The persecution under Albert was but the first in a series of calamities that would lead to the near-disintegration of the Empire over the next 1000 years. His successors followed with the same self-indulgent inclinations and unscrupulous behaviour that would characterise the Drak Wald dynasty. Without exception, all would undertake any effort, no matter how unsavoury and unscrupulous, to enrich themselves. To say that they cared more for the pleasures of the senses than the prosperity of the Empire would be a gross understatement. The fragmentary chronicles of the time provided the then widely circulated rumours of the many debaucheries held at the Imperial court – and of other, even more scandalous events. Despite the fact that they lack hard evidence, some modern scholars have hypothesised that the House of Hohenbach had given itself over to Slaanesh worship .

The hedonistic tendencies of the Drak Wald dynasty became all too apparent during the early 11<sup>th</sup> century reign of Emperor Ludwig II Hohenbach. Ludwig “the Fat” – as history derisively remembers him — was infamous for the torture and execution of chefs whose culinary abilities offended Ludwig’s self-proclaimed highly developed senses of taste and smell. Whether it was his sensitive palate or sadistic joy at watching people broken on the wheel, Ludwig finally found a cook in his Halfling servant Emmer. In appreciation for the servant’s feat, Ludwig elevated him to Imperial Chef and Elector Count. The latter act allowed Emperor Ludwig some revenge on the rulers of Stirland and Averland, whose daughters had spurned his advances. Through Imperial fiat, Emperor Ludwig declared that the fertile farmlands of the Halflings would secede from their former provinces and form the new Imperial province of the Mootland, with Emmer as its ruler.

Late in his reign, Ludwig’s expensive tastes and grandiose palace-building had left the Imperial coffers nearly empty. A failed assassination attempt by a deranged Dwarf gave him the opportunity to recoup his fortune.

### **The Drak Wald Emperors**

The House of Hohenbach produced 13 notorious or forgettable Emperors in their two centuries reign. The list, detailing name, dates of reign and reasons for fame, is as follows:

**Ludwig I (900IC to 918IC)** Bribing and blackmailing in order to secure his election as Emperor. Killed in a hunting accident.

**Alfgar (918 to 924)** Brother of Ludwig I. Executed those who accompanied Ludwig on that fateful hunt. Rumours persisted that the arrow was actually shot by Alfgar. Assassinated by unknown assailant.

**Emma (924 to 938)** Wife of Alfgar. Elected Empress upon her husband’s death. Dark gossip ties her lover, Baron Ernst von Schilderheim, to the crime. Baron found mutilated years later and Emma loses her sanity.

**Feodor the Crazy (938 to 940)** Half-witted oldest son of Alfgar and Emma elected through bribes placed by his brother Albert. Dies in a palace fire, allegedly set by himself.

**Albert, Despoiler of the South (940 to 986)** Elected to succeed his brother. Launched crusade against followers of the Old Faith, which ended in the Battle of Zollmüringen. Re-built palace in Carroburg. Said to have died in his sleep.

**Quintus the Depraved (986 to 991)** Eldest son of Albert who ascended to the throne at an advanced age. Known for his particular taste in women of the night. Many debaucheries held in the palace and stories of missing women, some of peasant stock, circulate. Officially died from over-indulgence.

**Humfried (991 to 996)** Youngest son of Albert, known for attending court on occasion in women’s clothing. Rumoured to have died from a contact poison in one of his gowns.

**Ludwig II “the Fat” (996 to 1022)** Oldest surviving son of Humfried (three elder sons died under mysterious circumstances). Elevated the Moot to Electoral status. Persecuted Dwarfs. Expanded the eastern borders of the Drak Wald province at the expense of Middenland. Died in his bed of a massive stroke.

**Leofric (1022 to 1040)** Eldest nephew of Ludwig. Increased taxation on craftsmen and merchants drove many to destitution. Found in a pool of blood with many stab wounds.

**Hergard (1040 to 1041)** Brother of Leofric who attempted to ease Leofric’s taxation. Hergard’s body was never found.

**Paulus (1041 to 1049)** Another brother of Leofric. Increased tax burden on the various cults, thereby starting a revolt. Forced to flee to Bretonnia by the army led by his brother Lorenz.

**Lorenz the Cruel (1049 to 1053)** Last brother of Leofric and leader of the rebellion against Paulus. Thought to be an Emperor ready to restore the greatness of the Empire, but revealed to be a paranoid sadist. Many perceived enemies were persecuted until his nephew, Boris, led a violent coup d’etat. Lorenz was said to be executed with a red hot poker.

**Boris “Goldgatherer” (1053 to 1115)** Only surviving son of Leofric. Greed, elimination of family rivals, suppression of wizards, despoiling temples, outlawing a number of knightly orders, the onslaught of the Black Death, collapse of the Empire all mark his reign. Believed to have perished in the latter stages of the Black Death.

**The Persecution of the Dwarfs**

Throughout the first thousand years of the Empire, Dwarfs who had emigrated from the Dwarf Kingdoms had played an important role in the affairs of the Empire. Dwarfs provided powerful battlefield support to the Empire's armies and contributed much to its intellectual life, teaching the advanced arts of architecture and engineering, or serving as counsellors to powerful nobles. One even became ruler of Übersreik in return for his great services to the Elector Counts of Reikland. Though they lived in their own communities in Imperial towns, their relations with the neighbouring Humans was good at first, with many fast friendships formed.

As time passed, however, jealousy and suspicion of the Dwarfs grew. The refusal of their master artisans to reveal all their secrets made many human burghers angry and resentful. Others envied their clan connections to the Dwarfs of the Grey, Black, and World's Edge Mountains, sure that this gave the Dwarfs an unfair edge in commerce. Eventually, in some circles, there were accusations that the Dwarfs practised rituals known only to them that gave them secret influence over the rulers of the Empire.

So it was, in the year 1013 IC, when an otherwise unnamed Dwarf from Wissenland tried to separate Ludwig from his head, that the Emperor decided another crusade was in order.

Taking his cue from Albert's earlier campaign, Ludwig ordered the arrest of every Dwarf in Carroburg. Summoning the representatives of the Elector Counts and the high priests

of Sigmar and Ulric, Ludwig had them sit as a jury while he acted as judge and his chamberlain conducted the prosecution. The charges were conspiracy and treason. The jury performed their predictable part in this show-trial, a given as they stood to gain from the confiscated wealth – including artefacts – of the Dwarfs. They found the accused guilty, and the Emperor passed sentence: the Dwarfs of Carroburg would be burned, their property confiscated, and all those who aided them would be held guilty of treason and sentenced to death.

The madness Ludwig initiated spread throughout the Empire. Many Dwarfs resisted, but it was futile. Some found sanctuary in a number of towns and baronies in Averland, Solland, and Wissenland near the mountains where the local nobility did not relish going to war with the nearby Dwarf realms over the mad policies of the Emperor. Other Dwarfs fled to their mountain kin, who could not intervene directly because their forces were stretched thin by a renewed greenskin offensive. Smoke from the pyres rose from almost all Imperial towns and cities, and the reek of burned flesh was everywhere. The public was all too ready to turn against them. Provincial troops sacked the Dwarf quarters, leaving behind the corpses of Dwarfs and burning what they could not carry with them. By the time the last embers had died, the once proud multiracial heritage of the Empire was in ruins.

**The Suppression of Wizardry**

In 1053, the last and worst of the Drak Wald emperors, Boris



Hohenbach – known forever as Boris “Goldgatherer” and Boris “the Incompetent” – ascended the Imperial throne. Emperor Boris craved the wealth and power money could bring him and devoted himself solely to its acquisition. To this end, he permitted the Elector Counts to rule as they saw fit so long as he received appropriate “gifts.” By decree, Emperor Boris created new titles and offices to be sold to the highest bidder. Elector Counts and other lesser nobles vied with one another to acquire ever more flamboyant titles, such as “Grand Prince” or “Grand Duchess Palatine.” Taxation soared across the Empire and many local peasant revolts were brutally crushed. Many of the cults joined in the scheme; selling ecclesiastical offices to raise money so that they in turn can purchase a more grandiose title. The Emperor himself even allowed commoners to purchase the right to spend the night in the Imperial Palace. “Souvenirs” were also made available for the right price.

Throughout the first thousand years of the Empire, wizards had played an important role in the affairs of the Empire. Though no documents or monuments prove his existence, legends say that Sigmar’s chief advisor was a wise sorcerer named Märlinn. Wizards provided powerful battlefield support to the Empire’s armies and contributed much to its intellectual life, some taking seats at newly founded universities, others entering the nobility or serving as advisors to powerful nobles. One even became Elector Count of Reikland. Many founded monastery-like communities far from civilisation, where they could undertake their studies in an undisturbed collegial atmosphere.

But wizards were never wholly trusted. They wielded their strange powers without the sanction of the gods, and some areas of research seemed blasphemous and even tainted by Chaos. Wizards’ spells were always risky, and their failures could mean disaster to anyone in the area. Then there were those who gave themselves over to evil, the necromancers and demon-worshippers, and those who swore themselves body and soul to Chaos. Though other wizards would help hunt them down, the suspicion of even kindly sorcerers was never far from the surface.

So it was, in the year 1069 IC, when an otherwise unnamed sorcerer from the Westerland tried to turn Ludwig into a living candle, the Emperor decided another crusade was in order.

Taking his cue from Albert’s and Ludwig’s earlier pogroms, Boris ordered the arrest of every wizard throughout the Empire. Only the Graf of Middenheim defied the Emperor’s wishes.

In a tactic similar to his predecessor, Ludwig, Boris sat the representatives of the Elector Counts and the high priests of Sigmar and Ulric as a jury while he acted as judge and prosecutor. The charges were conspiracy, heresy, treason, witchcraft and consorting with Chaos. They found the wizards guilty, and the Emperor passed the foregone sentence: the sorcerers of the Empire would be burned along with any records of their existence, the practice of magic was banned, and those who wielded magic outside of an established cult were guilty of the same charges and sentenced to death. He ordered all wizards in the Empire to surrender their wealth, books, and magical paraphernalia.

Many resisted, but it was as fruitless as it was for the earlier victims of the Drak Wald Emperors. A number left behind their

lives and took up new identities in the hope of avoiding those bent on their murder. A few took a different route and went underground, forming secret societies with their remaining fellows. Once again, smoke from the pyres rose throughout most of the Empire, and the stench of burnt bodies was everywhere. In a shameful display of history repeating itself, the public was all too ready to turn against them. Provincial armies sacked the rural hermitages, leaving behind the corpses of the wizards and burning what they could not carry with them. By the time the last embers had died out, the once proud magical heritage of the Empire had been extinguished.

The Empire would soon pay the price.

### **The Black Plague**

To the few brave souls who warned that the Empire would pay a heinous price for losing its way since the rule of Emperor Sigismund the Conqueror, Judgement Day came in 1111. On that day, the most devastating plague in Imperial history erupted in several eastern cities simultaneously and relentlessly spread to the west. The remote lands to the east, near the Worlds Edge Mountains, were abandoned as the plague even ravaged the population of wild beasts and livestock. As expected, crowded towns and cities were hardest hit. Whole neighbourhoods would be put to the torch at the first sign of plague in a desperate attempt to stave off its deadly effects. Many travellers and refugees were hung and their corpses burned by frantic Roadwardens suspecting them of carrying the plague. The faithful were sorely tested as prayers to the gods went unanswered with priests and the devoted dying in droves. In a fruitless effort to stave off death, the nobles and the wealthy abandoned their homes in the urban areas for what they falsely believed was the relative safety of their rural estates. They only found death waiting for them.

In typical fashion, Emperor Boris and his court sycophants locked themselves within the Imperial palace of Carroburg where they planned to feast and make merry as the plague passed them by. It was to no avail. Those who brought the Black Plague that ravaged the Empire would not be done until they slaughtered the Imperial court. In 1115, Emperor Boris met his well-deserved fate at the hands of the Skaven.

The plague was not the only calamity awaiting the Empire. The Skaven erupted from their underground lairs in order to enslave the decimated populace. Small pitched battles erupted across the Empire as the people fought for their survival. Salvation came in the form of Graf Mandred von Zelt of Middenheim and Middenland (united in 1105), and the unlikeliest of saviours, Baron Frederick van Hal of Sylvania (a newly-revealed Necromancer who, ironically, was the man who was instrumental in Emperor Boris’ suppression of wizards in the eastern Empire). Between the armies of the two, the Skaven were driven off with whatever captives they had already taken.

### **Aftermath**

The reign of the Drak Wald Emperors had been an unmitigated disaster for the Empire. The seeds of destruction laid, in part, by the success of the earlier Emperors. Since Emperor Sigismund the Conqueror, the Empire had not faced any real external threats to its security. There were the occasional Goblin

and Orc raids in the east and south as well as raiders and marauders in the north, but nothing that required a unified response from the nation. The only disturbance of the peace came from the squabbling within the nobility. Disputes over land or inheritance were increasingly being settled by a clash of arms.

Under the Drak Wald Emperors, corruption and self-indulgence became widespread, weakening the Empire's resolve, and setting up the land for disaster. The alienation of the Dwarfs and Wizards in particular proved to be disastrous. Without the aid that these two groups could have offered to buttress the defence against the Skaven and Undead, the Empire was unable to cope with the calamities visited upon it.

In the end, the Empire lost nearly 70% of its population to the Black Plague and Skaven depredations. Many cities and towns were abandoned, some never to be rebuilt. In time, the forests reclaimed the ruins in the north, while those in the south crumbled. The *Pax Imperium* that had lasted for nearly 600 years (excepting the three tragic events described above) tragically came to an end. The Empire would never again experience such a period of relative calm and prosperity. Moreover, Carroburg would never again be the centre of Imperial politics.

#### Gaming during the Reign of the Drak Wald Emperors

Some GMs might prefer to run campaigns in the past rather than the present date of 2522. For those that might create a series of scenarios during the time of the Drak Wald Emperors, there are some minor adjustments that should be made as described below:

- When the line of Drak Wald Emperors came to power, the Empire had a population that greatly exceeded that of the early 26<sup>th</sup> century.
- The first millennium Empire was certainly as advanced as the time under Emperor Karl-Franz, even though some technologies – such as gunpowder and semaphore towers – did not exist.
- The provinces of Drak Wald and Solland were still in existence, though their respective borders – along with the other provinces – were shifting depending on which noble house was in power.
- Marienburg was a small port that was subject to raids by the Norse and other pirates that preyed on those whose livelihood depended upon the bounty of the Sea of Claws.
- Most trade came over the Brenheim Pass from Tilea, which made Nuln the largest and most cosmopolitan city in the Empire. Nuln had been the Imperial capital for much of the Imperial history until the Drak Wald Emperors moved it to Carroburg.
- Carroburg grew to be as large a city as Altdorf at that time.
- The descendants of the Belthani were few and on the fringes of society at the beginning of the reign of the Drak Wald Emperors, so the war against them would have largely gone unnoticed by those living in the Imperial cities and towns.
- Until their respective suppression, Dwarfs were far more numerous in the first millennium Empire than they would be for many centuries after that catastrophe.
- Wizards were respected as individuals of knowledge and

influence until they were outlawed.

- The Wizards did not utilise Colour Magic. Instead, the magic wielded by these Wizards would be considered by 26<sup>th</sup> century Magisters as “Lesser Magic” (though a number of spells were as powerful as those in the arsenal of the Magisters).
- Corruption was rife within the powerful elite across the country and began to creep into the upper echelons of the Church of Sigmar as well as town councils and guilds.
- The relative scarcity of external enemies made the urban Imperial populace soft and self-centred.
- The rural population were generally ruled by absentee lords who placed mostly corrupt officials and men-at-arms to rule in their name.
- Nobles raised and led private militias to protect their interests and raid those of their neighbours. These small scale predations were the root cause of many private wars.
- The numbers of bandits, outlaws, and robber barons increased during the reign of the Drak Wald Emperors. By Boris' reign, the roads and rivers were less safe for small groups of travellers than they would be in the 26<sup>th</sup> century Empire. In fact, it was very common for Roadwardens to supplement their meagre income through banditry.
- More of the northern forests were cleared and towns established than at any other time in Imperial history, including the present.
- Beastmen were much rarer in the Imperial forests than they are today, though goblins and other large, non-chaotic beasts were more numerous.
- Mutants were exceeding rare. The Chaos gates were fairly inactive during the reign of the Drak Wald Emperors and the years immediately following the Black Plague.
- Secret societies of Chaos cultists grew slowly during the time of the Drak Wald Emperors and many were not active in plotting the overthrow of the self-indulgent and decadent regime. One could say that the Drak Wald Emperors were doing a fine job of leading the Empire to a ruinous end themselves.
- In addition to the Norse raiders in the north, the Imperial frontiers of West Mark (which encompassed much of the present Bretonnian duchies of Montford and Parravon) and Lichtenberg (on the far side of Black Fire Pass) were subject to raids by the native tribes of the Bretonni and Darians, respectively. West Mark fell early in the reign of Emperor Albert, around 940. Lichtenberg fell during the reign of Emperor Boris in 1060.

#### Conclusion

Throughout its history, the Empire has been a vibrant place where those looking for such can find adventure, whether it is playing in the appropriate milieu for that time in history or using the events of the past to create present-day scenarios requiring investigations or quests. More to the point, the addition of more detail for various historical epochs brings to life the richness of Imperial history as well as expands upon the depth of a scholarly character's knowledge.



# WOMB of the GODS

*THE CREATION OF THE GODS &  
OTHER MATTERS BY ROBIN LOW*

This article draws on a number of well-established ideas and much of what follows is personal interpretation, but largely fits with previous and current official sources.

Although much discussed, there seems to be no coherent explanation of the issues regarding the formation of gods, where magic really comes from, the existence (or not) and fate of souls, and just what the various spirit creatures of the Warhammer World actually are or where they come from. The following attempts to provide explanations for many of these things while maintaining the feel of the setting. Although ideas have been drawn from *Warhammer 40,000: Rogue Trader*, effort has been made to make them consistent with WFRP but not link the two settings directly.

The ultimate aim of the article is not to over-define or over-explain the more mystical aspects of the WFRP setting, but to provide a more coherent structure than we have at present and develop some ideas beyond the vague generalities we already have (such as gods come from emotions, magic is Chaos, and so on). The world of Warhammer is a place full of gods, magic and a wide variety of supernatural creatures. Providing a clearer idea of how these things come to be and relate to one another can enable GMs to develop more practical in-game ideas for locations, NPCs and plots.

The article is not intended to be a strict guide to how NPCs and PCs understand and define their world. There are certainly elements and ideas in it that can be portrayed as commonly held views, but mostly it provides a structure to help the GM understand what is going on behind the scenes. From it, individual GMs can describe their own visions of common belief and understanding. For example, a necromancer may perform her ritual and call forth spirits from the cold dark lands of the dead to give shambling life to the corpse before her, but the GM knows that her ritual is manipulating warp potential to open a warp portal into the warp to find and draw out a soul spark to animate the dead body. When Tzeentch's Curse strikes her in the form of a daemoniac dog, she believes her magic has angered Morr, but the GM knows her

manipulation of warp potential has left a warp trail which a warp entity has used to track and attack her. However, this works the other way round, for example when the GM realises that the panic and hysteria the PCs have created in the townsfolk with their madly incautious tales of giant rats in woods is sufficient to transform high levels of ambient warp potential into a rat-like warp entity more monstrous than the mutant rats they were so worried about to begin with.

## **A Warp Glossary**

The following terms are for the benefit of the reader, but are not suggested as terms commonly used in the Warhammer World, even by scholars and wizards.

**Real Space:** The physical world in which we find the Warhammer World. It exists alongside warp space, and although real space is finite and warp space infinite, there are points within each that correspond with points in the other.

**Soul/Soul Spark:** A warp potential copy of the personality, drive and will power of a living creature. After death the soul normally enters warp space. It may survive, but many dwindle into soul sparks: barely aware warp entities.

**Warp Entities:** Any creature that lives for at least part of its existence within warp space. Some warp entities are created from warp potential (Astral Hounds and Spectres), while others seem to have originated in real space, but later adapted to the life in warp space (such as Enslavers and Psychneuein). The term is also applicable to gods, Daemons and elementals, and souls and soul sparks.

**Warp Gate:** An opening from the real world into a sealed tunnel through warp space that exits through another warp gate into a different region of real space. Essentially, a warp gate is a short cut between two points in real space via warp space.

**Warp Realm:** A closed island or region of stability within the maelstrom of warp space. Warp realms are usually created by gods, powerful Daemon Princes or large groups of warp entities



capable of manipulating warp potential; they might even be formed by the unconscious minds of groups of mortals in the same way gods are created. They might be heavens, hells and everything in between. Most warp realms have at least one warp portal connecting to real space.

**Warp Space:** A dimension of raging warp potential that exists alongside real space. Although real space is finite and warp space infinite, there are points within each that correspond with points in the other. Like real space, there are creatures and worlds existing within it. For the purposes of this article, warp space is *not* the Realm of Chaos – the latter is taken to be the twisted and contaminated real space regions surrounding the collapsed polar warp gates of the Warhammer World.

**Warp Trail:** Magic performed in real space leaves emanations or trails in warp space. Some warp entities can perceive and follow such a trail back to the practitioner who created it.

**Warp Portal:** A simple opening between real space and warp space. With the right techniques (magical rituals or high technology) warp portals can be created from either warp or real space. Some allow one way movement only, some both ways; some are permanent, some are temporary.

**Warp Potential:** The raw fluid material of warp space. Warp potential can be manipulated, consciously or unconsciously by emotions, beliefs and mortal will power to create physical and magical manifestations within both warp space and real space. Quite literally, the stuff that dreams and gods are made of.

**Warpstone:** Pure solidified warp potential. It is dangerously unpredictable as it has the ability to transform real space and things within it (chairs, hills, people, space-time) in the same way mortal creatures can transform warp potential, but with no rational thought driving the changes.

### Warp Space

Warp space is just one of a number of dimensions that exist alongside the real space universe in which we find the planet of the Warhammer World. It is effectively infinite in size and composed almost entirely of swirling energy, and best likened to a vast, dark and terrible ocean, storm-wracked into a maelstrom of unpredictability. In fact, it is more like the region just below the surface of such an ocean; to be within warp space is to be engulfed. It is possible for living creatures to enter warp space and travel through it, but this requires special knowledge and great power, and even greater knowledge and power to survive the visit. It is also possible to construct permanent openings and passages between real space and warp space using high technology, such as the now-collapsed warp gates at the poles of the Warhammer World, or temporary openings through the use of magic.

The furious energy that comprises warp space is best described as a fluid potential, hereafter called *warp potential*. Under certain circumstances warp potential can be moulded and given form. The key issue is *how* warp potential can be given form:



what are the tools that shape it? The answer is simple: warp potential can be given form through the emotions and beliefs of any creature that is capable of having such things. The greater the strength of an emotion or belief, the more impressive the thing that it can create from warp potential. Furthermore, there is strength in numbers, so emotions and beliefs broadly similar in nature will pool to have even greater and more profound effects on warp potential. Even having found form, anything created from warp potential remains subject to the vagaries of the forces (emotions and beliefs) that brought it into being in the first place. Additionally, it seems highly probable that random dreams, nightmares and other fancies of the living sometimes influence warp potential. However, the process of giving form to warp potential is entirely unconscious, at least among the vast majority of creatures; important exceptions such as gods and wizards are discussed later.

For the purposes of WFRP, the best description of warp space can be found in the original *Warhammer 40,000: Rogue Trader*. Its ideas of warp gates (two points in real space connected by a tunnel through warp space) and warp portals (a simple entrance into and out of warp space), and its descriptions of several types of warp creature (Astral Hounds, Astral Spectres, Enslavers) is extremely useful for WFRP. The practical uses of these in WFRP games are described later in this article. The two original *Realms of Chaos* books also provide some useful ideas, although they strongly push the warp-space-equals-Chaos philosophy. This article takes the view that whilst warp space and warp potential are dangerous and unpredictable, they are essentially neutral in nature, and subject to the vagaries of human (and non-human) nature, for good or for ill.

### Womb of the Gods

The question of how the gods of the Warhammer World come to be has been asked many times and the answer always comes back: collective emotion. The first description of this process seems to be the story of how the activities of the Eldar (Elves from W40K) gave rise to Slaanesh, told in *Realms of Chaos: Slaves to Darkness*. However, the beliefs of individuals and groups play a crucial part, too. It is specific beliefs and ideas that often give rise to powerful emotions such as fear, hope and desire, and have an extremely significant role in detailing form. The easiest example is that of Khorne, the Blood God. Khorne was shaped from Warp Potential through hatred of the enemy and the mindless rage and blood lust felt by warriors during the heat of battle. He is a blood god because there are few things more symbolic of anger and violence than blood. He is terrifying because hate and pain and death can be terrifying. It took no conscious thought on the part of living creatures to create Khorne; the intensity and frequency of such emotions were more than sufficient for the god to simply take form. However, Khorne wears black armour and wields a sword because this is a recognisable image of war and all that attends it. This image may differ between cultures, but the essential nature and power of the god remains undiminished.

Compare Khorne with another god of battle, such as Ulric. The fact that Ulric is commonly called the White Wolf reminds us that he is also a god of winter and wolves. The harsh winters of the northern Old World and the seasonal threat of hungry

wolves during that time of year provoked understandable fear in the hearts and minds of early human tribes, which undoubtedly spurred the formation of a harsh god. In his earliest incarnation, Ulric may indeed have been a literal White Wolf. However, the need of Humans to attempt to placate these hostile elements gave rise to a Human-seeming form of the god, something less alien and easier to commune with, but still closely tied to the wolf. In those early times, wolves were also seen as noble, respectable creatures who hunted in packs, socialised together and defended their territories from outsiders. This undoubtedly appealed to tribal Humans, who sought to emulate that united strength, especially in times of conflict. In this way, Ulric also became a god of battle, but one concerned not with mindless slaughter, but with unity, defence and survival.

In these two examples, we see how the fears and concerns of living beings can transform warp potential into gods, and how the beliefs and needs of living beings can shape the image and nature of those gods. Of course, it is a complex process, and the precise details are far from certain. Gods themselves become aware of the process and seek to take advantage of it by encouraging intelligent beings to worship them. A god's ability to affect real space through manipulation of warp potential (for example by the creation of Daemons or use of miracles to inspire mortals) can make this relatively simple. However, it is a double-edged sword, as the beliefs and emotions gods seek to encourage in order to strengthen themselves can change and end up reshaping them. Consequently, most gods seek to maintain a relatively stable image with a broad appeal and following amongst mortals. The obvious exceptions are those gods who thrive on change, the gods of Chaos.



### Realms of the Gods

Warp space is effectively infinite, and it is possible for powerful warp creatures, principally gods and Daemon Princes, to create their own realms within it. These are islands of stability within warp space, protected from its storms and unpredictability. Each realm represents the nature of the god who created it. For example, Ulric's realm is a place of dark forests and bitter winter snows, of wolves and battle, where tribes of souls live on as the early Human tribes once did. Verena's realm is a vast noble city, filled with schools and universities where scholarly souls discuss science, philosophy and art. Some realms have permanent or temporary portals between each other (such as those of Ulric, Taal and Rhya) or places in real space (most likely secret shrines and other sacred sites, long, long forgotten by mortal priests).

Arguably, these might sound like the planes of *Dungeons and Dragons* among others, but gods need to exist somewhere. Also, given that death and undeath are so important to WFRP, it is important there are places where the dead can go (and return from), places it might be possible for living PCs to follow. Warp realms make excellent locations for short adventures or brief encounters, especially in campaigns where religion and the divine are the central theme. However, such places should always have a grim or perilous edge to them. From a living PC's point of view, they are strange, biased and extreme places, probably even to a PC devoted to a given realm's god. Ulric's realm of wolves, blizzards and shape-shifting axemen has obvious risks, but even Shallya's land of good health and kindness could be twisted into something threatening if the PCs are forcibly taken as patients by a crowd of Shallyan souls keen to rid them of any hint of ill-health and physical imperfection. In the business halls, warehouses and markets of Handerich's realm, PCs find they can achieve *nothing* without something to trade with and the business acumen to take on the fiercely competitive merchants and tradesmen.

### Souls of the Dead

WFRP has never been very clear on the nature of souls and the afterlife, despite having a god of Death and more Necromancers and Undead creatures than you can shake a scythe at. The nature of both is really up to individual GMs to decide for themselves. What follows is a personal interpretation, designed to fit with the themes of this article as well as the setting, and definitely should not be seen as applicable in any way to real-world beliefs and opinions.

Within every living creature, even animals and plants, there resides a spirit. That spirit is essentially warp potential that enters the creature sometime between conception and birth (or germination). As the creature lives, the warp potential is shaped and changed by the creature's life and experiences, and becomes its soul. The living creature and its soul *are* different; the soul is really a copy of the living creature's personality, drive and motivation, and sense of self-identity. Consequently, some souls are stronger than others.

When the living creature dies its body decays and its soul is released. At this point, the soul has an independent existence. However, the vast majority are naturally drawn back into warp space where all but the most powerful either dissolve back into

warp potential or continue to exist as mere sparks of memory floating through warp space. Those sparks may be harvested by gods, Daemon Princes or other warp creatures and used as seeds from which to grow other entities or add directly to their own power and knowledge. The same is sometimes true for the more powerful souls that retain their sense of self, but with their greater drive and motivation they are more likely to find their way to a realm of a god they have some affinity for. Or, they are able to carve out an independent existence for themselves in warp space, transforming into Daemons or something greater. Sigmar is undoubtedly the greatest example: his powerful ego, the ongoing adoration of an Empire of people, the respect of the Dwarfs, and the fear and hostility of the goblinoids, all giving his soul the power to transform into a god.

Some people die unfulfilled, with a sense of outrage at the way they died or with important (if only to them) things left unsaid or undone. When someone dies feeling like this, the soul feels the same way and can find either the strength to ignore the tug back to warp space and linger in real space or the strength to continue to survive in warp space but periodically re-enter real space, all with the intention of resolving its issues. Such souls are, obviously, Ghosts. Their periodic visible and physical manifestations in real space are a result of their ability (unconscious or otherwise) to manipulate warp potential. This ability is likely to be temporarily enhanced by symbolic connections, such as the anniversary of death, environmental conditions at the time of death (thunderstorms), Geheimnstag, and the presence of relatives or descendants. Magical ability in life may also be significant, particularly in the case of dead Amethyst Wizards.

Of course, there are forms of Undead other than Ghosts, but the principal is essentially the same: the soul overcomes the pull of warp space and remains behind. The innate connection of the soul to warp space can allow it to manipulate warp potential to perform magical feats: the Wight uses warp potential so it can inhabit and reanimate its corpse; the Vampire reanimates its corpse, keeps it in a semblance of life fuelled by blood, remaining almost unaware of the distinction between its body and soul; Wraiths are the souls of powerful Wizards that have transcended their physical body. The lesser Undead, Zombies and Skeletons, are usually little more than the sparks of soul described earlier, captured from warp space by Necromancers and used to give awkward life to decaying corpses and old bones.

Additionally, the continued existence of souls and soul sparks means there is ample room for the reality of reincarnation, as well as possession of the living or just recently vacated corpses. This is an excellent source of plots, ranging from the activities of souls and soul sparks to the schemes of still-living creatures seeking to survive in real space beyond death by transferring their souls from body to body.

The funeral rites of the cult of Morr have a very specific purpose: to ensure that souls do not remain to pester the living or be used by others. The blessings and rituals performed over dead bodies are intended to open a portal between real space and the warp space realm of Morr, through which souls are drawn. In Morr's realm all souls, from the powerful to mere

sparks can be protected from the attentions of malign warp creatures and Necromancers alike. Morr himself can decide to send souls on to the realms of other gods, transform them into his own daemonic servants or let them dissolve back into warp potential. Of course, other races have other gods and other rites to fulfil similar functions. Souls for which such rites are not performed are subject to the hazards and vagaries of warp space or are free to linger in real space if they have the strength and drive to do so.

### Magic

Very simply, magic represents warp potential given form or purpose in real space. Unlike the creation of gods, it is an active process, requiring conscious effort on the part of a Wizard. Spells and all the different classes of magic are just techniques and methodologies performed by Wizards to shape warp potential into a specific form. Even Daemonologists and Necromancers are just manipulating warp potential when they summon the entities of their particular interest, using it to form portals between real space and warp space, or realms within it, through which Daemons, souls and other warp entities can be summoned. Of course, all the different Wizards insist their magic is superior or more demanding or simply different from the others, but the truth is their various forms of magic come from the same place, whether they know it or not. The rituals and incantations, mental visualisations and arm-waving are actually just foci. It is Wizards' absolute belief and confidence in the techniques they feel comfortable with that allow them to unconsciously manipulate and shape warp potential and give it form in real space. The process can be compared to being able to drive a car without understanding how the engine works, or even that there is an engine. Spell ingredients represent both symbols upon which Wizards can focus their will and a form of sacrifice, as ingredients vanish into warp space to become warp potential (or perhaps they float, lost in infinite warp space or wash up on the shores of various warp realms?). As they practice magic, Wizards becomes better able to utilise warp potential, enabling them to manipulate more of the stuff more effectively, and shape it into more impressive spell effects (in rules terms, the Magic Characteristic of WFRP2 and the Magic Points of WFRP1 are simply artificial mechanisms representing how effectively a Wizard can manipulate warp potential).

However, most of the time Human Wizards tap into very specific forms of warp potential. There is some natural seepage of warp potential from warp space into real space, and the transition has the effect of separating it into different forms, like white light passing through a prism: the Colours of the so-called Winds of Magic. Human wizards are usually limited in their abilities and can only work with a single Colour of warp potential. However, it is possible that the High Elves are able to reach more directly into warp space itself, perhaps explaining the more impressive magical talents of the Elven High Mages. Alternatively, the Colours only represent a small part of a much larger spectrum of magical Winds: in the same way Humans can only see the visible spectrum of light, perhaps the Elves can see into the equivalent infra-red, ultraviolet and more extreme ranges of the Winds, enabling them to perform

mightier, stranger magic. Dark magic draws on a different part of this spectrum, which perhaps explains why some Wizards can manipulate only a single Colour, but may also cast spells relying on the dark Wind *Dhar*. Do not forget that Human magic may be limited because the magical techniques the High Elf mage Teclis taught Humans were deliberately designed to limit Human perception and use of the full range Colours and other regions of the magical spectrum.

It must be stressed that warp space is an unknown concept as far as Human wizards are concerned, although it is possible that High Elf mages possess at least some understanding of it. The best insight that the majority of wizards have is that magic is linked to Chaos, something few are happy talking about, preferring to speak of the Winds of Magic and the Colours, which are a lot more socially acceptable and provoke less hostility. Other wizards talk about energies specific to their favoured fields: for example, Necromancers use phrases like 'necromantic energies'. However, in both cases this is simply because (a) they are not aware of warp space and warp potential, (b) they like to talk-up their special interests and (c) it impresses the natives, so to speak.

Divine magic is largely the same as sorcery. If there is a difference, it is that a Priest manipulates warp potential to contact his god and ask for divine assistance, and the god manipulates warp potential on the Priest's behalf. In this way, the god is seen to be working through the Priest.

The most important message to take away from all of this is that GMs can choose to add (or bring back) any form of magic they think suitable. Elementalism, Battle Magic, Illusionism, Lore of Spirit, High Elf Magic, Kislevite Ice Shamanism<sup>1</sup>: each of these forms of magic represents warp potential given shape and purpose in real space through a combination of training and instinct. Their differences are not evidence of different sorts of magic, but demonstrate how philosophy and belief, as well as culture and society, affect the ways in which warp potential can be shaped.

One last thought – if warp potential is drawn from warp space into real space and transformed into a magical effect, then it could be argued that after the magical effect is over it reverts back into warp potential, which remains lingering in real space for a time. Not only does this provide a reason why places where magic is heavily practised, such as the colleges in Altdorf, are so strange and unstable, it also means that magic is an environmentally unfriendly activity, even when it brings benefits. This is ripe for parody and adds to the whole Chaos-is-radiation-Warpstone-is-Uranium metaphor that has always existed in WFRP.

### Warp Entities

There are many creatures in WFRP which are magical or spiritual in some way: the Undead, Daemons, Elementals, Nature Spirits and the Gods themselves. These beings have always been presented as distinct creatures in their own right. However, this article presents the idea that most are in fact different classes of *warp entity*. The term originally comes from *Warhammer 40,000: Rogue Trader*, and describes many different types of creature native to warp space. Here, its use is extended to a broader range of entities, such as those mentioned

above, as well as some creatures taken from W40K:RT. Gods and souls have been discussed earlier in the article: others are considered below, along with the aforementioned examples of W40K:RT warp entities that are characterised in WFRP terms.

### Daemons

These powerful creatures are entities created from warp potential by Gods to act as their servants within their realms in warp space and sometimes in real space. Daemons vary from the relatively mindless to the enormously powerful, according to the task they were created for. Generally speaking, the more powerful they are, the more intelligent and self-aware they are, enabling the stronger ones to develop personalities and aspirations – many Daemon Princes arise this way. It is likely some Daemons are created by belief and fear, perhaps it is not such a good idea to tell children scary stories before they go to a fretful sleep. The prevailing belief in the Warhammer World is that all Daemons are Chaotic and evil, but there is no reason why the non-Chaotic Gods should not be able to create their own Daemonic servants from warp potential. It is reasonable to assume the animal totems and messengers of many Gods are also Daemons, but ones possessing forms and natures more attractive and acceptable to mortals than the Daemons of Chaos. Additionally, there is no reason why Daemons have to appear as living creatures, natural or otherwise; they could take the form of objects or places. An example of the latter would be the strange house from *The Haunting Horror* scenario from *The Restless Dead* campaign, recently reprinted in *Plundered Vaults*.

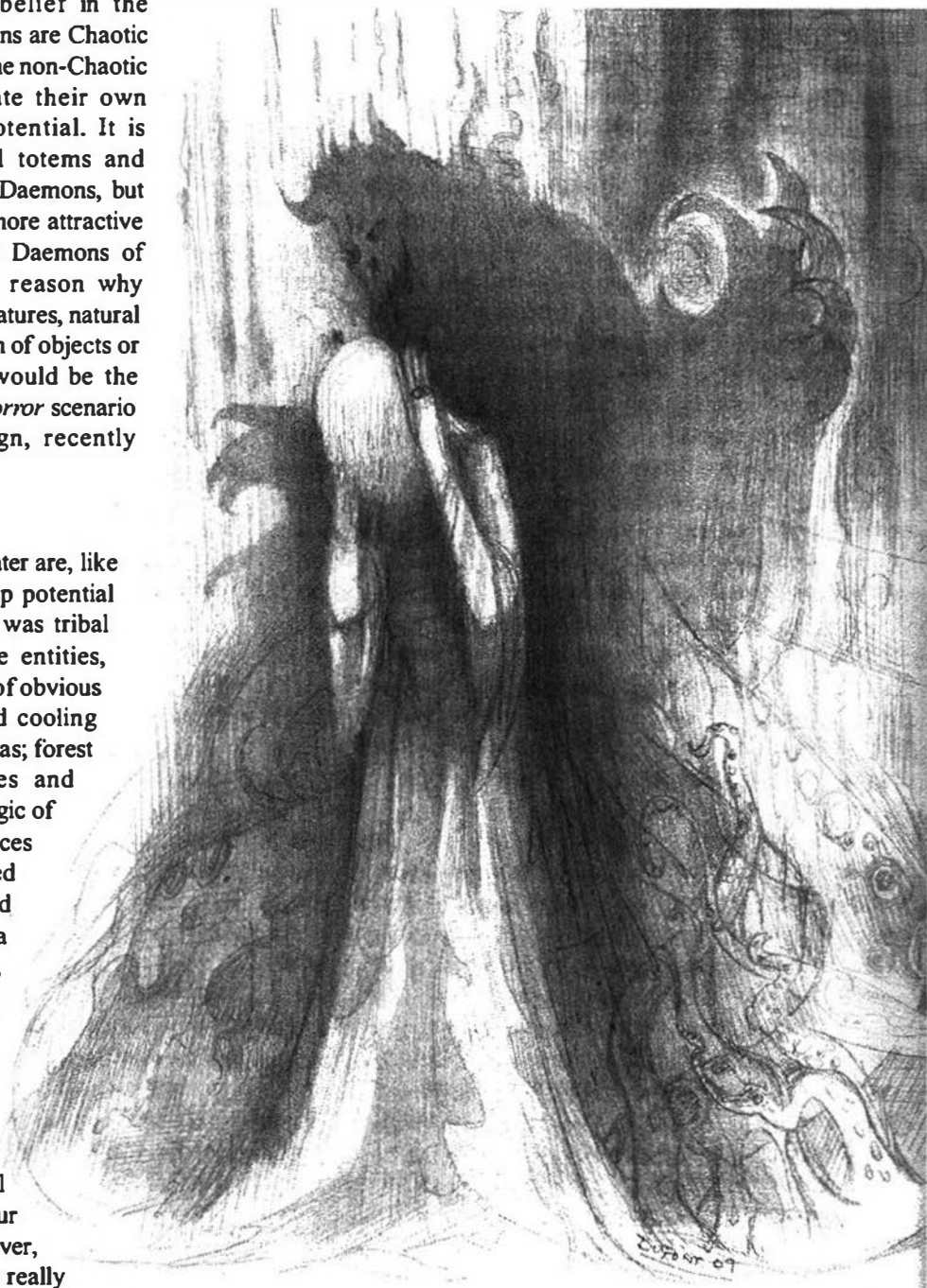
### Elementals

These spirits of earth, air, fire and water are, like gods, essentially the product of warp potential shaped by belief. Millennia ago, it was tribal shamans who began to create these entities, based on their limited understanding of obvious forces of nature: howling winds and cooling breeze; torrential rains and stormy seas; forest fires and volcanoes; earthquakes and glittering gemstones. The earliest magic of Humans and probably many other races was based on beliefs and emotions tied to these elements, and the desire and need to control or use them. It was a tradition that lasted, in various forms, at least until the coming of Teclis and his Colour Magic, and no doubt still survives.

Today, Human scholars, alchemists and magicians who seek to understand the physical world have come to believe that all physical substances are composed of these four elements in varying quantities. However, only natural philosophers and Wizards really

have an understanding of the concept of the four elements, too small a proportion of people to provide sufficient belief and emotion for Elementals to have an ongoing existence. For practical purposes, Elementals are manifestations of a Wizard's beliefs and understanding of a given element, and as such they spontaneously come into existence only when a Wizard performs a ritual to summon one. Any given Elemental is very much a product of the summoning Wizard's imagination: two Fire Elementals might have exactly the same characteristics and abilities, but one would appear as a roaring sphere of fire, the other as a beautiful female figure of flame. After they fulfil the task set for them by the Wizard, they dissolve back into warp potential.

However, it seems reasonable to argue that the more powerful the Wizard, the more powerful and independent his elementals could be. This means that after being summoned (in reality,



created by the Wizard from warp potential) and fulfilling a task set for it, an elemental could return to warp space and continue its existence. Perhaps enough such elementals of each type can form a group mind, powerful enough to manipulate warp potential to create their own elemental warp realm. Like the warp realms of the gods, elemental realms might seem reminiscent of *Dungeons and Dragons'* various planes, but some GMs might like to pursue the idea.

### Nature Spirits

This is a purely personal view, but nature spirits are Daemons with the ability to spend extended periods in real space, possibly at will, but perhaps limited to specific places and/or times of year. They can be friendly, but also capricious and dangerous: they are, in my view, the faeries of the Warhammer World. They are formed through the need to explain life's little fears and small blessings, to give a face to the rustlings in the forest shadows. When nature spirits are not in real space they reside in the warp space realms of Rhya, Taal, Ulric and Manann, and possibly those of other Gods they feel kinship with. Wizards and Priests of various types can summon them in much the same way as Necromancers and Daemonologists summon the dead and the Daemonic, if they know the appropriate rituals to open magical paths or warp portals for them. It seems likely that the Dryads of Athel Loren are similar spirits, but ones who have become intimately associated with trees, and able to remain permanently in the material world.

Various towns and cities have existed in the Old World and elsewhere for many centuries, so it is fair to say there are a few urban spirits, too. Even the Dwarfs grumble about Old Gremblin whose moulting beard fouls engines and mechanisms; offerings of greasy food and ale with oil are made to keep him happy and occupied.

### Entities Indigenous to Warp Space

In the original *Warhammer 40,000: Rogue Trader* there were several examples of warp entities that lived for all or part of their existence in warp space, but possessing the ability to enter real space under certain circumstances. Examples are described below and given characteristics, skills, talents and special rules appropriate to WFRP. They could be used as plain foes, but were originally designed to be particularly baneful to psykers, especially weak ones. Here they are presented as possible alternatives or additions to Tzeentch's Curse or the Wrath of the Gods, or simply as the starting points for adventures.

## ASTRAL SPECTRE

(commonly called Will Eaters, Enervators, Soul Feeders)

Astral Spectres are non-physical creatures inhabiting warp space, which feed on the energy of physical creatures with magical ability (i.e. possess a Magic Characteristic of at least 1) in real space. They are able to interact with real space only through the activities of those performing magic like Wizards and Priests. They either actively hunt out magical trails left in warp space or are drawn to them through unconscious instinct. However, Astral Spectres cannot enter real space to attack their prey and drag it into warp space to devour it – they have no

physical body to do so. Instead, they seek to bodily possess a victim and slowly consume its will, before leaving a mindless but still living husk (every day, the victim loses 1D10 points of Will Power as the Spectre feeds). When a host body is almost depleted, an Astral Spectre must find a new host or it will be almost immediately be drawn back into warp space when the host's will is completely consumed.

Some Astral Spectres are quite clever. Instead of depleting their host's will entirely, they seek to jump from host to host, allowing hosts to recover and be re-used later. They use their hosts to interact with other people, seeking to encourage magic use (leaving trails in warp space for other Spectres to find and follow), even trying to set up new schools to 'breed' and 'farm' potential hosts. Some cabals of corrupt Wizards allow themselves to be possessed in this way; the Spectre's enhanced Magic allows them to present themselves as being more powerful than they really are. Similarly, some Priests form secret societies and heresies, believe themselves to be periodically inhabited by avatars of their Gods. All this is as true for, say Goblin shamans, Slann Mage-Priests and Skaven Grey Seers, as any other race.

In real space Astral Spectres' characteristics modify their hosts as described below. In warp space, their characteristics are extremely variable.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
+15	+15	+6	+6	+6	56	56	36
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
+1	+5				+1		

Skills: As host, plus Magical Sense

Talents: As host

### Special Rules:

**Possess:** Once an Astral Spectre finds a suitable target (a character with a Magic Characteristic of at least one), it and the target make a contested Will Power Test. If the Astral Spectre fails, it seeks out a new target; if its target fails, the Spectre successfully enters the target's body and takes physical control of it; stalemate results in a new Test next round. Once per day, the victim can attempt to expel the Spectre through another contested Will Power Test, with stalemate maintaining the status quo; however, each day expelling the Spectre becomes increasingly difficult (the victim loses 1D10 points of Will Power per day as the Spectre feeds). If the victim successfully expels the Spectre, he immediately regains 1D10 Will Power points, and will regain another 1D10 each week, until reaching the level he was at before the possession took place. During the period of possession, the Astral Spectre is in complete control of the victim's body, and has access to his knowledge and memories, although it may be a bit slow to remember information or hesitant performing tasks. Victims gain one Insanity Point per week of possession, and these stay even

if the victim successfully expels the Spectre; GMs can increase this if the Spectre uses its host for particularly horrible activities.

*Instability:* Astral Spectres are not subject to instability (see Daemons in the *Old World Bestiary*) whilst possessing a body, but if they are unable to find a new host to possess when their current host loses all its Will Power, then it must successfully make a **Will Power Test** every round or be drawn back into warp space.

*Others:* An Astral Spectre may be able to use other special abilities appropriate to its host.

**Armour:** As host.

**Armour Points:** As host.

**Weapons:** As Host.

## ASTRAL HOUND

(commonly called Swine-Hounds, Dark Hunters, Mage Banes)

These dangerous predators resemble strangely pig-like dogs whose appearance flashes between real-looking animals and angular, crystalline blurs of coloured light. They live in warp space, but have a taste for the unique type of warp potential that accumulates in the bodies of living creatures that use magic, principally Wizards and Priests. Individuals or packs of up to six Hounds prowl warp space searching for the trails of those with the ability to perform magic. When a Hound locates a potential victim, it attempts to dominate the victim and use his or her magical ability to create a portal from warp space into real space where it can physically attack. Critical wounds paralyse the victim who is dragged into warp space and consumed by the hungry Hound. Hounds slain in the physical world dissolve back into warp space as warp potential.

As described in the Special Rules, a Hound must overcome a target's Will Power before it can use its magic. Less powerful users of magic usually have less developed will power and *vice versa*. Ironically, this means that whilst Hounds can often overcome, say, a Wizard's Apprentice and use her magical ability, the Apprentice's magic is usually too weak for the Hound to actually materialise. A Wizard Lord who fails the challenge of wills is more likely to face a successfully materialised pack of Astral Hounds.

Astral Hounds make a good example of Tzeentch's Curse, or they could be used as an ongoing threat facing any character with a Magic characteristic. It is possible for an individual Hound or pack to become an ongoing foe for a character, continually tracking the character, trying to break through until they succeed and face the character in real space. Hounds that are forced back into warp space (they may choose to retreat, be sent back with magic, or be overcome by Instability) lose the target's scent and must find the trail once again. This hunt is left in the GM's hands, but the Hound(s) could pick up the trail when the character becomes a victim of Tzeentch's Curse or the Wrath of the Gods. Or, once each month the Hound(s) must try to make a successful **Perception Test** to find the scent, followed by a successful **Follow Trail Test** to track the target.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
36	40	50	50	45	50	65	-
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	25	5	5	6	0	0	0

**Skills:** Follow Trail +20%, Magical Sense, Perception +20%, Shadowing +10%, Silent Move +10%

**Talents:** Daemonic Aura, Fearless, Frightening, Keen Senses, Natural Weapons, Night Vision

### Special Rules:

*Materialise:* Astral Hounds can attempt to materialise in real space through any creature with a Magic characteristic. Firstly, the Astral Hound and the target make an opposed **Will Power Test**. If the target wins, the Astral Hound cannot use the target's Magic; it will ignore the target in favour of easier prey; stalemate results in a new Test next round. (GMs may allow packs of Hounds to combine their Degrees of Success.) If the Astral Hound wins it rolls the target's Magic characteristic: if it rolls 9 or higher the Hound materialises in real space 1D10 yards from the target and attacks; if it scores lower it cannot materialise; if it rolls all ones then the Hound never bothers the target again (but others can). The Hound can make three attempts to materialise over the course of three rounds. Three failures mean it abandons its attempts, and will not try again until such time as the target's Magic characteristic changes; the Hound must locate the target again and a new opposed **Will Power Test** is needed. Up to six Astral Hounds can materialise in real space through a portal created by a single Hound. The target is aware something hostile is trying to break through his defences and can choose to allow it through, either at the **Will Power Test** stage or the Casting Roll stage.

*Teleport:* Having entered real space an Astral Hound can shift quickly back into warp space and then back into real space in a slightly different position; the original target the Hound used to enter real space must be within the Hound's sight for it to do this. As a Full Action, a Hound selects a point anywhere within one to ten yards of its current position. A D10 is rolled: if the number matches the Hound rematerialises where it intended; if it does not match, the Hound rematerialises the dice roll in yards away in a position chosen by the target the Hound used to enter real space.

*Paralysis:* Any critical hit inflicted by Astral Hounds paralyse the victim; the paralysis lasts until the victim makes a successful **Toughness Test**, which can be attempted as a Full Action on the victim's subsequent turns. Any victim without a Magic characteristic that is paralysed is ignored, but a victim with a Magic characteristic can be automatically dragged into warp space by the Hound on its next turn.

*Instability:* Astral Hounds are subject to instability as described for Daemons in the *Old World Bestiary*.

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** None

**Weapons:** Sharp Fangs

## ENSLAVERS

(commonly called **Eye Lords**, **Ocular Fiends**, **Nesters**)

Unlike Astral Hounds or Spectres, Enslavers are apparently normal physical beings, though somewhat weird and unpleasant ones. They seem fully capable of living in warp space, but given the opportunity can enter and survive in real space with no threat of instability. Like Astral Hounds and Spectres, they can detect the emanations and trails of magic use in warp space, and can use them to track the users of magic in real space. Three Enslavers can form a mental bond and transform a practitioner of magic into a warp portal between warp space and real space through which the trio (and the trio alone) can pass.

Although clever, it is hard to say if Enslavers are actually intelligent. They never appear to use tools or weapons and never communicate with other creatures, although they do seem capable of making rational decisions and changing their behaviour according to circumstances. Arguably, their key ability seems to be the power to take mental control of other living creatures, using them as slaves for manual labour, most of which seems to involve constructing nests and other structures; the purpose of these, and the Enslavers' ultimate goal, remains unclear.

These bizarre creatures are quite monstrous by most standards and will undoubtedly be regarded as Daemons. An Enslaver's body is like two leathery, rugose globes, the smaller one fused atop the second which is at least half as big again; these are normally brown, but Enslavers can change colour as they wish. The upper-most globe is dominated by what appears to be a large central eye, but which could in fact have an entirely different purpose; it is usually red, orange or pink in colour, or a swirling mix of each. Growing from all around the equator of the lower globe there are eight to twelve pale brown or white tentacles about one and a half metres long; usually at least two of these are much longer than the others and terminate in pads covered with suckers; the obvious comparison is with giant squid. All these tentacles can be used for manipulation and may have other sensory functions. However, they do not act as walking limbs. Instead, Enslavers are able to float above the ground, up to three metres, although they cannot be said to fly.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
39	-	32	38	30	22	59	-
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	3	3	6	0	0	0

**Skills:** Follow Trail +20%, Magical Sense, Perception +10%, Silent Move +30%

**Talents:** Ambidextrous, Hoverer, Natural Weapons (with the Fast and Snare Qualities), Night Vision, Resistance to Magic, Terrifying, Wrestling

### Special Rules:

**Create Gate:** When three Enslavers all find a suitable target (a character with a Magic Characteristic of at least one) they can form a mental link and together transform the target into a living warp portal. At first, the victim is unaware of this, but over the course of a week he becomes increasingly tired; later his skin begins to change, taking on unnatural hues, forcing him to hide or disguise himself; later still his body begins to bloat and swell, skin slowly and painfully splitting until it finally ruptures and the warp portal is formed. The trio of Enslavers can now use the victim to travel between warp space and real space and back again as they wish; however, only the Enslavers who created the portal can use it. The victim remains alive throughout; who knows if rescue is possible?

**Shock!:** Enslavers normally attack using a mental power striking at the physical body of the target. A single individual within 48 yards can be targeted as a Full Action, and on a successful **Ballistic Skill Test**, damage is inflicted as for a Hand Weapon (plus Strength Bonus); armour is ignored, but Toughness is subtracted as normal. The attack feels like an electrical shock.

**Enslave:** An Enslaver can attempt to enslave up to two individuals at one time as a Full Action. The targets must all be within 24 yards of the Enslaver, but there does not have to be visual contact between them; Enslavers can remain hidden. To determine the success of an enslavement attempt, the Enslaver and the targets make a contested **Will Power Test** (the Enslaver rolls only once and the result is compared to the targets' rolls separately). If a target wins, then it is immune to enslavement by any Enslaver. If a target loses, then it immediately comes under the total control of the Enslaver. However, if a slave moves further than 48 yards from its Enslaver then the control is broken, although another enslavement attempt could be made later. Similarly, an Enslaver can release a slave at any time, and attempt enslavement again later. Only when a target wins a contested **Will Power Test** against an Enslaver does it become immune. However, at the GM's discretion animals can be re-enslaved if they have been enslaved once already. Victims gain one **Insanity Point** every time they are enslaved; they may gain more depending on what acts the Enslavers make them perform.

**Armour:** None

**Armour Points:** None

**Weapons:** Whipping Tentacles or Shock! attack

### Final Thoughts

For some, over-detailed rationalisation and explanation can stifle creativity but for others, it can be inspirational. Hopefully,



this article achieves more of the latter. When writing an article it is important to consider how any given explanation can be used by GMs to do something interesting in an actual game. Some suggestions are found in the text; here are some others.

**The Blue Lady:** Successive years of young children at a boarding school for the wealthy middle classes have long told one another stories about a blue lady who walks the grounds at night. The origin of this is a story made-up long-ago by older children to scare a new intake, but years of belief by young, impressionable minds have allowed a minor Daemon to form from warp potential. On nights of the full moon, the blue lady does indeed walk the corridors of the school. *The idea that warp entities are created from belief and emotion enables GMs to create any number of minor beings simply from the beliefs and emotions of a group or even a single person. The nature of the being is shaped by the beliefs and emotions, so you might have the friendly spirit of a local wishing well (which can be summoned for assistance) or a daemonic cat beast inspired by a single unsolved murder decades ago (the new murders by the cat beast Daemon can only be stopped by proving the guilt of the now-aged woman who was the original villain – the sudden loss of belief will diminish the Daemon sufficiently to weaken it).*

**The Stag:** After trekking up a high, forested mountain ridge, the PCs pass through a thick bank of cloud. When they emerge, they find themselves looking out over a land they do not recognise: a primal, northern wilderness, untainted by any sign of smoke or cities scarring the land. A huge noble stag trots down the slope towards them. It speaks to them, and gives them a message. Before they can enquire further, clouds cover them; when it lifts, the land below is familiar once more. Later, when they travel down, they share their story with a Taal priest in his hermitage, who tells them of the sacredness of the ridge and that they have passed into Taal's realm and absolutely must act on the words of the stag. *GMs can use warp portals into warp realms to create atmospheric scenes and do things they could not normally do without straining credibility. Another example is a door in one of Marienburg's counting houses that leads into the business halls of Haendryk himself: the door is not always there and it sometimes moves, but if you need to do business with a god then it might make itself available. Of course, some things can come out of warp realms and into real space, too – an owl wise in the ways of war from Myrmidia's realm or a sacred blade fashioned from wolf bone and teeth from Ulric's realm.*

**In Residence:** An NPC Wizard suffers a bout of Tzeentch's Curse and the Astral Spectre that possesses her finds itself very much at home. Rather than entirely sapping its host's will, it takes advantage of the Wizard's position within a college of magic to move between hosts. Over several months, the college acquires a reputation for the increasingly bizarre antics of its masters and apprentices – even by wizard standards some of the behaviour is weird, people say. The college authorities decide they need some non-wizards to track the problem, even though they do not like involving outsiders. *GMs should make*

*use of Tzeentch's Curse and warp entities to create scenarios and NPCs. Remember that entities expelled back to warp space are not necessarily destroyed, so they can become recurring villains. Perhaps an Astral Spectre takes a liking for a Wizard or Priest PC. It never completely drains the PC's will and willingly leaves before it destroys its host, but whenever the PC suffers Tzeentch's Curse or Wrath of the Gods, the Spectre is there, ready to attempt possession. The player might even be allowed to play the possessing Spectre during this time.*

**Dahrghyran:** The Necrarch Vampire Lorenz is a Necromancer of unusual talent. Before becoming one of the Undead, Lorenz was a Jade Wizard, manipulating Ghyran, the Green Wind of Magic. Following his transformation, he understandably became interested in Dhar and the Dark Magic of Necromancy. Lorenz discovered he could see a new Colour he termed simply as *Dharghyran*, and set about developing a Lore of Necromancy all of his own. Where most Necromancers animate corpses and skeletons, Lorenz can imbue dead plant matter with a shambling form of life: dead trees stalk and protect the borders of his territory, the red moss that covers his tower drinks the blood of those who attempt to scale it, and dark ivy creeps through the windows to strangle his sleeping enemies. *Warp potential is exactly that: potential. Do not be restricted by the Winds of Colour, but mix them like a painter, and remember there are shades unseen by the Human eye, frequencies unheard by Elven ears. Remember it pools and gathers in certain places, enhancing and even changing magic performed there when different Colours mix.*

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# DEAD MAN WALKING

MUSINGS ON THE UNDEAD BY TOBY PILLING

Do you want to know a secret? I have the solution to the undead menace. I will reveal this momentous cure later, for there are two things that I want to cover in this piece – death and un-death. Or perhaps I am really considering one question – what lies beyond death? I propose that it is a crucial question for WFRP, which every GM should consider closely.

We certainly know that a lot of the background of Old World society, and the way it functions, is based around roughly historical precedents. Add in magic, interventionist Gods and the undead and I believe the logic of much game activity starts to look shaky. I am aware, of course, that a little give and take will always be necessary – this is “only a game”, after all. However, contemplating rational responses to a magical game reality, enriches the world we play within. Indeed, I have some suggestions on how to do so.

## Morr’s Realm

Religion is fundamental to understanding the practice of necromancy. With regard to the former, I am certainly not the first to urge debate on this subject. Tim Eccles in his sadly missed Correspondent series<sup>1</sup> posed several questions<sup>2</sup> which I will not reiterate here. To consider the dead rising, however, I believe we do have to consider one of his queries: exactly where does a Bogenhof militiaman go when he dies?

I realise that the nature of the Gods themselves is a source of uncertainty – debate rages over whether they are formed from Chaos, through the collective belief of thinking beings; or that they are all aspects of certain archetypes – so that Ulric is an aspect of Khorne, or vice versa.

Whatever – let us assume that they exist and function as their adherents believe. It is crucial to consider what happens in Morr’s realm. I will present my take, using three examples; first, the cult of Ulric.

Let us assume that such an Ulrican principally venerates Ulric, whilst acknowledging and praying to others at need.

Imagine Ulricans believe that upon death, they are invited into a Valhalla type feasting hall, where they drink, carouse and test their skill at arms for near eternity. I say near eternity, for one day, as the Chaos Gods finally take over the world, they will once more take up their arms and fight in a Ragnarok type battle against those timeless foes, where they will be defeated but die (again) gloriously – the universe and existence as we know it will end, and a new one will begin. So the circle continues.

This heavenly drinking hall is, crucially, located within Morr’s realm. Death is an enjoyable, vital experience, not just



<sup>1</sup>Warpstone issues 10 to 23

<sup>2</sup>Particularly in issues 10, 22 and 23

consisting of rest or peace. A spirit of an Ulrican, torn from that realm through whatever method, would not complain of his rest being interrupted therefore – rather he might claim (if he could remember) that he had been about to hear a great saga from his forefathers' herald, and is surly about such a prospect being curtailed.

My second example is a follower of the Old Faith. It is important to consider the followers of this belief system, as they are an alternative to the pantheon of Old World Gods.

A worshipper of the Old Faith believes that upon their death, their essence or spirit is subsumed into the whole. They lose their sense of identity and individuality, becoming part of a togetherness, at one with nature and all existence, so entering a nirvana-like state. If it were possible to detach such a spirit, it would likely be rather spaced out, beatific and uncomprehending – almost impossible to communicate with.

Interestingly, a worshipper of the pantheon of Gods, would claim that this loss of individuality is actually a non-existence, a null, void-like state – simply, a form of purgatory.

Lastly, let us consider a worshipper of the Ruinous Powers. All believers of all faiths would claim that these souls end up in hell. Followers of Khorne, however, would claim that “hell” is just a word for a higher plane of existence, where their essence can evolve and become something greater, achieving a more perfect, true state – a process that over millennia can lead to a form of daemonhood and an ability to manifest (for a short time) back into the lower plane of the Old World. Human frailties, emotions and feelings – of pain, ecstasy, terror, etc – become meaningless in time, a mortal skin to be sloughed off on the path to transformation. Along this path would feature endless violence and bloodshed. Though the wounds inflicted and borne might cause pain, they would soon re-heal. An eternity of mindless war. Of course, an actual Khornite might not be quite so expansive in their explanation.

Any such damnable creature wrenched from hell, would like as not have lost all traces of humanity or sanity long ago. Who knows what it would tell us? Witch hunters burn all books that claim such knowledge.

### The Rub

Let us say then that for most Old Worlders, some form of existence beyond death is expected, and once reached, it is deemed preferable to returning. Exceptions will exist – for example some spirits may delay their journey to the afterlife, to avenge or right some perceived wrong.

Let us then consider what happens when someone utilises the dark arts to raise the dead. For a corporeal form, (a zombie or skeleton), my understanding is that one crucial element is required – the body. This is then infused with the spirit of the body's possessor (or at least a shard of it), that has been wrenched from where it is residing/resting/burning in hell. If this is not the case, and the spirit of the incumbent is not being discomfited at all, why would Morr's priests revile the practice so? We must assume therefore, that the afterlife is being interrupted in some way, which pisses off those so afflicted, and is morally wrong.

But let us think about what follows from this reasonable assumption, for a moment.

Is it only Humans who can be raised from the dead? What about Skaven, Beastmen or Orcs (ignoring the ‘Orcs as mushrooms’ argument for a moment)?

I am not one to often quote WFB sources, but we have a clue in the form of Richter Kreugar and his Cursed Company, one of the Regiments of Renown. The models depict skeletal Orcs and Dwarfs and others, alongside Humans. Also, there is a GW modelling guide about constructing zombies of other races, including Beastmen. We also know of zombie dragons and bone giants. I am not against these non-human critters, by the way – I think it is logical that they exist. Others are shown in *Something Rotten in Kislev*.

However, if such material can be animated, what is the harm in doing so? I don't see that many Old Worlders would object to interrupting a Skaven's idea of heaven at all, especially if such an automaton could be employed against other foes of humanity. There has to be a logical argument against such a practice, employable by priests of Morr, otherwise we can assume it would be a common tactic. Let me proffer one such.



### Thin Skein

The world of the dead (or worlds, perhaps) is not a physical realm, but a spiritual one that exists alongside our own. Imagine the divider of these two worlds as a skein. In some (thankfully rare) parts of the world, it is thinner than in others – such places are a focus of disquiet, where strange things happen and the dead lie uneasy. Mousillon in Bretonnia would be an example of such.

When a spirit is torn from one realm to exist in another, it pierces that skein, and weakens it. Each such rupture is unremarkable in itself, but the damage is cumulative and irreversible. Any amount of mass tears, in a short period of time and space, could rip a hole in the Aethyr, allowing a gateway between the worlds of the living and the dead. Priests of Morr have nightmares about the apocalypse that would follow. Hence, they are utterly against any form of necromancy, for whatever purpose, because of the threat it poses and the irreparable damage it causes to the fabric of reality. It is not only a moral matter, regarding the rights of the spirits of the dead; the very fate of the world is at stake.

### Spirit or Essence?

Having dealt with that, let us examine another potential problem area – undead animals.

Humans, Orcs, dragons and even giants are, as far as we know, sentient beings. As such, we may grant them the existence of what could be termed a ‘soul’. Does a horse possess a soul, however, and if so, where does it reside? We know for a fact that skeletal horses exist, so what is it that animates their corpses?

One answer could be that it is not a shard of their soul, but an aspect of their essence or life force. These may reside in Taal's infinite forests and plains, again in Morr's realm. Another alternative would be to have them animated by magic

alone – which then begs the question though; why bones are required at all for such an automaton? Why not just animate a horse-shaped being out of rocks, steel, or pork pies for that matter?

It must be that some essence of life is being stolen from its rightful place. Morr's realm seems a prime candidate for such theft, and again we must assume that the skein of reality is being damaged, to ensure such acts are deemed abominable.

### Burial Rites

Earlier I claimed that I held the secret cure for the bane of undeath. The answer to the blight of necromancy is deceptively simple, however. So simple, that we shall have to ponder why it is not being practised already. It is one word. I shall whisper it to you: *Cremation*.

Without bones, there will be no skeletons. Without corpses, there will be no zombies. Ethereal ghosts can still be bidden, I imagine, but scattering any such ashes will gift the necromancer little to gain a hold upon. Even if we grant that burial rites, undertaken properly, can make bodies inert for necromantic purposes (a subject I will come on to later), the expedient of burning bodies should be being undertaken throughout the world. In effect, it rids the necromancer of most human ammunition.

Why is not it being done then? Surely, not another implausible, Skaven-like conspiracy.

### Body of Evidence

There does not need to have been an evil cabal at the heart of the cult of Morr since time began to explain such a discrepancy; unless you want one, of course. Maybe there is not a discrepancy at all, but a logical reason to bury the dead, foregoing cremation. I think one exists, which is given to us through the very practice of necromancy itself.

We know there is a link between the body and the spirit, even after death, because that is how a necromancer raises a corpse.

Perhaps then, obliterating a corpse not only makes it near impossible to animate, but also has ramifications for the spirit. Maybe the spirit will find it much more difficult to find its way to Morr's realm, if the vessel it inhabited has been scattered to the four winds as dust. Years, decades, centuries or millennia could be spent wandering in a form of purgatory. Perhaps that is why bodies are buried, as intact as possible – to ease their spirit's passage to the other side.

This also explains why humanity would have little compunction about burning the bodies of its foes in mass pyres – not only do they care little for the soul of such a being, but

### *Selling Sulring*

*"Of course, some priests of Morr would say that the art of necromancy threatens the world itself. There is a grain of truth in that claim, but the skein dividing the realms of the dead and the living is far stronger and resilient than they proclaim. Ignorance of the facts is the greatest threat, which the authorities' constant fearmongering and witch hunts do the most to foster. With a responsible attitude, using scientific methods, necromancy can be practised perfectly safely – indeed, it can help avert the far greater threat of Chaotic domination. The binding of spirits is regrettable, yes, but the need is great and I shall not discomfit them forever. Indeed, you will notice a move away from human receptacles amongst the defenders of Bolgusgrad. Let the Ruinous Powers provide the resource, I say."*

### *'...or your money back!'*

A de-frocked priest of Morr has been selling indulgences and relics to soldiers during the Storm of Chaos, vowing that they would secure their purchasers a place in Morr's realm, even if they did not receive a proper burial and rites. He guaranteed their effectiveness, with a full refund for any dissatisfied customer. Recently however, he has been haunted by a ghost, demanding re-payment for it and its fleeced brothers in arms. The ex-priest has squandered most of his ill-gotten gains. Somehow, the PCs get involved in brokering a settlement.

### *Volkmar's Grim Tidings*

*"I did not choose to have my rest in Morr's realm interrupted, nor did I opt for a demon to disturb that tranquillity. But oft, evil will shall evil mar."*

*"Brothers, I have seen the other side. I have sat by the foot of Sigmar's mighty throne, where profound secrets were revealed to me. And I tell you that I was sent back to inhabit once more this unworthy vessel for a reason, to begin the most holy of missions. The truth is that my work here is not yet done. Indeed friends, it has barely begun."*

### *Eternal Guards*

*"Gather round, you whom I trust most, and let me reveal our sacred duty, as revealed to me by Sigmar himself..."*

The PCs somehow get involved in the activities of a cult within the cult of Sigmar, who term themselves the 'eternal guard'. It seems that, inspired by the example of Volkmar, some priests are grooming impressionable and zealous templars and the like, to forego their burial rites, and commit their body to the cult. These individuals sign a compact, specifying the number of years they shall delay the passage to the afterlife, in order to serve the Emperor in death, and fight the menace of Chaos from beyond the grave. After all, what greater sacrifice could prove one's piety, than postponing one's own journey to paradise? Certain priests have delved into the necromantic arts to enact the process. Whilst debate rages over how to best employ this scarce resource, some of the zombies are proving difficult to control.

### *Pale Rider*

A priest of Morr hires the PCs to guard him as he attends to a holy quest. His mission, to travel the war-ravaged north-east of the Empire, and inter properly and with full rites as many victims of the Storm of Chaos as he can. Any bodies that have been hurriedly buried in mass pits will have to be dug up first. The PCs will be provided with shovels.

they realise they are removing necromantic raw material. That may be why we see so few undead Orcs, Mutants or Beastmen.

### Six Feet Under

Why should any Imperial citizen be scared of a graveyard? Certainly not because of the bodies within it. For, if the Old World is going to make any credible sense whatsoever, the last place a necromancer is going to find any useful bodies is within one. Let us look next at these burial rites.

We know that the correctly administered ceremony presided over by a priest, makes a body inert for necromantic purposes. If this system was regularly failing, it would be overhauled. Yes, there might be the odd corrupt practice, but they would be the exception rather than the rule. People fear graveyards therefore, because of those that prey on the dead, not the dead themselves – namely ghouls. Folklore and myths will have built up over the centuries about these foul creatures.

People will still fear the unquiet dead of course, but these will be in different localities than hallowed graveyards. Scenes of mass carnage, where the dead could not be properly buried with full rites, would be the culprits, particularly sites of disaster, war or plague.

### Fear

Another phenomenon I want to look at is the curious aspect of fear. Personally, the visage of an Orc or Beastman seems far more frightening to me than a skeleton. Even if we grant that the undead look physically scary, one would imagine that repeated exposure to such creatures would inure one to any such fear.

But there is a simple, logical reason to fear the undead. Not for what they are themselves, but for what their presence indicates. For where we find the undead, we will also nearly always find someone capable of raising them. If we then fall in battle before such enemies, with no chance of a proper burial, we face the unappealing prospect of our spirits becoming unwilling slaves, animating our smashed bodies, possibly for eternity.

Skeletons and zombies indicate the shadow of a necromancer – it is he who is rightly feared.



### What's my motivation?

I have often wondered why, in a world where Gods demonstrably exist beyond a shadow of doubt, anyone would be persuaded to forego a happy afterlife and become a necromancer. OK, some may attain lichhood and prolong their lives – but at the cost of their soul's damnation. Daemonologists and worshippers of Ruinous Powers are different, of course – their aim is to achieve immortality through daemonhood. What then motivates a necromancer? Consider this when designing your protagonists.

Of course, all such practitioners of the dark arts are individuals, and will have myriad motivating factors. But some interesting ones present themselves to help make such NPCs more than cardboard cut-outs. I have looked at a few in some plot threads (see sidebar pg. 25).

### Can of worms

Pondering the issues and practicalities around un-death can lead to some inventive and amusing plot lines – far more interesting than lonely necromancers in stark towers re-animating dead for no good reason.

I hope that the ideas I have presented through my various musings prove useful. I certainly feel that the more logical and pragmatic a fantastical game mechanism is, the more believable it becomes.



# GHOST STORIES

GHOSTS IN WFRP BY CLIVE OLDFIELD

*'An idea, like a ghost, must be spoken to a little before it will explain itself.'*

Karl Diechenz, Altdorf pamphleteer.

Ghosts are lost creatures of the warp unable to completely leave the real world. Directly aggressive, unknowably obtuse, instinctively cruel or deliberately spiteful, vengeful, misguided or just bored, ghosts see what they want to see in a twilight world of their own, passing the interminable centuries phasing in and out of existence, able to do almost anything, but actually achieving next to nothing. Not bound by the normal rules of real space, they are a GM ideal, just waiting for a plot.



## Ghosts in the Old World

Ghosts are a controversial subject throughout the Old World. Many scholars believe they do not exist. This is despite evidence to the contrary, and the knowledge that necromancers can bring life from beyond death. Even though vampires and dragons are considered more than legend, many educated folk still refuse to believe in the existence of ghosts.

Of course, the working classes, old wives and the man down the pub know well they exist. It is a strong part of the folklore of the Empire and beyond that spirits come from many things and these spirits can interact with humans. The vast majority of spirits are not malign and generally keep themselves to themselves.

Whatever the ethics of doing deals with these spirits and trying to get them to play a role in the world of humans, this article only deals with those spirits that have come about through a traumatic death and thereby haunt the world of humans. It is hard to differentiate between nature spirit, forest sprite, djinn, and all those other supernatural emanations from the warp, and ghosts; it is really a case of 'you'll know one when you see one.'

Ghosts are undead and ethereal and they reach beyond the world of the dead to the real world but seem to belong in neither. They chose (however indirectly or subconsciously) to cling to the material world instead of entering Morr's realm, for a reason. They will not leave until the reason no longer remains, or they are destroyed.

Ghosts are not always visible, they appear intermittently, and

often for seemingly no good reason. This is handy for a GM who can have them turn up when he desires (usually when the PCs walk by), but they are more likely to appear when someone is near, or when their remains are disturbed. They are also more likely to turn up at special times, the anniversary of their death, Geheimnisnacht, and so on.

Their behaviour is unfathomable too; for they are indeed, haunted. The ghost is a creature of base instinct and caprice not one of studied strategy. They are confused, and their perception of the world is so slanted in their shadowy existence, and their manipulation of things so difficult and clumsy they can seem to behave in entirely strange ways. Ghosts can become fixated on a single detail, or lose all memory of the erstwhile impending need for their haunting. This, again, is all good news for the GM, who has license to be spooky while not



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needing to act entirely logically.

Ghosts will eventually fade away into nothing, or perhaps become so absorbed by their surroundings that they become as if a nature spirit; perhaps this is the origin of all such spirits. This fading can take hundreds, even thousands of years and sometimes they need to be got rid of before then.



### Why are they Here?

Ghosts occur when the departing soul spark cannot find its way into warp space. This is usually because the manner of death is so violent, sudden, unjust or plain tragic that the soul spark finds the simple bloody-mindedness to keep itself in the real world. This is an unconscious effort, and whether the ghost can make sense of its predicament is up to the GM, but usually they are so confused by this act, that they become unaware of their true nature.

Sometimes a promise made, unfinished business or strong loyalty can also keep the soul spark in real space. One common cause of a haunting is that the spirit made a vow in life and did not manage to keep to it. This is especially true if the spirit desperately wanted to fulfil it, or the vow was made to supernatural beings such as Kislevan spirits, or even daemons. The spirit will now not rest until the vow is upheld (or perhaps it fades away into the mist of time once the vow has become entirely obsolete). The spirit may need someone still living to make good on the vow (i.e. PCs) and have to urge them and give hints in the unfortunately obtuse manner now left to these tragic figures.

The spirit may be seeking justice for an ill done to it, or loved ones, more than likely the act of death itself. So the spirit will simply wish its murderers to be found out and brought to justice. Of course, if the haunting goes on for many years the

### Terminology and Rationale

Ghosts, Poltergeists and Spectres are all listed in the OWB as 'Spirits,' but this article is interested in all ethereal undead and names them all ghosts. Wraiths also qualify as ghosts for this article. RotIQ gives 'spirit' its own meaning, too. Although ghosts are only one type of spirit in the Warhammer World, the terms ghost and spirit will be used largely interchangeably in this article. What else might be meant by spirit is dealt with in Robin Low's Womb of the Gods (pg. 9). I do use 'Aethyr' for 'warp space,' and 'material world' for 'real space,' occasionally.

There is a case to be made for not bothering with categorising these ghosts and their Talents and giving the GM freedom to make up the abilities and nature of his ghost as the adventure deems. I would certainly be a supporter of this view, too. On the other hand, categorising them, presenting a list of potential abilities, can serve to inspire ghostly adventures and support them with hard and fast rules when required, and that is the intention of this article.

The relevant rules in the OWB have been referenced here but not included, and that bestiary is required to make full sense of this article.

murderer may die, and all hope of justice will be gone. Then, more than likely, the ghost will fade into the locale. Or the desire for justice may burn on and the ghost will continue its haunting utterly inconsolable.

Sometimes magic can be the cause, necromancers often having an interest in keeping souls in the real world to do their bidding. Sometimes, just the pure mindlessness of the violence of a death can tie the victim to the material world. In these cases, the haunting can never be 'solved' or the thing placated. It can only be defeated by time, or by a similar mindless brute force.

All these things can affect the attitude of the ghost. This can explain why the spirit might be helpless, or lost, angry, or violent. This attitude will affect the nature of the haunting and the tools at the ghost's disposal.



### Getting Rid of the Things

The key to a ghost's presence is the key to its removal. One must find out what ails it. Even the most spiteful spirit clinging resolutely on to undeath will be gone in an instant once its grievance is resolved.

### Hitting Them

Hitting ghosts hard and repeatedly with enchanted objects will get rid of them. It is not clear why this should be but it is undoubtedly true. This however, can be an unsatisfying resolution to a haunting, so GMs should beware of allowing this sort of thing. Trying to attach some sort of adventure to the acquisition of an anti-ghost magic weapon or bringing consequences to its use will help. If the party is loaded up with magic weapons, then putting a ghost in their path can be a small hindrance, but if the ghost is there with a convoluted back story that the party must painstakingly fathom in order to bring an end to the haunting, then they are still just going to hit it with magic metal, instead.

Perhaps defeating ghosts in such a blunt manner only brings a temporary end to the haunting, and once they have recovered in a similar way to how characters recover Wounds, although on a slower basis, then they will be back to their old habits.

The GM could perhaps make his ghosts so sympathetic that the players will be swayed to try to undo the haunting in as humanitarian a way as possible.

Perhaps, in the presence of magic weapons, or at least after they have been hit once, the ghost will simply disappear, and continue its haunting at a later date, when the PCs are no longer there. This might solve the problem as far as PCs are concerned, but won't help with the actual haunting itself, if that is what the PCs need to solve. Then, perhaps, the ghost will never reappear in the presence of the magic weapons, so if the PCs do wish to interact properly with the undead spirit, they will have to get rid of their magic.

### Bargaining

Bargaining with spirits is possible, just ask any Kislevan Hag. Some ghosts may have a sufficient grip on real space that they

can be bargained with also. Generally they are too restive and angry for that to work. If the GM wants an adventure where a ghost tells the PCs what it wants, and the PCs tell it what they want in return, that can work, but it may be more appropriate with nature spirits. Communicating with ghosts should be more difficult and confusing.

#### *What's Done can be Undone*

The thing about ghosts is that they are hanging around on this earth because of something that was done in life. If that is undone then they will immediately leave.

They might be (somewhat) aware that this is what they want to happen and of their ethereal limitations, and so will leave clues for others to find. The clues will be limited and their means of delivery obtuse or just scary, but attentive and brave investigators should be able to get to the bottom of things.

Unfortunately, ghosts are creatures of (often contradictory) instincts, and so even as PCs are working towards their salvation, they might have no choice but to frighten them, or even attack them. Or, having lost all sense of the big picture, a ghost might not want to be undone. It might be, in its twisted way, enjoying its miserable and cruel existence. (This will be especially likely if they were miserable or cruel in life.)

To do the job properly, the PCs will be forced to undo the haunting by working out what has led to the ghost's existence in the first place. They need to work out what has occurred, how the ghost has been wronged, and they need to put the situation right. Only then will the ghost be gone for good.

The ghost could stick around for long enough to give a thank you speech and explain any bits of the plot the players did not quite get. That is only polite. In addition, a ghost having been around for so long, with nothing to do but haunt, and eavesdrop, might, as a bonus, have a bit of helpful or vital information to impart to the PCs by way of a grateful reward.

Some things are so convoluted that it might be virtually impossible to tell what is required to undo the haunting. Or it may be so long ago, that even if you can tell what should have happened it might be too late to put things right. Some spirits might require a symbolic 'putting right' rather than an actual one; just what occurred becoming known, or well known, might be enough to undo things.



#### **Talents**

Here is a collection of Talents from which you should be able to build a ghost that can reflect the adventure you want to run. There are no hard and fast rules for putting these together, though it helps to have a good idea of the sort of ghost you want to create before giving it Talents. Ghosts can be extremely varied. The specific ghosts of the OWB can be seen simply as examples of ghosts given a specific name. For example, a poltergeist is seen to be a ghost with the Spirit's Push special rule. The GM can pick and choose from the abilities below, to make a ghost that fits the manner of its death and its environment. And, of course, the GM should be free to fiddle about with the stat block, too.

Note that in order to affect real space ghosts require these various Talents. A ghost without any Talents may as well not exist, for it will be invisible, (nor sensed in any conventional way), and powerless to affect the world. The OWB lists some of these as 'Special Rules' but here, together with new ones, are all collected as Talents:

#### *Ethereal, Night Vision, Frightening (or Terrifying), Undead*

From the OWB, these are the four Talents possessed by all the spirits dealt with here. If they are not ethereal, or undead or Frightening, then they are not the ghosts we are talking about. Of course, they won't be frightening until they are actually sensed, so that usually comes in conjunction with the Apparition or Vision Talents.

The Frightening and Terrifying Talents come into effect as soon as the victims realise what they are seeing is out of the ordinary. This is a separate Test to those which have to be made because of Attacks and Visions, such as Fearsome Touch and Terrifying Display. PCs may not notice that the vision or apparition of the ghost is in any way supernatural and they will probably not be frightened unless the vision is in its own way frightening. For example, a host appearing as a frightening monster might be frightening even if the PCs do not realise they are seeing a ghost. Similarly, once one member of the party realises what is what, if he points this out, then it will be much easier for his companions to realise the nature of what they are viewing. Although, sometimes, the 'realistic' apparition brings with it a strange air of foreboding, and even though nothing appears wrong or ghostly, a Fear or Terror Test can be called for if required.

#### *Apparition*

Ghosts can be entirely invisible and only sensed by their effect on the material world. Many however, have an appearance or even more than one. Some have different appearances depending on their mood, but most will have a visage that they will always appear in. This is often how they looked (often idealised) at the moment of their death, but can also be their appearance at another time in their life or the even how their decaying remains look.

A spirit can have several appearances choosing one or having one thrust upon it instinctively, to suit its mood. Ghosts are often preoccupied; their appearance in the material world is often not directly controlled by the spirit or the result of a conscious decision. Often the ghost is caught (at least until distracted) carrying out a single act from their life (or the moment of their death). This is often a clue to their 'Undoing.' Or the ghost could appear as something as simple and unrevealing as a glowing light or a puff of smoke.

Sometimes the appearance is enhanced with metaphorical trappings. A ghost with a fiery temper may be shrouded in flames, or one that was a prisoner or feels trapped, appears wrapped in heavy chains. This sort of thing can also be a clue to the nature of the spirit and of how to undo the haunting. Apparitions can affect the other senses too, most commonly in the form of a particular and strong odour, or an unusual sound, not uncommonly a literally haunting melody.

The Apparition (unlike *Vision* below) will be centred on the actual location of the ghost. That means that the apparition



can be attacked physically (allowing for its ethereal nature). Most ghosts, however, are able to 'turn off' their appearance and become suddenly invisible to normal sight.

#### *Vision*

Not the same as Apparition, this will be a vignette or scene that the ghost wants to get across to any onlookers. This will most often be an important scene that actually happened to the ghost. But it can be a flight of fancy, something dreamt up by the spirit, as a caprice or to manipulate, or even to show what may become in the future.

The vision can be intentionally benign, to hide the ghost's Apparition, perhaps to lure a victim into range of a deadly attack. For example, the appearance may begin as a weeping child, but as a PC approaches, intending to help, the spirit may suddenly change its visage to a terrifying gaping skull, as it attacks with surprise and a free attack.

Sometimes the ghost tailors the vision to suit what the observers already know, drawing them deeper into a mystery, or gradually revealing more of what they need to impart. Sometimes, it must show the same old scene over and over again without the slightest change.

The vision need not be wholly, or even partially, visual. It can involve sounds and smells, thoughts, or just a feeling.

#### *Fearful Vision*

This is simply a vision, as discussed above, that requires a Fear Test from the viewer. Once this **Fear Test** is passed, then (unlike a potentially repetitive Fearful Touch) the vision will have no further effect on the victim. This is actually similar to the 'Frightening' (or Terrifying) Talent that all ghosts have, except it is based on a specific vision, rather than the ghost's Apparition.

#### *Terrifying Display*

As Fearful Vision, but causing a **Terror Test**. (OWB pg.110)

For all these appearance type Talents above the GM should be careful to come up with evocative descriptions. If it is supposed to be frightening, then he should make it so. If it is supposed to offer a clue to the history of the ghost, then the clues should be made explicit. Ghost adventures will depend a lot for their effectiveness on the atmosphere that the GM brings.

#### *Touch*

These Touches are the attacks of ghosts that can damage opponents in various ways. The ghost should use its SB characteristic to determine damage, even if conventional Strength is not really a factor. A few are below but it is a trivial matter for the GM to make his own touch attacks to suit his ghost.

#### *Fearful Touch*

As detailed in OWB (pg.109) this is the standard 'attack' method for a spirit. It is not a conventional attack, and is arguably often not even intended by the spirit; it is simply a side-effect of their existence which is anathema to the living. GMs may choose to use ghosts that wish to communicate with the PCs and want to give clues to their undoing, but have no

alternative but to eventually 'attack' and frighten them off.

#### *Chilling Touch*

This is the signature attack of a Spectre as described in OWB (pg.110).

#### *Fiery Touch*

Common in ghosts who have perished in fires. This attack simply does normal fire damage when it hits. The fire is real enough so nearby flammable materials have a chance of going up in flames, too.

#### *Touch of Weakness*

Every hit upon this ghost's victim saps their strength. Damage that would have been applied to Wounds is applied to the Strength instead. A victim brought to zero Strength is dead. If the victim survives, the Strength is regained at a rate of D5 per day of complete rest. This will make the victim feel weak and look drawn and pale, as if, you might say, they had seen a ghost. The GM can come up with other stuff to sap as appropriate for the ghost. An ugly vindictive ghost who is jealous of joie de vivre and beauty, for example, might sap Fellowship, and a ghost who is trying to tempt its victim into a foolish act would sap Will Power.

#### *Touch of Ages*

Some ghosts can make their foe age physically, by the number of years equal to the damage rolled. No armour or Toughness Bonus can prevent this, but the victim subtracts his Will Power Bonus (i.e. the tens digit of WP) instead. The damage is not heal-able by any conventional means. For all intents and purposes the victim has aged by the number of years indicated and has all the physical attributes of a person of his new age. And, of course, there is always the possibility of death through old age. (One suggestion is to treat 60 years similar to zero Wounds.)

#### *Chilling Attack*

This is the name given to the attack of the Wraith in OWB (pg.120).

#### *Spell List*

Some powerful ghosts can manipulate the world in spectacular ways. This could be because they were wizards in life and have not lost their talent in death. Alternatively, a spell list can be given to a spirit to represent the way in which it manipulates the world. It may not have a background in a particular sphere of magic, but, thematically, this could be the easiest way to represent the power that it does have. For example, a feral ghost lost in the forest full of rage and empathy for the wilderness could be given an Amber spell list. Of course, the GM should give the spells slightly different feel and description to lend to the supernatural atmosphere. Any ghost with a spell list should also be given a suitable Magic score.

#### *Wanderer*

Usually, as defined in the OWB (pg. 109) a ghost cannot move more than 36 yards from its place of death. GMs of course can

be more generous than that, as is appropriate for the haunting. But certainly, the ghost should stay within a reasonable distance of its remains, or place of death, or some other significant location.

Some however, are lost. They wander pitifully with no focus. This can be caused by the spirit being lost (physically or emotionally) at the moment of death. Or this can be the result of the ghost's physical body being removed or destroyed. Wanderers by their nature rarely hold clues to their undoing and so it can be extremely difficult to solve their haunting. They are usually doomed to wander in perpetuity. Until summoned by the Wandering Monster Table.

#### *Ghostly Howl*

Ghostly Howl is a Talent associated with, and the defining characteristic of Banshees (OWB pg.82).

#### *Spirit's Push*

This is the defining Talent of a poltergeist as described in OWB pg.109.

#### *Out of Your Mind*

Although many ghosts can take the sanity of those who encounter them through the sheer terror of their haunting, some ghosts specifically attack the mind of those they encounter. They get straight into the head of their victim and conjure up the most terrifying visions and thoughts they can find in their victim's mind. This involves the ghost taking things from the victim's mind, not from its own life and death, so these are far more frightening. It also makes it much harder to pin down the nature of the spirit, as it appears as something from the victim's imagination.

Any hit by the ghost on the victim requires a **Will Power Test**. If this is failed the victim takes 3 (or 5 if the GM prefers) Insanity Points. The GM should agree with the player what sort of visions and thoughts the ghost is dredging up, and any Insanities accrued should be a reflection of this. The effect can also be 'out of time' in that it might take many minutes or hours to play through in the victim's head, but only take a split second of game time. The crucial difference between this Talent and Terrifying, or Terrifying Display (as well as the extra IPs) is the intimate and personal nature of the effect.

#### *Possession*

A nearby ghost can attempt to possess the mind of anyone who fails a **Fear Test** because of it. If the victim loses a contested **Will Power Test** then he is under the total control of the ghost. The possession is usually brief and takes a lot of effort from the ghost. The possession is normally done to make some sort of statement about the undoing. The possessed character usually performs some brief physical act or murmurs an obscure phrase which can be hard to interpret. He will not make a clear and eloquent presentation on the matter. Remember ghosts are confused and troubled spirits caught in a twilight world between planes of existence, and they don't do PowerPoint.

The victim may only have fragmentary memory of the possession once the effect has ended. But sometimes they may also recall images from the ghost's life or even un-life.

#### *A Surfeit (of H2O)*

This is associated with nautical deaths and shipboard hauntings. Any hit by the spirit upon the victim will be seen as water spewing from the victim's mouth. If the victim is brought to death (zero Wounds) then he will be seen to be drowned. (This might be worth an **Insanity Test** for those seeing it.)

Although named for it, this need not be limited to water. The attack is a manifestation of an element associated with the spirit's death, so the victim might be seen to burn, and if killed will really have been burned to death. Or perhaps, the victim could die by suffocating on blood, or earth, or flower petals.

If the victim is not killed and the spirit dies, or the victim is taken from its presence, then the manifestation disappears. There will be no physical sign of the attacks, other than the loss of wounds on the character sheet. Unless the victim dies, the victim looked like he was drowning, thought that he was drowning, but it turns out to be merely an illusion.

#### *Back to the Land*

This is effectively a normal attack with conventional armour and Toughness saves. If the victim is brought to zero Wounds

*"I offer this explanation, not because it is in my mind that I know this answer, nor because I have much evidence to speak of. Your scientific mind may well blanch at this, but it is the best I can postulate given what limited insight has been granted me and the wisdom of years.*

*Between the real world, and the Aethyr lies a shadowy realm barely discernible from here, and defying all literal description. It is there that those that were alive, but cannot be called truly dead, survive.*

*Sometimes on a death, the deceased does not pass into Morr's realm. For whatever reason, and there can be a number, the soul is forced to inhabit a shadow world between the real world and beyond. This is not what is called the Aethyr, though it is equally unfathomable, and an entirely separate realm to that of Daemons. Here in the spirit realm, the souls of man (and Dwarfs (and perhaps even Elves too)) continue to exist out of reach of Morr's embrace.*

*Some of these souls, seduced, transfixed somehow by that which preoccupied them in life (or especially the moment of death) become part of the land, part of nature, perhaps even elemental themselves (if you believe that such things exist). Some are snatched forcibly by Daemons or necromancers or other foul sorcerers to become their dreaded servants, bound to do such abominable bidding. Some, by the force of their own will, refuse to enter Morr's realm, just yet.*

*Just as we, or even the strongest magicians, cannot properly perceive this grey landscape nor influence it dexterously, so too the spirits cannot see or influence our world except clumsily, aloof and with some confusion. But they can indeed influence our world, in strange and unexpected ways, and when they do, we must beware."*

Fr. Gian Agnelli, Knight of the Raven, Miragliano

from entering. In Ostland it is customary to sprinkle this mixture into coffins if there are any qualms about the recently deceased returning to their living relatives.

### *Geistpaddel*

This is a long flat paddle that can be seen hanging up in many kitchens or hallways, especially in the rural Empire. It looks a lot like a bread peel. That is because it is a bread peel. But, it has the nickname *geistpaddel*, because it is used (or said to be used) for hitting away ghosts and spirits from the home. If a PC is in the right sort of dwelling, and after ghosts, the old wife of the house will offer the use of her *geistpaddel* to help out.

### *Divining Rods*

These are usually simple copper rods with handles. They are used for a variety of tasks across the Old World including finding water, Warpstone and witches. Their efficacy is debated, but some believe that in suitable hands they are capable of pointing out ghosts.

### *Portal Icons*

These are simple three-lined runes or icons in the shape of the Morrite portal, the symbol of passage unto the next world. They are a common symbol on Imperial graves, too. If blessed by a Morrite then these portals can help to repel ghosts and their influence. Give 5% or 10% bonus to any **Will Power Test** connected with these spirits. They can be as large as great log structures planted in the ground or as small as a pendant. Sometimes, Morrite runes are etched into the door frames of normal houses, and blessed, to create an unmovable Portal.



### **Help from Above**

The thing about the Cult of Morr is that it is virtually their entire *raison d'être* to protect the world from undead. What use is a good ghost story for the PCs if a Priest of Morr turns up (probably at the sensible PCs' behest) at the end and simply sorts it all out for them? This certainly has the potential to become a problem.

You could look at this situation similarly to that of Chaos. There are many organisations who want nothing more than to see Chaos vanquished, and yet the PCs do find themselves having to deal with it. They cannot just run to the nearest Sigmarite Zealots and tell them their problems. A squadron of Knights Panther is not going to turn up at the Chaos hunt denouement to aid the PCs (well, not very often, anyway). In the same way, the PCs should not be able to get all the help they need from the Cult of Morr. They can get advice, the odd blessing, and what have you, but ultimately they should be left to deal with things on their own. They'll thank you for it later.

Why would the Morrites let the PCs do this? There is any number of reasons. They are a generally urban cult and are spread thin throughout the Empire. They need to concentrate on the areas of highest population, simply for practical reasons. That means PCs will usually be miles away from any sort of

expert help in the countryside. Local priests of any persuasion might be around to give some advice, when required. And the local undertaker will be familiar with the concept of a haunting, but these need not have any more expertise in dealing with a ghost than the PCs.

In the cities and larger towns, dozens die every day. The cult is not the most glamorous in the Old World, and is generally shunned, and it requires much study and dedication to become a priest. So only a certain type of person will find a vocation in the Cult of Morr. This usually leaves them short staffed. The priests of the cult are often rushed off their feet simply trying to deal with the day to day workload of seeing the devout off to a better place.

The Cult may or may not be happy to see gangs of amateurs trying to rid the world of ghosts. If they are inclined to think the PCs will do more good than harm, then they can spare the time to give some decent advice and perhaps help them with a ward or charm. On the other hand, if they see the PCs as misguided, or even dangerous, then they may refuse to help, even as they insist they will not be dealing with the matter, either. This gives the GM freedom and excuse to give the PCs exactly the sort of help he feels they deserve and to make the adventure rightly challenging.

Unofficially, the Cult of Morr is often happy to see gangs of ghost hunters form. If they trust them, they can make them official representatives of the cult. This usually occurs during times of heavy workload, especially plague and war, and involves giving the right to seek out and bury the dead in an official capacity on behalf of the cult. But, this is a small step to giving a party of adventurers effective sanction to investigate and deal with whatever matters they may be inclined to look into, in the name of Morr.

### **Witchsight Ghostsight**

Those with Witchsight can certainly discern ghosts in a different way to normal folk. As ghosts usually appear 'strange' and otherworldly, this might give normal folk an inkling into how those with Witchsight see the world. But sometimes ghosts appear as normal living beings attempting not to give away their true natures. It is up to the GM how he deals with this. Sometimes the whole adventure might depend on the PCs not realising that what they see is actually a ghost. Sometimes it might be good to allow those with Witchsight more information about an apparition. The GM is invited to attach 'not even those with Witchsight' to anything below in the article.



### **Sample Hauntings**

#### **Four Knaves**

Agatha, a Strigoï girl was murdered in the woods. It is an idyllic country scene in rural Averland. The comfortable wine-growing villages and market towns and neat farmsteads make this one of the most pleasant places in all the Old World.

'The table' is a large stump of a cut down tree. It was used for picnics and as a landmark for a while after the tree was

first cut down, but more recently it has gained a reputation for being haunted, and most people avoid it.

Four young men from the area, were out hunting ten years ago when they came across the runaway gypsy girl. She offered to read their fortunes for money, and they agreed and she did so. But they were not satisfied with the reading and refused to pay her. And then it got nasty and violent, and they killed her brutally upon the table.

People will say the table is haunted, and has been haunted as long as anyone can remember. That is typical of the countryside, everything has been happening as long as anyone can remember, but truth be told the hauntings only began ten years ago, shortly after Agatha was murdered.

The PCs should come across the stump in their travels and know nothing of its reputation but it is a good place for a rest or a camp. Whether they decide to stop or not, they will see a young woman there with a tarot deck.

She will not speak but make a show of cutting the deck and dealing five cards. It will look like she is reading a PC's fortune which might be amusing for them. She will place the cards in

a cross shape and overturn them clockwise finishing with the centre card. She will show a knave (or jack) of each suit, and finally the centre card will be the card 'Death.' Then she will disappear, and the PCs can make a Fear Test with the sudden realisation that none of this was real.

The next time the PCs reach civilisation, probably a village or market town just down the road from the table, they will meet Agatha's murderers and will be subjected to visions created by the ghost of Agatha. The knaves, Agatha's murderers, are simply normal townsfolk going about their business, they will be pleasant enough and not stand out. Except, as the PCs interact with them, a playing card will suddenly appear on their person, and the PCs will notice this, but soon it will disappear again. The cards displayed will make sense in context, too. The knave of pentacles is the one who refused to pay her, the knave of swords stabbed her, the knave of wands hit her with a club, and the knave of cups was drinking and egging his friends on.

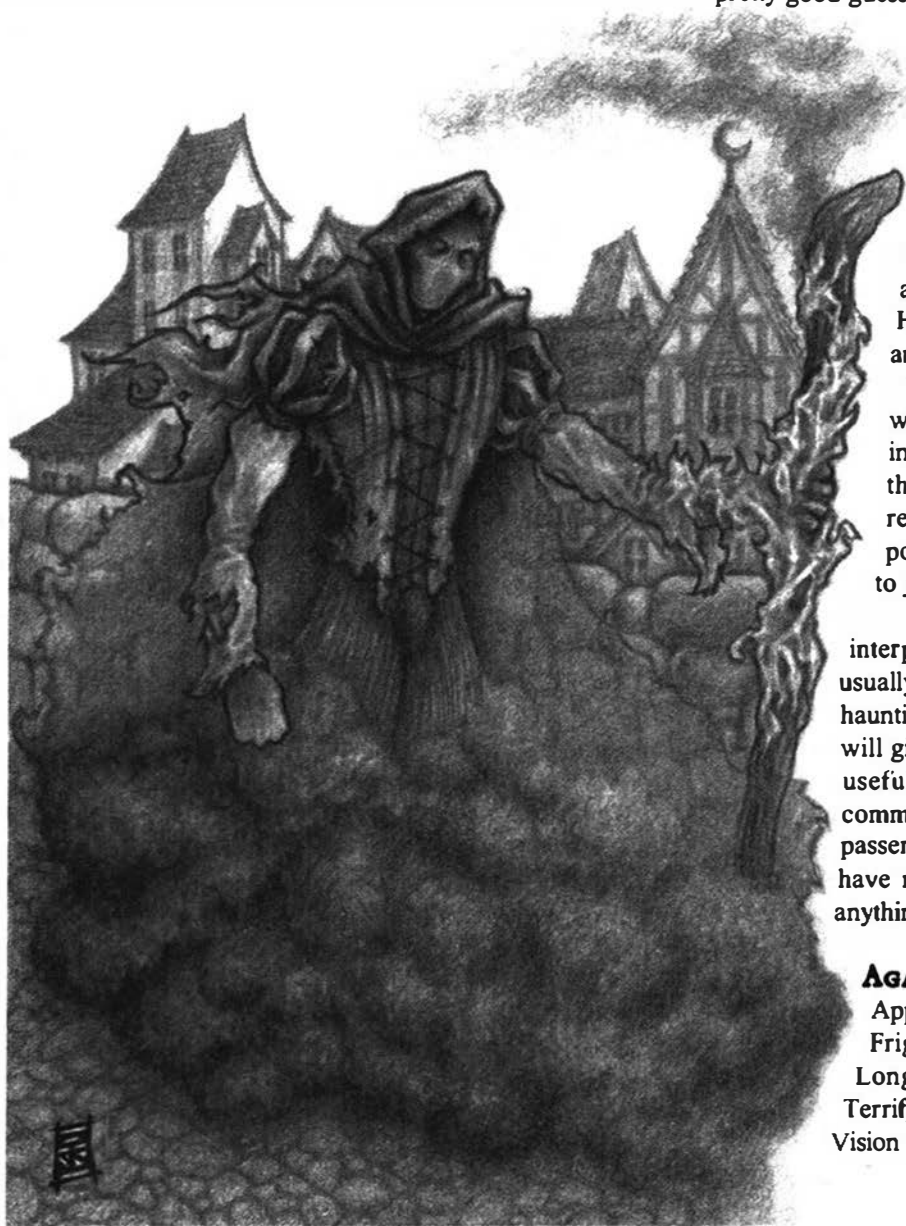
It should be up to the PCs what they make of this and how they deal with it, but by the third vision they should have a pretty good guess about what it all means. If the PCs return to the table and attempt to communicate with the ghost, or show that they are sympathetic to her now, then they will see a vision of Agatha's death scene. This will be harrowing, extremely unpleasant, but it will show the knaves clearly, ten years younger, and be enough to confirm any suspicions the PCs may have had, and enough to identify any of the four the PCs have not run into yet. How it might hold up in a court of law is another matter, however.

The GM is free to make the knaves what he wishes, but they could be generally upstanding in their community. Perhaps one is the son of the local baron, one is in the watch, one is a respected merchant or tradesman, the sort of positions that will make it difficult for the PCs to just ride on in and round them up.

If the PCs bring the knaves to justice (a loose interpretation can be applied, as ghosts do not usually worry about the letter of the law) then the haunting will stop and Agatha will be grateful. She will give the PCs a proper, accurate and genuinely useful tarot reading. Agatha has attempted to communicate in this manner before, with other passersby (she does not trust the locals) but they have not had the fortitude or initiative to make anything of it. Hopefully the PCs will fare better.

**AGATHA**

- Apparition (Fortune Teller)
- Frightening
- Long Range (Around her Murderers)
- Terrifying Display (Her Murder)
- Vision (Tarot Cards)



### Bad Light

Upon moonless nights on a cliff top on the windswept coast of Couronne shines a bright light. The light has brought many boats to their doom. The light is put down to wreckers and the duc has sent troops many a time to flush out the criminals responsible but they are never found. The cliff is even called 'Bad Light' (Malume) by the locals.

Despite the area's reputation for wrecking, the locals leave this place alone, and if a ship does run aground, they will not go out to claim the cargo believing it bad luck, not a gift from Stromfels or Manann or Ranald or anyone, but unutterably bad tidings.

If the light is approached then a weird wailing will be heard on the sea breeze. Despite the beautiful voice anyone hearing the haunting melody will need to make a **Fear Test** to keep on their way. If they go even closer they might be able to make out the lyrics. It is an old Bretonnian shanty sung by fishwives to get their men back home safely.

#### Leave Her For Me

*From the ice cold winds of the Sea of Claws*

*Leave her for me, leave her*

*To the baking sun of the Spice Islands*

*It's time for you to leave her*

*From the bawdy inns of Sartosa town*

*Leave her for me, leave her*

*And the parched sands of old Araby*

*It's time for you to leave her*

*From the steaming jungles of Lustria*

*Leave her for me, leave her*

*To the dark ships of the raider Elves*

*It's time for you to leave her*

The voice can also be heard between verses lamenting the name of her love, Gerard de Savoie.

It happened that Lisette Blanche was engaged to marry de Savoie, a sailor, about 40 years ago now. He went off on a voyage and never returned. He wrote her a letter from l'Anguille saying he had found a new woman and he was not coming back. In her anguish and despair, Lisette threw herself to her death off the cliff. And now, with a hatred of all sailors, she spends her time trying to lure them to their deaths upon the rocky coast below the cliffs.

Asking around the PCs can find that Gerard de Savoie still resides in l'Anguille, but it is quite a way there and back. If the PCs do find him, they find that he is an old hopeless drunk. Gerard lost his new woman, because of his drinking and his gambling and many more after that. His wild lifestyle may have been quite dashing (it must have been) in a younger man, but now he is old and toothless (and he recently lost an eye in a knife fight over unpaid debts) his chances of attracting any more maidens are low.

If the PCs bring him up to meet Lisette again, she will demand that they throw him over the cliff to appease her. The PCs should be given the choice of what to do and have to face this dilemma. However de Savoie will cry and beg for mercy and

piss himself in a very pathetic display.

Seeing this pitiful sight, Lisette will come to her senses and realise that her anger was pointless and that time heals all wounds, and that Gerard really was not worth bothering with. She will tell the PCs to let him go, after all, that she is happy now, and can leave. And so she does, never to haunt the cliff top again.

### Lisette

Apparition (Light)

Apparition (Shanty)

Frightening



### The Red Wood

Many years ago a now forgotten Imperial knight was travelling through the foothills of the World's Edge Mountains. He was coaxing his destrier across a stream in the shade of a great beech tree, when he was set upon by a raiding party of goblins. Despite a heroic effort the knight was eventually dispatched. So many crossbow bolts had pierced his body, that even as he finally bled to death, he remained upright, skewered to the tree.

Many years have passed and that tree has become surrounded by a sizable copse. The beeches that comprise it have all grown up with a distinctive red sheen about the bark, giving the copse its name, and heralding that it might not be a normal wood. The locals know this well and stay clear.

The truth is that the ghost of the long forgotten knight is still pumped with the blood lust of a long ago battle, and quite mindless. It sees any being's encroachment upon the copse as part of that goblin assault and will attack remorselessly. The mind of the knight is subsumed into the essence of the tree. And it behaves, without knowing it, in tree-like ways, and it has a certain amount of control over all the trees of the copse.

If the copse is approached, its branches will shake with rage and build to a deafening roar of leaves in the wind. It may require a **Fear Test** for travellers to continue. This is enough to frighten off the locals, but if someone does continue, then all the trees will begin to bow down to trap him, and saplings and roots will thrust up from the ground to attack, also. This is a *Back to the Land* (pg. 31) attack and any hits can be seen as the trees wrapping their limbs about their victims. If someone is brought to zero Wounds, then the victim has been caught utterly by the trees and has become a tree itself. The victim's face can just be made out in the bark of the tree's trunk. (Once this is seen, it will be possible to make out similar faces in many of the other trees in the wood.) Though the trees are real enough, the ghost that controls them is ethereal, and so normal weapons, though they will be seen to physically damage the branches and saplings, will not affect the ghost in any way.

If the transgressors manage to reach the great beech at the centre of the wood then the knight will appear, almost as when he died. He will appear as a normal knight (of the era) save for the many crossbow bolts sticking from him, and streaming with blood, and the red glare of battle-lust in his eyes, will be

literally a red glare. The knight will attack as if it were still alive.

If the 'knight' is brought to zero Wounds or below, it will fall to the ground, not dead, but awaiting its death in a stoical and knightly manner, yielding entirely to its attacker and expecting to be put out of its misery. If the knight is slain, then the haunting will stop, for a few years, at least. If the knight is spared, however, in its mad ghostly state of mind, it will see that mercy is indeed a worthwhile quality. Its anger will dissipate as will its spirit unto the Aethyr, and the haunting will end, forever.

### UNCROWN KNIGHT

Back to the Land (Tree)  
Frightening  
Get Physical (The Knight)



### The Green Man

Many years ago, in the city of Kemperbad, little Micky Furtgang, aged six, threw a tantrum. He had a small wooden doll with movable limbs, carved to look like an Imperial soldier and painted in the green uniform of Stirland. Micky was arguing with his brother, who stole the doll and pulled off its head. In his anger, Micky smashed a lit lantern. The room they were in caught fire and he, and his six brothers and sisters all burned to death.

Later, the site of the townhouse was rebuilt as a tavern. The tavern was originally called The Stirlanders' Arms, but after a few years of odd sightings, or simply because of the colour of the Stirlanders' uniforms, the place became known to locals as the Green Man. And now that is its official name. The inn sign even looks remarkably like the ghost. Any local will know that the place is haunted, or will even have caught a brief glimpse of the green figure at some time.

The Green Man is haunted by the ghost of Micky Furtgang. The angst and guilt and panic of his death have created a little monster. His Apparition, the Green Man, is a small (three foot high) goblin-like figure. Usually, the ghost skulks, or rather sulks, in the roof space of the tavern watching what goes on. It likes it when there are loud arguments or fights. Sometimes, after a particularly violent drink-fuelled incident, the ghost will follow the instigator home. Excited by the violence and anger, it will transform into a large dark figure licked with bright flame. In this state the ghost will set fire to anything it touches. Usually the house of the victim will be burned down.

Fortunately for Kemperbad, the many stone-built dwellings in the cliff top city prevent the fires from spreading, and usually only a single building is destroyed. The area has a bit of a reputation for arson and being susceptible to fire, but no one really knows why.

Once the ghost's anger has subsided, it changes to appear as an ash-like vaguely humanoid shape. The ash creature hangs around the burned-out dwelling for a few days, or so, until it is happy there will be no more fire, and then it returns as the Green Man to the Green Man.

If the PCs manage to commune with the ghost of Micky,

through some spell or rite, then they will get a clear image of the toy soldier and a feeling for the ghost's need for it. All that is required to stop the haunting is to put a similar toy soldier (there is a quality toymaker a couple of streets away from the inn, for the PCs' convenience) somewhere in the Green Man for Micky. The landlord might even offer to hang it above the front door, if he believes it might stop all the fires.

### THE GREEN MAN

Apparition (Ash Creature)  
Apparition (Fire Monster)  
Apparition (Green Man)  
Fiery Touch  
Frightening  
Long Range (Up to a few streets away)  
Spell List (Lore of Fire)



### The Music Box

Several years ago Baroness Felice von Wattner lay on her deathbed, the last of a line of rural Talabeclander aristocrats. Her will was made out and ready for the local magistrate to take care of. The will named her heir, but she was brutally murdered by a hired thug in the pay of her distant cousin Robert von Lichbruug. The thug ransacked Wattner Schloss to make things look like a burglary. He delivered the will to Robert, who was (according to his forged papers) the closest living relative of Felice, and so Robert became the new Baron von Wattner and all that that entailed. Unknown to the thug or to Robert, Felice had made a copy of the will, just in case, and hid it in a secret compartment in the mantel above the great fireplace in the schloss.

One of the things the thug stole and sold to a local fence was a small silver music box (engraved with Felice's initials) which played the well known tune 'Talabec Sky.' The music box can now turn up anywhere the PCs are, easily enough.

The music box was a favourite of the baroness (quite a musical lady) and in her death her soul spark managed to become part of it. Now, if the PCs play the box it will play Talabec Sky. Except, if they move it, and play it again, it will play either Hot Sun of Copher (a music hall ditty) or Cold Mountain (a traditional lament). Which song it plays will depend on whether they have moved further (Cold...) from the hidden will or closer (Hot...) to it.

Eventually, if the PCs work it out, the music box will lead them to the mantelpiece and the will which shows that Robert von Lichbruug can have no possible claim on the Barony of Wattner.

### FELICE

Frightening  
Mystery Object (Music Box)  
Vision (Tunes)



# Saint Olaf's Shrine

A Temple of Verena by Robin Low

## Introduction – Or, What the PCs May Have Heard

On the Nordland coast, roughly half way between the River Shaukel in the west and the town of Hargendorf in the east, there is a small building. This lonely structure is a shrine to Saint Olaf of Verena, a follower of the goddess of knowledge, who lived and died in the eleventh century I.C. Saint Olaf was martyred as he set foot on the shore, having fled across the Sea of Claws pursued by Norsemen, a throwing axe embedded in the back of his skull. His split skull resides in the shrine. A

Priest of Verena lives there, caring for and protecting the shrine.

## The Shrine of Saint Olaf

The shrine is set some way back from the shore on the edge of the forest. An area around it was cleared centuries ago, although a significant number of trees and bushes have grown back during that time. There is no longer an entirely clear view of the shore, although the immediate area around the building is clear.



The building is square, with two storeys. Its base is set firmly on local stone to the height of a man's waist, but its upper parts are built of logs and heavy planks. Both the stone and wood is shaped to give the impression of columns around the building, typical of the Verenan temple style. Its roof is peaked and tiled with slate. At the crux of the peak is an inset carving of an owl bearing a scroll in its talons. There is an arched double-door facing the sea and a single arched and shuttered window above it in the upper storey; a similar window exists on the other three sides. Each of these can be locked with the same key, as well as barred on the inside. (**Challenging (-10%) Pick Lock Test**; shutters TB 4, W 25; door TB 5, W 30)

Inside, the ground floor consists of a single room. It is not normally lit, but there are torches on each wall. In the centre of the room is an altar surrounded by a sturdy metal cage, with a locked door at the back (**Average Pick Lock Test**; TB 7, W 25), reaching to the ceiling. Even if the skull could be hooked by some ingenious means, the cage bars are too close together for it to pass though. The altar is covered by a velvet cloth, embroidered with Verenan symbols, reaching to the stone floor. On it rests the skull, facing the door of the shrine. Walking around the cage reveals a neat split in the back of the skull. A small number of copper and a few of silver coins are scattered inside the cage, both on the floor and on the altar cloth. The reason for this, and the curious device incorporated into the cage door, is described below in *The Skull of Saint Olaf*.

Across the back wall of the room is a flight of stairs to the upper storey, which can be closed off by a hatch in the floor (**Average Pick Lock Test**; TB 5, W 25). The upper storey is the home of the resident priest and caretaker, Hanni Messner.

The smell of cooked fish permeates the room, only partially masked by the various bundles of dried and drying herbs hung in bunches around the walls, used for seasoning fish. There is a simple bed, a table with two chairs, several small cupboards, and a brazier. Under the western window is a simple stove, alongside firewood and a small axe. The cupboards contain general household utensils, candles, blankets, and writing paraphernalia. By the bed and on the table is a candlestick in a holder. A small bookshelf carries half a dozen books, including *The Annotated Journal of Saint Olaf* (described below) and *Prayers and Petitions to Verena*. A cunningly crafted floorboard (**Hard (-20%) Perception or Search Test**) can be removed to reveal a small leather bag of coins, a simple dagger, and anything else the GM wishes. Some may note that the beamed-ceiling of the upper storey is flat (**Average Perception Test**), contrasting with the peaked roof. A concealed panel (**Hard (-20%) Perception or Search Test**) opens into the attic space.

#### Around the Shrine

Down by the shore is a sturdy two-man boat, securely tied to a heavy rock with a hole through it. When not in use, a heavy waterproof tarpaulin is secured over the top. Inside the boat are two oars, a collapsible mast and sail, two fishing-nets, fishing-line and hooks in an oiled leather pouch, a coil of rope, a heavy knife, and a boat-hook.

Behind the shrine, just before the woods is a small shack for smoking and salting fish. Given the occasional disappearance of fish, Hanni Messner suspects that something lives deeper inside the woods. Haarrig (see **Regular Visitors**) hates fish, so he is not under suspicion.

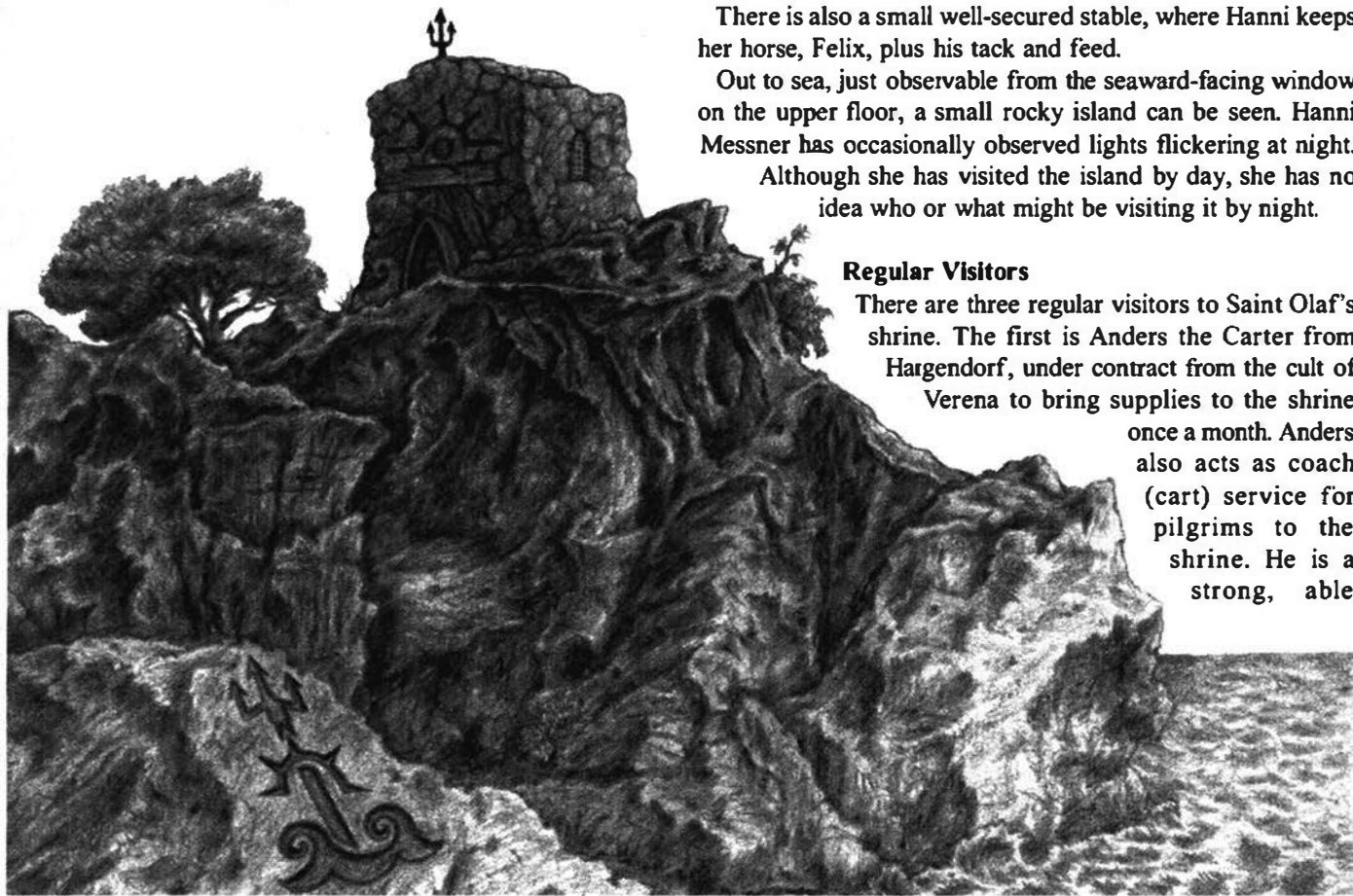
There is also a small well-secured stable, where Hanni keeps her horse, Felix, plus his tack and feed.

Out to sea, just observable from the seaward-facing window on the upper floor, a small rocky island can be seen. Hanni Messner has occasionally observed lights flickering at night.

Although she has visited the island by day, she has no idea who or what might be visiting it by night.

#### Regular Visitors

There are three regular visitors to Saint Olaf's shrine. The first is Anders the Carter from Hargendorf, under contract from the cult of Verena to bring supplies to the shrine once a month. Anders also acts as coach (cart) service for pilgrims to the shrine. He is a strong, able





young man, who spends most of his time transporting goods around Hargendorf and sometimes further afield. The second regular visitor is Anders' younger sister, Karelia, who is fascinated by Hanni, convinced that the priestess has some exotic past. Hanni very happily talks to the girl, and has taught her to juggle, but has yet to give away any stories of her own past.

The third and final regular visitor to the shrine is a wild dog, named Haariġ by Hanni. A big shaggy brute, Haariġ is very friendly towards Hanni, Anders and Karelia, but is cautious around most pilgrims to the shrine, usually staying in the woods. Felix the horse is surprisingly tolerant of him, and the dog often accompanies Hanni when she goes riding along the coast.

### The Skull of Saint Olaf

The skull of Saint Olaf rests on the altar, locked within the sturdy cage previously described. Mounted between the bars of the cage door behind the skull is a curious contraption. This device is a metal rod reaching into the cage to a point almost above the skull. The rod is pivoted, allowing limited up and down, left to right movement. There is a groove running down the rod, deep and wide enough to allow a coin to be rolled down its length. The purpose of this device is to allow a supplicant to ask Saint Olaf for a blessing in some endeavour (usually related to sailing), aid in learning and education, or guidance in acquiring some specific piece of information. The supplicant rolls a coin down the pivoting rod, hoping to move the rod and aim the coin directly into the open gash in the back of Saint Olaf's skull (**Challenging (-10%) Ballistic Skill Test**). Whether a successful roll actually results in any aid from Saint Olaf is up to the GM, but some benefit that could arguably be attributed to Saint Olaf's good will add a sense of magic and mystery to the world.

Any character with a reasonable degree of combat experience or used to seeing the bodies and skeletons of those who have died in combat gets an automatic **Average Intelligence Test** to notice that the split in the back of Saint Olaf's skull is not the result of an axe wound, as the legend would suggest. In fact a wedge has simply been sawn out. The reason for this is that the real skull of Saint Olaf is hidden within a secret compartment in the stone altar under the velvet cloth (**Hard (-20%) Perception Test** or **Challenging (-10%) Search Test** to spot the existence of the compartment and open it). The real skull is hidden to avoid the loss of the relic to thieves and also because it is fragile; most of the back of the skull is now fragmented.

### The Annotated Journal of Saint Olaf

Found on the bookshelf on the upper floor of the shrine, this leather-bound volume begins with a short summary of Saint Olaf's life (as much a description of the era he lived in) and is followed by the annotated journal. The annotations amount to explanations of archaic language and speculation on the meaning of many of the saint's descriptions. GMs can use the annotations as a source of hints to direct PCs towards future adventures.

Saint Olaf's writing amount to a travelogue of his wanderings

across Norsca. In addition to descriptions of the landscape and notable places (such as the mossy initiation caverns of the giants and a pinnacle of black rock allegedly marking a Dragon Ogre's grave), Olaf reveals much about the societies and traditions of several clans of the Norseman, taking particular interest in marriage ceremonies, rites of passage and coming-of-age ceremonies, for both men and women, and seasonal celebrations. He paints a picture of societies bound together by fierce and demanding loyalty to clan, tribe and family. Friendships and alliances are forged through gift-giving, and feuds are resolved through a similar fashion or outright conflict. Of course, this information is now several hundred years old.

The final section of the saint's journal is a hurriedly written description of his flight from a small tribe he refers to only as the *Karkas*, a name unlike the other clans he discusses. He stayed only briefly with the Karkas before the tribe's shaman decreed that the saint's writing amounted to a magical theft of the tribe's spiritual essence. What follows is the story of the chase through forest and across crag as the tribe sought to regain what they believed Olaf had stolen from them. The journal ends with Norsca's southern coast barely a day away. It is presumed that Olaf found a small boat, but was followed by the Karkas warriors, one of whom put a throwing axe in the back of the saint's head as he stepped onto the Empire's northern shore. Curiously, the Karkas apparently decided against, or perhaps were prevented from, retrieving Olaf's journal.

It must be acknowledged that the *Annotated Journal* is also edited and modified, which may be obvious to careful readers (**Hard (-10%) Read/Write Test** to notice sections are missing and the writing style changes in places). The original scrolls are kept under lock and key in the temple of Verena in Middenheim. The reason for censorship stems from the description of certain Norse tribes that worshipped Chaos. Not all such tribes were apparently as rabid or corrupt as would be commonly believed. In fact, Saint Olaf seems to suggest that these tribes lived in comparative harmony with the gods of Chaos. Harsh and often violent lives certainly, with ritual combat and sacrifice, but not overwhelmingly destructive or provocatively aggressive against others. Obviously, this was, and still is, a totally unacceptable depiction of the followers of Chaos, and the priests of Verena in Middenheim who took ownership of the saint's writings saw fit to keep the true writings to themselves. The originals are kept secure in accordance with Verena's wishes that knowledge be protected. Those within the cult who are aware of Saint Olaf's writings justify the hiding of the truth, arguing that the knowledge could too easily be misinterpreted or misused by the ignorant, weak-willed and corrupt. Should these original scrolls fall into the hands of, say, Sigmarites, then the cult of Verena will come under intense scrutiny and suspicion for its failure to destroy clearly heretical documents and its beatification of an obvious Chaos sympathiser. What other suspect documents and relics have the cult of Verena retained and hidden?

### Other Relics of Saint Olaf

The cult of Verena has the scrolls and skull of Saint Olaf. What they would also dearly like to have are the boat (or some part

of it) in which the saint escaped Norsca and the Norscan throwing axe that slew him. One young Verenan scholar suspects the skeletal hull of the boat might be half-buried in the silt of the shore somewhere near the shrine, and is seeking support and funding to locate and excavate it.

The cult has no record of who originally actually brought the scrolls and skull to them, although legend has it they were brought to the temple at Middenheim by the Angel of Nearly Lost Knowledge (a non-Chaotic daemonic entity loyal to Verena), However, modern scholars of Verena prefer to believe in a pious Nordland fisherwoman or a noble traveller. Perhaps the axe remains with the noble's descendants as a valued family heirloom of forgotten or invented origin. Perhaps the boat was put to use, first as a fishing-boat, but later broken up and its keel used in a building somewhere. (Saint Olaf carved a secret coded message into the wood, describing a mysterious location in Norsca with a valuable secret, which can still be read today.)

## HANNI MESSNER

Hanni Messner began her working life as part of a travelling circus. Her parents were simple labourers, but Hanni became one of the entertainers when she was still a child. She was used as a prop in strongman juggling acts, wore a beard and played a Dwarf in the clown sketches, and stood very still while knives were thrown around her to the gasps of the audience. As she grew into a young woman she became a trick-rider and a dancer.

It was in those roles that she became noticed by a young nobleman, Felix von Noll. Felix became something of a rather pleasant stalker and admirer, periodically appearing at towns where the circus performed, just to watch Hanni. After a year of this, Felix finally found the courage to approach Hanni, and several towns later the pair became lovers. The affair lasted a year, until abruptly Felix failed to make a meeting. Hanni waited patiently for several towns to pass, but when Felix still failed to appear, she angrily took her leave of the circus to give the young noble a piece of her mind.

Travelling to Felix's home town, Hanni's anger turned to sorrow as she discovered that her love had been killed in a tragic accident. However, she heard rumours that the accident was more likely murder, the result of a feud between Felix's family and another noble house, the von Rupp. Hanni set out to find the truth and exact vengeance.

Discovering that the head of the von Rupp household was a keen theatre-goer, Hanni found herself employment in the theatre, where she went out of her way to catch his eye. It was only a matter of time before she became Rudolf von Rupp's mistress. Hanni played her role well, and in time she garnered enough information from Rudolf's pillow-talk to confirm that one of his sons had been responsible for Felix's death at Rudolf's instigation. The reason for the murder: simply that the Felix's business dealings were more successful than the von Rupp. Hanni could get no hard evidence that proved the von Rupp guilty of murder. However, she did learn of their more dubious business dealings, and passed information to the local temple of Verena about a certain warehouse. When the cult led the local watch on a raid of that warehouse, the illegal narcotics



and drugged slave-girls were more than enough to ruin the von Rupp.

The temple of Verena was intrigued by Hanni, her ability and her dedication to uncovering the truth. They offered her a job within the cult: to continue in the role of courtesan, specifically infiltrating noble households and the homes of wealthy merchants the cult of Verena suspected of criminal activity or possessing dangerous secrets. Hanni accepted, and spent many years doing precisely that.

In time, however, enough was enough and Hanni tired of the work. The cult allowed her to retire, although as a priestess of Verena she could not simply abandon her vows. As she wished to live away from the towns and crowds that had filled her life, the role of caretaker of the shrine of Saint Olaf was suggested and she took it.

Hanni is a handsome woman in her middle years, her once black hair now attractively streaked with silver. She spends her days simply and happily looking after the shrine of Saint Olaf, out fishing or riding her horse, affectionately named Felix. Hanni is not lonely, but she is still appreciative of company and still enjoys hearing news and gossip, especially as she is no longer part of it. The cult of Verena still occasionally sends representatives to ask her for background information on families, individuals or organisations she was once involved with. Hanni remains strong and fit for her age, but she is not by nature a fighter. In difficult situations she draws on her

extremely impressive social skills to protect herself.

**Race:** Human

**Career:** Priestess (ex-Entertainer, ex-Courtesan\*, ex-Initiate)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32	42	32	37	42	62	55	62
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	3	4	1	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (the Arts) +10%, Academic Knowledge (Genealogy), Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Theology), Animal Care, Channelling, Charm +30%, Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip +20%, Heal, Perception +20%, Performer Actor +10%, Performer (Dancer +10%), Read/Write, Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Speak Language (Kislevite), Ride +20%

**Talents:** Dealmaker, Etiquette, Mimic, Trick Riding, Savvy, Schemer, Petty Magic (Divine), Public Speaking

**Basic Armour:** None

**Armour:** None

**Weapons:** Dagger, Hand Weapon (Axe) – both can be thrown

**Trappings:** Horse, Religious Symbol (Owl of Verena), Robes

\* The Courtesan Career was previously available at the Black Industries website. Use Charlatan or Spy instead.

## CHEDWIC MANZEL

Unable to find a suitable Dwarf apprentice in the small southern Imperial town, Grom Hergarson grudgingly accepted young Pieter Jahrdrung (named for the month he was left on the doorstep) from the local orphanage. Hergarson, a mason and carpenter, was a bully and a bigot, only taking the young human out of need for an extra pair of hands. Despite all his attention, dedication and genuine hard work, Pieter failed to make an impression on the mean old Dwarf. So, on his sixteenth birthday, Pieter poisoned Hergarson and fled town. He took with him a bag of tools, two books of notes on Dwarf engineering and more knowledge of Dwarf construction techniques than the small-minded old Dwarf would ever had credited him with.

Pieter took the name of Chedwic Manzel, and after making a modest living as a travelling carpenter and mason, he found himself working for the cult of Verena. Growing to trust the Verenans, he told a senior priest of his crime of murder, but also of his possession of secret Dwarf knowledge. Being a pragmatic sort, the priest, quickly initiated him into the cult, accepting that Pieter Jahrdrung, the murderer, was not the same

person as Chedwic Manzel, possessor of valuable secret knowledge. Copies of the Dwarf notebooks were made and placed securely in the temple of Verena in Middenheim. Manzel was permanently hired as a craftsman of the cult, working on new shrines and temples, and maintaining old ones. Manzel was responsible for the recent restoration of Saint Olaf's shrine and the construction of the secret compartments in the altar and the upper level floor and ceiling. He has a particular knack for identifying hidden compartments, and secret rooms and passages.

Manzel has an intense dislike and distrust of Dwarfs, born of memories of mistreatment at the hands of Grom Hergarson and the on-going fear of being caught by grudge-bearing relatives. He avoids voicing this prejudice, however, and it only becomes noticeable when Dwarfs are around and he becomes nervous and curt. Manzel often worries that Dwarfs might notice their own style of working in his craftsmanship, and so is reluctant to acknowledge his work in front of one. Most Dwarfs are unlikely to notice, however, given their condescending attitude to other races' building efforts (**Hard (-20%) Perception Test; Challenging (-10%) Trade (Stoneworker or Carpenter) Test**).

Given the travelling nature of his work for the cult of Verena, Manzel has a fair knowledge of the roads, towns and buildings of the northern Empire, and he knows many stories and legends associated with the temples and shrines of Verena and other cults. The destruction caused by the Storm of Chaos has kept him and his small team of workers very busy of late.

**Race:** Human

**Career:** Artisan (ex-Tradesman, ex-Initiate)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
37	32	40	41	47	48	42	37
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	4	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Theology), Animal Care, Drive +10%, Haggle, Evaluate +10%, Perception +20%, Read/Write (Reikspiel and Dwarven), Search +10%, Secret language (Guild Tongue), Trade (Carpenter) +10%, Trade (Stoneworker) +10%

**Talents:** Artistic, Savvy

**Basic Armour:** Light Armour (Leather Jerkin)

**Armour:** Body 1

**Weapons:** Hand Weapon (Hammer or Axe), Dagger

**Trappings:** Trade Tools, Horse and Wagon, Religious Symbol (Owl of Verena)

# DANGEROUS INGREDIENTS

A Scenario by Roysten Crow

WFRP<sub>2</sub> Conversion and additional text by Michael Congreve

Some years ago Valerik Ziegel, a young idealistic lawyer, became angered at those who constantly escaped justice. Ziegel and others with the same view began to kidnap those they believed had unfairly been freed. These individuals were secretly tried and then executed by throwing them into a pit with a pit-fighter, who for many years has been a vicious individual named Zornig Andersson. The Brotherhood of Justice, as they came to be called, started to enjoy the bloodshed and in time slipped into the worship of Khorne.

Recently the Brotherhood, sometimes known as the Cult of the Sundered Head, decided that they would pursue a wider agenda to honour Khorne. They decided to target wizards, who their god despises. To this end the cult has hired an accomplished agitator, Freidrich Streitsuchtig, to be their spokesman. Streitsuchtig has done a sterling job in ensuring that the goals of the Citizens League Against Wizards and Spellcasters (C.L.A.W.S.) are forwarded.

The Player Characters arrive in Middenheim as the tension is building. Wizards are becoming targets of the mobs and the decision by the Guild of Wizards and Alchemists to lay low is not working. The Player Characters come across one wizard who becomes a target of the mob and if they help him he hires them as bodyguards. When the League starts directly attacking wizards the Player Characters are in the frontline. The League hopes to force the authorities to bring an end to the unrest by cracking down on wizards. The League's plan comes to fruition with a faked assassination attempt on the charismatic Streitsuchtig which they hope will lead to violence in the streets. After this, things quieten down but the Player Characters have made enemies of the League and may find themselves staring up out of a pit at a bunch of baying lawyers.

This adventure is set in Middenheim where the League focuses its attention on the Guild of Wizards and Alchemists and the wizards living in the city. If this is not feasible for your campaign then you could use the Talabheim Battle College or the University College of Nuln. In this case, all the lawyers and groups involved are residents of that city. Altdorf is another option although the Colleges there are much more influential and the mages generally more powerful.

## Part I

### What Do We Want?

When the Player Characters arrive in the city they probably need a few days to sort out their usual adventurer requirements such as repairing and buying armour, restocking, seeking tutors, training for new skills, and so on. During this period they become increasingly aware of what has been going on until they are offered a genuine hook to get them properly involved. If they start investigating earlier then their awareness of the situation greatly impresses their potential employer when he happens along.

The Player Characters encounter a small number of local people stomping down the street chanting the very simple slogan 'wizards out'. A couple of them are passing out or nailing up a flyer (**Player Handout 1** pg. 43) and others are acting as town criers and heralding this information.

If a Player Character is obviously a spellcaster, the group stands before him and bellows its chant with great fervour directly at them. A larger crowd starts to gather as they have seen the protests but there are no confrontations as of yet.

If the wizard makes a hostile move, the leader of the group hollers that everyone should flee, as the vile wizard is going to rain fire down on them for daring to speak their Sigmar-given voice in the free Empire. The protestors scream and exaggerate their terror, then run for it. The crowd flinches and backs up, mumbling about how there may be some truth as to what is being said.

If the wizard departs, the group either follows and continues chanting at him until he reacts, or some of the crowd simply decree that the wizard knows that C.L.A.W.S. is onto him and he is slinking away to hide. A final yell that this affair is not over with ends the encounter.

If anyone accompanying the wizard acts in a hostile manner, the protestors' leader yells that the wizard has brainwashed them with sorcery to kill those who speak out against them. The chant now turns to 'traitor' and 'wizard's familiar'. If any non-humans are involved, racial overtones develop. These focus on people's innate distrust, and that with such races obviously guarding wizards, who knows what plans their hidden Empires

have for those of humans.

The Watch has been keeping a covert eye on the protestors and before any serious conflict occurs, a significant group marches in to break up both parties. The protesters leave peacefully after loudly announcing how they have no quarrel with the fine men of the Watch who guard normal folk, and it is a pity that wizards are somehow above the law.

The Watch hangs around to ensure that neither party pursues the other and escalates the situation. The sergeant warns those who were responsible for worsening the situation that they should stay out of the way of the League. The Watch has nothing against either side. Its men are here to maintain the peace, and public opinion is getting pretty heated since the League hit the streets with their anti-wizard campaign.

### Friends in High Places

Another event to cultivate interest is a sudden commotion where members of the League are yelling at the Watch as they try to arrest Freidrich Streitsuchtig, the leader of C.L.A.W.S., for disturbing the peace. Eventually, he calms his followers down and agrees to go without a fuss. He shouts that this is the doing of wizards who fear what he has to say, but intends to go with the Watch because he is a man who respects the law.

After catching wind of this event Valberik appears with Zornig Andersson in tow and he has a brief, quiet chat with the arresting officer. The man sighs and nods his head, whereupon Streitsuchtig is set free. A glance is exchanged between the two and they part ways.

Word spreads and tempers start to rise at the possibility of Freidrich's inevitable arrest, but then news suddenly begins to circulate that all charges have been dropped despite vehement opposition from the head of the Wizards' and Alchemists Guild in the Freiburg district of Middenheim. There is talk that some very prominent lawyers intervened unexpectedly and saw to it that Freidrich was given free reign to say his piece. People see this as a sign that even the law has also had enough of the wizards.

## Part 2 Word on the Street

Local rumour and opinion on what is going on regarding the protests depends on who the Player Characters ask and what they ask. Most people know a little something, and by asking around the PCs are able get a picture of what is going on. This section details the information that can be gained from talking to people on the street. The Games Master can ask Player Characters to make *Gossip Tests* as required.

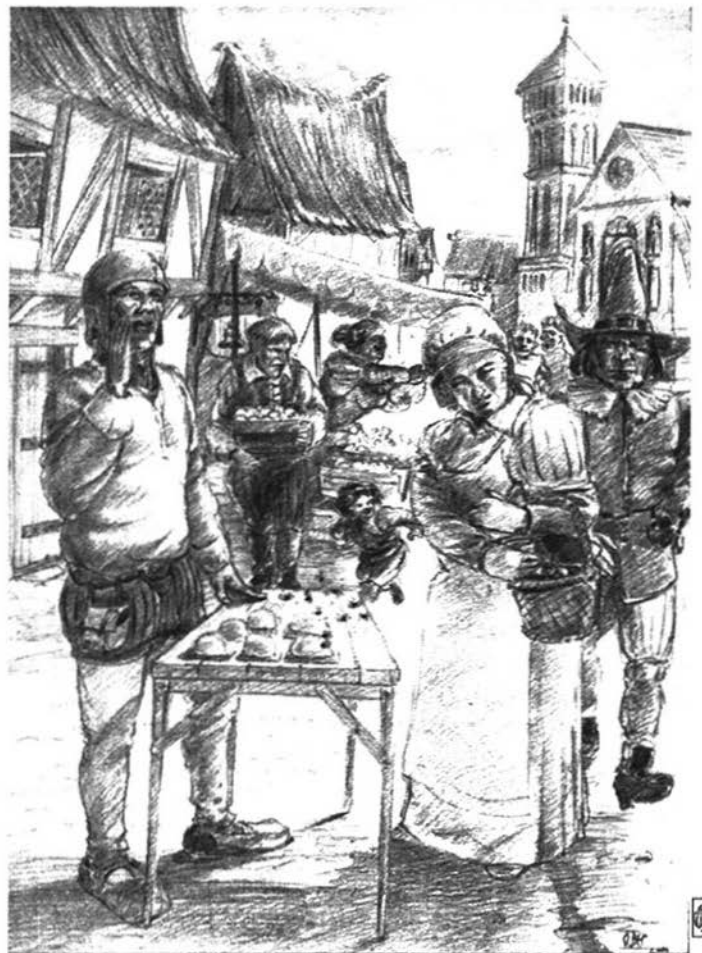
### C.L.A.W.S.

*Lower Class:* Who? I dunno. Spare a shilling?

*Average citizen:* It's people who don't like wizards or something and they appeared a while back. People recall seeing the odd small protest but did not really pay much attention until the movement started to become more obvious. Most are at least a little sympathetic to the cause after having had their own fears rekindled about what wizards get up to in their private towers and colleges, and of course, about the nature of something as

strange as magic itself. The great fire of Altdorf, the Storm of Chaos, and other wizard-based catastrophes and scandals are given as the basis for their opinion. Some only know that C.L.A.W.S. has a very prominent head, perhaps in the nobility, and others recall that Freidrich Streitsuchtig is that man. Those who have been in the city a long time may or may not know that he has trumpeted several causes over the years, and he likes to stir up trouble. Such causes have been taxes on non-Humans, cleaner streets, pro-non-Human rights, higher pay for the Watch, tougher crack downs on Watch brutality, and so on. Looking for him is probably futile. Wizards might send nasty things his way if he lets his dwelling be known.

*Educated, Authorities:* A recent group that has sprung up to try and get more restrictions placed on wizards. It wants to make wizards more accountable when any of their number go bad or mess up, because it is generally the peasants in the vicinity who pay the price. The powers of the city are starting to pay attention, largely because of its growing popularity and this means they can have a very big bandwagon to jump on. The wizards are concerned, but seem assured that it will blow over with time. Wizards do not see peasants and their opinions as much of a cause for concern, and they are probably right. Freidrich Streitsuchtig is the C.L.A.W.S.' leader. He used to be an average student who studied in Altdorf but found rabble rousing much more fun and profitable. He touts his skills as a demagogue to whoever puts gold in his purse. A few people in power have occasionally used him to stir up support amongst the peasants for their various causes, and it keeps their hands



clean and burn free, which is why he's probably being used to represent whoever has a grudge against the wizards here. He is getting funding for printing and to maintain a small base of operations somewhere. If the wizards find out where, you can probably expect he will meet with an accident.

*Upper Class, Nobility:* Nothing more than local rabble complaining about wizards to make themselves feel more important than they are. Not even worth paying attention to. Whatever keeps them happy, I suppose.

*Wizard:* Some are becoming concerned because they have been heckled in the street. The League seems to be getting more confident now that its numbers are growing. It used to be possible to get protestors to back off by giving them a stern and threatening look. The matter may have to be brought to the authorities if it escalates. After all, wizards are vital to the city. Ignorant labourers and shop keepers cannot be expected to fathom the arcane mysteries of magic, and "they should definitely not be allowed to question us".

Other wizards are indifferent to the League and assume it will pass once the citizens get bored. That is why they are afraid of magic after all, because most do not have the will, patience, or mental faculties to even learn to read and write their own language, let alone commit to years of study to master the arcane arts. If it's too much for them to even try to learn, it's too much for them to trust or at least not fear.

*Priests:* The people are being told of the dangers of wizardry. Although this has the potential to do harm, it also has some very good points. The priests use their powers under the will of their deity, and therefore are committed and dedicated to those ideals. Wizards have a lot more freedom to do ill with their power, and answer to equally ethereal guild masters who may or may not have the interests of the Empire at heart. The current laws are not enough. How many times has one of the faiths been slurred via association when one of the very wizards who swore an oath before a high priest and their own wizard master, was then found to have embraced Chaos or diabolic paths of magic?

A local demagogue of dubious commitment to his professed ideals and with more dedication to gold is leading them, probably for a sponsor who wants to stay safe from any sorcererous reprisals.

#### **Freidrich Streitsuchtig**

*Lower Class:* Who? I dunno. Spare a shilling?

*Average citizen:* Isn't he the one who gives those speeches about making wizards answer for what they get up to when they burn down the city or start letting Chaos run amok? What did they do to stop the Chaos invasion?

Some may have caught one of his oratories and although they may agree with him or have been impressed with his ideals, they assume he is going to get a roasting if he keeps it up.

*Educated, Upper Class:* A student who spent time in Altdorf. Fairly unremarkable as word has it, but a great orator, especially

with regard to less intelligent types. Not the best way to make a living, but he seems to enjoy it.

*Wizard:* Some rabble rouser who turned from books to causing trouble. It seems that his resentment at his own intellectual shortcomings have caused him to try and take on the wizards. People will get bored and stop listening soon enough.

#### **Who Is Behind Freidrich?**

*Lower Class:* Look, I told ya, I dunno. Now, how about that shilling?

*Average citizen:* What do you mean? You saying he's not for real?

If pressed to think about the possibilities, a multitude of theories will arise, everything from the priests, the nobility, the Emperor, the military, a disgruntled mage, a failed wizard's apprentice, but in the end most people assume he's the true force behind the League. Any others are just rich sponsors trying to stay away from being noticed in case it all goes horribly wrong.

*Educated, Upper Class:* Maybe the people in power are annoyed they do not have the wizards as deeply under their thumb as they have the average citizen. Perhaps it is someone trying to elevate their position by causing this ruckus and then riding the wave of popular opinion into a decent office. Or perhaps they are just people with a grudge spending their money against the people they have a quarrel with through a third party to keep their anonymity.

*Wizard:* Paranoid merchants, suspicious politicians, surly nobles, anyone with more gold than brains. The candidates are too numerous to even consider. When the people get bored, they will stop spending on their puppet and he will find some other fool to pay him. Votes for the masses or something stupid like that probably.

### **Part 3**

#### **Following the Protestors**

Even in the hubbub and din of the city, by wandering around it is not hard to pick up the chant of 'wizards out'. During the day, anything from one to three groups are marching along hollering this. Protestors are putting up posters, answering questions about what they stand for, and generally trying to get people on their side.

With the onset of dusk, they congratulate each other on the day and their continuing commitment to 'the cause' and the rank and file head home. The leaders of each protest group go to the campaign headquarters.

The unlabelled office occupies a small three-story house in Altdorf.

*Joining up:* Those who come to the office and profess a willingness to join the cause will be asked a few questions about why they are interested and then told what the League stands for and what it is after. This information is represented on a flyer (Player Handout 2) which they may be handed if

they visit an area where learned men, or at least those who can read and write, frequent. Otherwise it may be heard about in conversations or demonstrations elsewhere.

The League is trying to get as much support as possible and then will see what sort of laws it can try and have passed to restrict and control spellcasters. Characters cannot meet with the head of the League, as he is always very busy. They are told that if they want to hear his words they should attend his next rally. He gives them without warning so that the wizards cannot attend in force or influence him with magic.

The Player Characters are asked to come back in the morning and join one of the wandering protests. Those who can obviously fight might be asked to help guard the protesters, the office, or attend one of the rallies to protect them there.

The manifesto of the League is not to get rid of wizards, more to ensure that more restrictions and accountability are placed on them, and to commit them to the defence of their fellow Imperial citizens. After all, it is harder to come by gunpowder and a cannon than to just learn the dread arts of devastating magic. Also, if weapons, food, and property can be confiscated for the good of the community and the Empire, then why not the skills of a wizard? Why can a farmer be dragged from his home when he is drafted in time of crisis and the deadly talents of a wizard are left untouched?

The entrance to the building has two guards standing discreetly outside. There are several desks with a pair of comfortable chairs in front where new arrivals can sit. There are always around six workers in here preparing documents and letters to those in power, petitioning an escalation in wizard control and regulation laws, and attending those interested in joining the League. A guard maintains a position at the door accessing the stairs to the cellar, and another stands at the door that accesses the stairs that go up. Hidden amongst piles of meaningless items is a small strongbox with 64gc and 98ss and 66p for League expenses.

The main meeting room is a sizeable chamber with a map of the city on the far wall. This is where the morning briefings are held for the protest leaders and it is here that Freidrich tells each group what route to follow during the day. Every protest is guaranteed to pass through an area of commercial business, a low class area, and of course, centres of learning and spellcaster education. They will also hold a prolonged chanting session in the Middenpalaz at the heart of the city's political district.

A set of stairs leads up to Freidrich's office and beneath them is a door to a small latrine. Freidrich will be in the office during the day planning new speeches and protests. The office contains a desk, some extra chairs, and some sets of drawers. In his desk drawer is a letter from Valberik Ziegel (Player Handout 3) and an address in Altmarkt-Altquartier. This is Valberik's home address. There is also a purse of 22gc. A door in the far corner accesses his private bedroom.

The bedroom contains a simple single bed and a wardrobe with sets of normal clothing. There is a loose floorboard near one corner and beneath it is his current pay in Valberik's employ, namely four purses each containing twenty cut diamonds worth 5gc each, and a purse of 50gc.

The cellar is largely occupied with basic printing equipment,

spare paper, and boxes of posters (Player Handout 1). There are always two people here during the day working on producing the latest posters. There is a door in the far corner that accesses the supply cupboard. This contains a reserve of ink, paper, and other supplies to keep the campaign running.

**C.L.A.W.S. Worker (Scribe)**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
27	26	28	34	28	34	31	37
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	11	2	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Law), Common Knowledge (Empire) +10%, Gossip, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%, Trade (Calligrapher)

**Talents:** Strong Minded, Linguistics

**Equipment:** Decent town clothes, Knife

**C.L.A.W.S. Guard (Thug)**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
41	25	42	34	30	25	33	28
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	13	4	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (Empire) +10%, Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Gossip, Intimidate, Secret Language (Thieves Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Coolheaded, Disarm, Excellent Vision, Quick Draw, Strike to Stun, Very Strong, Wrestling

**Equipment:** Leather jack, Pot helm, Club, Knuckledusters

**Freidrich Streitsuchtig (student, ex agitator)**

**Appearance:** 28 years old, he is a tall man with an athletic build. His face is kindly and he has dark brown hair with a trimmed and elegant moustache. He has a strong and charismatic voice that projects well and has great power to it.

**Persona:** Loves to argue, revels in seeing a mob form from previously calm and rational people just because of his words. He gains immense fulfilment from moulding entire crowds with his oratory. He is not dedicated to any cause, merely the process of changing people's minds and opinions and making them act as he wishes. He spouts freedom of speech simply because that is the means to facilitate his living and obsession.

When he has a cause, he seems fanatical, but will be just as zealous with the next cause, even if it seems to be a complete contradiction to his previous stance on the matter. Freidrich sticks to the story that he is in charge of the League and was the man who formed it. His reasons are not so forthcoming because he has not bothered to think any up just yet.

**Background:** Freidrich was an average student but he soon found that his ability to exploit facts and opinions allowed him to take advantage of people and win arguments over almost anything. He started to work for various causes and earned a decent living trumpeting their aims and furthering their goals. Valberik had seen him in the colleges on occasion and after listening to him speak a few times decided that he was the perfect front man for C.L.A.W.S.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
43	30	33	40	45	33	35	48
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	3	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Law), Charm +10%, Common Knowledge (Empire), Consume Alcohol, Gossip +20%, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%

**Talents:** Flee, Linguistics, Luck, Public Speaking, Suave, Super Numerate, Very Resilient

**Equipment:** Ring of Pyre's Denial (its true nature is unknown to Freidrich, who thinks it a simple gold band), decent but plain clothing

**Ring Of Pyre's Denial**

**(Academic Knowledge: Magic)**

Taken from a Magister 'unlawfully' and tried on by Valberik. The lawyer noticed how resistant the victim seemed to flames, and claimed the ring for his own use. Gifted to Freidrich Streitsuchtig as part of his payment in founding C.L.A.W.S., the ring has an important role to play in Valberik's plot.

- The wearer takes half damage from any fire-based attacks.
- The wearer gains +10% to any Test to resist the effects of fire.

**Part 4  
Putting the Boot In**

Most people are dubious about tangling with something as potentially lethal as a wizard, but when mob mentality is rising, safety in numbers can bestow courage to tackle even the most pernicious adversary. Unfortunately for Hans Reinhardt, he is about to find this out first hand and from the wrong side.

The Player Characters encounter eight men who have finished work, had a few drinks, and gotten all riled up by a passing protest. They have been working on the roof of a local

blacksmith and have seen an obvious wizard living in the house next door. They are familiar with Hans' appearance and when they see him coming back from the Guild they seize the opportunity to corner him.

They are dressed in the manner of labourers, some hold bottles of ale, and the leader is waving a C.L.A.W.'s posters under the nose of a well-dressed man while demanding that he confess to what they have been told it says on it. A poor translation has them thinking it details how wizards are plotting to overthrow the Emperor, that they are all responsible for helping unleash Daemonologists and Necromancers on everyday folk, and that they are generally up to no good. The threats start to get more serious and they start to shove him about. He asks to be left alone but it is clear that they are mustering their anger for a beating, maybe worse.

If the Player Characters are walking past without intervening he can call to them for aid, whereupon the labourers will tell the Player Characters in vividly lurid detail to keep walking unless they "want some as well".

The labourers are of a disposition to beat something up, preferably a wizard, but interfering adventurers who cannot handle a day's honest toil will do just fine. If weapons bigger than a shortsword come into play, if they are heavily armoured, or if Dwarves are present then they will argue a bit to try to save some face, make the odd mumbled curse or derogatory comment, but will be largely committed to leaving. They tell Hans that the League will catch up to him soon enough, him and all his snooty wizard mates.

In the event of a fist or knife fight, Hans backs up, and when it appears as though someone is taking serious wounds or likely to get killed, he casts *Dazzling Brightness*. The labourers are immediately terrified by the flash of magical light and flee the scene. Hans then thanks his rescuers, offering casts of *Healing of Hysh* to any who need it.

**The Gang (Peasants)**

Gunther, Klaus, Wilhem, Wil, Stinky Gorman, and Sebastian. **Appearance:** They are all burly and weatherworn men in rough and sturdy clothing.

**Persona:** Simple men who have worked hard in the city all their lives. They are proud of their work and have a strong sense of patriotism towards the city. Gunther has represented them for many years and has acquired steady and well paying work. They trust him and his judgment implicitly.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
33	25	32	34	30	29	29	29
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	3	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Animal Care, Common Knowledge (Empire), Concealment, Drive, Gamble, Gossip, Outdoor Survival, Row, Scale Sheer Surfaces, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Cook), Swim.



**Talents:** Flee, Hardy, Sturdy.

**Equipment:** Labourer's clothes, Knife.

**Hans Reinhardt** (Master Wizard, Ex Journeyman Wizard, Ex Apprentice Wizard)

*Appearance:* A 32 year-old, 5' 3" slender man with bushy blonde hair and blue eyes. He has a passive serene expression with a small smirk constantly upon his lips.

*Persona:* A mild mannered man committed to the study and exploration of the mysteries of magic. He has little time for learning spells that everyone else has already mastered and rather dedicates his work in trying to create new and completely unique spells. He is cheerful but his lack of contact with everyday Humans makes his sense of humour and conversation a little bizarre at times. He has no time for an apprentice but will teach spells to any Player Character who wishes them if they accept his offer.

*Background:* Born in the city, his insightful nature and intellect gained the attention of a wizard who saw potential for a very adept apprentice to handle mundane chores for many years. Much to the wizard's annoyance, Hans excelled at every study and quickly eclipsed his master's skill. He learned from several other sources and paid his way by selling his ability to acquire information from books that would have taken those without his abilities considerably longer to do so. He continues to offer these services of concentrating dozens of tomes of lore into one coherent and comprehensive package and this helps fund his home and his ongoing researches.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	41	30	38	38	74	56	39
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	3	3	4	3	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Astronomy), Academic Knowledge (Daemonology), Academic knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Academic Knowledge (Magic) +10%, Channelling +10%, Charm, Common Knowledge (Bretonnia), Common Knowledge (Empire), Gossip, Magical Sense +10%, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Search, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Aethyric Attunement, Arcane Lore (Light), Fast Hands, Hardy, Lesser Magic (Dispel, Skywalk), Meditation, Petty Magic (Arcane), Savvy, Strong Minded

**Equipment:** Purse 45 GC, Pouch with an oak wand, 2 polished mithril discs, a small mirror, a silver charm, 2 unburnt candles, 3 pieces of down, an eagle's feather, and 6 glass beads

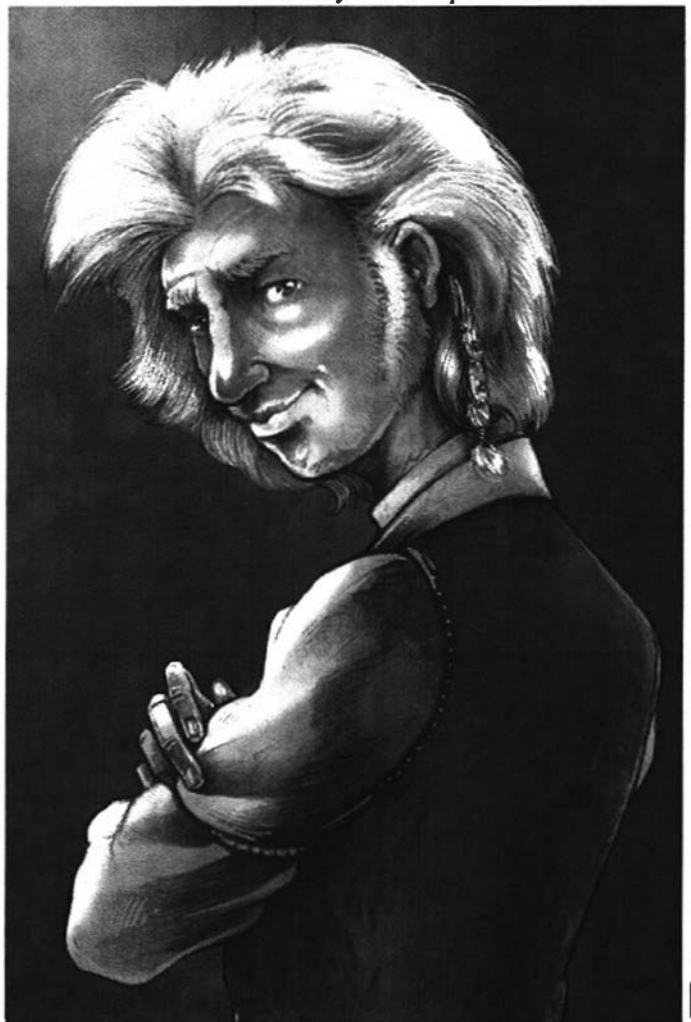
Hans will be grateful for even the most token effort on his behalf, and after introductions he extends an offer of employment.

Hans has watched the League rise from Freidrich Streitsuchtig holding one man rants on a street corner, to him standing amidst some followers, to the odd marching protest, to an organised anti-spellcaster campaign throughout the city. He is concerned that all of this anger and hatred will cause more events like the one he has just seen, and because he is in the middle of an important experiment, and because the gang that attacked him are working next door, he could probably do with some protection until people lose interest, the authorities step in, or the League does something illegal to warrant its disbanding. If something decisive has not occurred within three weeks, he will sell up and go to Altdorf.

He can provide room and board in his modest home and a crown a day. In addition, he can offer an enchanted item, the Blade of the Materium that he was working on. He was trying to create a new and fabulously unique ability in the item, but it did not come out as planned and is just a minor magic item that he has no use for now that he has found out what went wrong with the process.

Hans' house is a simple dwelling. The downstairs is a living area with a kitchen, and the upstairs is an extensive if cluttered laboratory where Hans works and sleeps. The party are expected to sleep and stay downstairs and accompany him when he goes for more ingredients, provisions, or just to get some air and clear his head.

The builders continue their work and after noticing the Player Characters in the house they do not persevere with their



animosity towards Hans. Twice a day, Hans makes a trip out and the Player Characters may feel very exposed when people regard the whole group and especially Hans with furtive looks and even snarls of open suspicion and contempt.

*Home Alone:* If the Player Characters do not leave someone behind during these visits to guard the home, the first time they head out they will return to find a smashed window, a brick in the middle of the room, and the builders sitting on the neighbouring roof with big smirks on their face. The builders deny any accusation and there were no witnesses to the act. If the Player Characters become aggressive the builders may toss the odd roof tile at them. The building upon which they are working is a butcher's shop and the owners and people working there will not permit people to enter the shop and storm upstairs through their private area to hassle builders.

The builders did not actually do it. It was just a random act of vandalism against Hans. Going to the Watch is useless unless they have something more to go on than the anti-wizard sentiments of the gang. From this point on, Hans will expect someone to stay behind and watch his home when he is out. This may have them worrying whether the next confrontation will be with Hans or at the house.

**Blade of the Materium**

**(Academic Knowledge: Magic)**

An experiment by Hans Reinhardt into creating a weapon specifically for use against creatures of the Aethyr, but which has not achieved the original intention. Still, it is a magical sword, and therefore of some value. Unknown to its maker, and any who attempt to assess the weapon's powers, it has a hidden ability.

- The weapon counts as Magical for the purposes of damaging Daemons and Ethereal creatures.
- The wearer gains +10% to any **Will Power Test**, except those caused by Ethereal Undead, in which case the wielder suffers -20% to **Will Power Tests** instead.
- The first time the weapon wounds an Ethereal Undead, the creature is instantly slain, and the weapon loses all special abilities.

**Part 5  
The Second Night**

Unknown to Freidrich, a series of attacks are being planned by the more aggressive quarters of his campaign. They have been covertly inspired by the true force behind C.L.A.W.S. and will attack several independent wizards in their homes. Hans is one of the wizards due to be targeted.

The attack begins around midnight. The group (use C.L.A.W.S. Guard profile pg. 46) charge the front door, batter it down as quickly as possible and rush in. The plan is to beat Hans into unconsciousness, and then they will smash everything up and run off into the night. If they cannot overcome the defenders in three rounds or if more than half their number are defeated they will flee.

If the Player Characters manage to capture anyone, the Watch will see to their arrest and trial. The attackers are basically thugs who have been inspired to take action. They know nothing

except where the campaign headquarters are and that Freidrich was not involved. He is a talker and they wanted to take some action against the threat, to show the wizards that the common man means business.

In the morning, Hans heads out to buy a new door, one that is a little thicker than the previous, and then heads to the guild for some answers. When they are out, word is all over the city about how several wizards were beaten up and their homes ransacked. The watch went to C.L.A.W.S. and were handed the culprits by their leader, who also saw to it that the wizards were compensated.

People are in two minds about the event. Some think that it was a good start, others are worried that the violence will escalate, especially if wizards start defending themselves with magical means.

When Hans comes home, two men from the League approach him. They mean no harm and offer Hans three purses, each with 20gc. They apologise for last night's unfortunate event, and promise that there will be no repeat, and that the League has no violent intentions. Those involved are being prosecuted to the full extent of the law and the League will make no effort for leniency. Despite the fact that Hans is a wizard, they simply apologise and leave.

**Player Handout 4** starts to go up immediately and this helps soothe the resentment against the League.

At the guild, Hans has called in a few favours and learned some interesting information that he will share with the Player Characters. The wizards are apparently going to try to keep a low profile on this matter, leaving him and the PCs on their own if they want to do something constructive about the League. The guild suspects that there are unknown backers behind the agitator and it will not rashly act. After all, the people are fickle and easily swayed into rash acts, wizards are above that sort of thing. Hans is somewhat irate that many wizards are just expecting this problem to blow itself out when the citizens get bored, but this stems largely from personal resentment because he held such a view before the attacks.

**Part 6  
An Unwelcome Visitor**

The next night, the sponsors of the League use their Daemonologist to summon a Daemon of Khome, which they proceed to send against the only wizard's abode where their thugs met serious resistance.

**Bloodletter (Lesser Daemon of Khome)**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
50	0	51	34	48	48	48	10
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	12	5	3(5)	4	0	0	0

Skills: Dodge Blow, Perception, Speak Arcane Language (Daemonic), Speak Language (Dark Tongue)

**Talents:** Daemonic Aura, Frenzy, Frightening, Natural Weapons, Night Vision, Resistance to Magic, Specialist Weapon Group (Two Handed), Will of Iron

**Mutations:** Horns (SB-1), Metallic Skin (2 AP all)

**Special Rules:**

*Instability:* On a round in which a Bloodletter is injured in melee combat but fails to inflict any wounds back in return, it must succeed at a **Will Power Test** or be banished back to the Realm of Chaos.

**Equipment:** Greatsword

The Bloodletter makes short work of the door and then enters to kill anything in its path. If the Player Characters are in serious trouble, Hans comes running down and casts *Banish* to take care of the beast.

In the wake of the attack, Hans is very concerned at this turn of events. Something else is clearly going on and now that he knows that there is more to the League he changes his mind about leaving. He is a decent person and will not leave wizards to be carved up by Daemons while he runs away with his tail between his legs and a couple of fat purses from those responsible.

He asks the Player Characters to investigate what is going on. For results that could help break the League or find out what is going on behind it he will offer the Player Characters one of the purses or, if the Games Master wishes, a minor magic item.

### Part 7 Investigating the League

As a result of the the attacks and other recent events, the information that the Player Characters can find from investigation changes.

*Wizards:* Enquiries amongst wizards reveals that they have taken the matter and their growing fury at the League's actions to their guild. The guild openly tells anyone who asks that they have tried taking the matter to the authorities, but the authorities are dragging their heels on acting, saying that until the League itself acts illegally there is nothing to be done.

*Authorities:* The Watch leaders have approached some of the city's prosecutors and sought to see what can be done to end the escalating strife between the League and the spellcasting community. They were told that the League has some very powerful lawyers on its side. When they pressed the matter, they were informed that it was the Brotherhood of Judgment, a small informal group of very proficient lawyers who work as a team on occasion and are infamous for their unspoiled record of success. The Watch has reluctantly accepted its impotence to act and is now waiting for some more tangible reasons to allow them to break up the League.

The Watch knows the Brotherhood of Judgment only too well because they have been defeated by them on several occasions. The Brotherhood has managed to set criminals free that the Watch had taken great effort to bring to trial.

*The Lawyers:* Any major lawyer in the city knows that the Brotherhood of Judgment is a small group of mutually allied lawyers. They maintain a town house for their meetings. They discuss law and they work on new tactics and strategies, do occasional work for the poor and needy, and work together on some of the toughest cases. It is a lawyers' club that was established by Valberik Ziegel, but the exact membership is unknown.

*The Underground:* Those who command or who are heavily involved with the criminal fraternity know and fear Valberik. He has prosecuted a good number of people involved in various circles around them, and those who managed to slip the charges have had a tendency to 'vanish without a trace'. They suspect that there may be some sort of vigilante in the city and he is either watching Valberik, knows him, or may even be employed by him. They are afraid to act against Valberik because they have no idea as to what precautions he may have established. It is almost certain that he has significant information on them, and may have evidence that, while not enough to have them arrested, could make their lives very, very difficult.

*Valberik's House:* A wealthy if somewhat small abode. It has a butler, a cook, and a maid living and working within, and it also provides accommodation for Zornig next door to Valberik's private bedroom.

*Valberik's Law Offices:* An office is maintained in the main judiciary building of the city. It is well furnished and unremarkable in every way. He has a secretary named Lore Than. She is middle-aged, very proficient, and has a Will Power of 46.

*The Brotherhood of Judgement:* The Brotherhood operates from an unremarkable town house in Ulricsmund. It has a kitchen, storeroom, several empty chambers, a library of law, and a meeting room at the heart with heavy doors. The meeting room has a table with large leather chairs around it and there is a secret door that accesses a set of descending stairs. Lurking within the spare rooms is the cult's pet Daemonologist.

**Johannes Diener** (Journeyman Wizard, ex-Apprentice Wizard, ex-Servant)

*Appearance:* A contorted creature with small bat like wings, a fanged snout, and purple leathery skin.

*Persona:* Johannes hates himself because of his stupidity. He reviles his mutated flesh but fears death and damnation too much to end his life, and so he serves Valberik out of fear.

*Background:* Johannes was a servant in a minor household. When the fortunes of the family changed he was dismissed and found himself in the employ of a wizard who offered Johannes the chance to study magic in his remote abode. He readily accepted but soon found himself learning more about Daemonology than normal magic. Suddenly his master vanished and the authorities burst in. He had been set up to accept the blame for the foul crimes his master had been orchestrating since he had employed the youth. His master had been summoning Daemons in secret and letting them loose

to kill and destroy. Johannes protested his innocence but by then, his transformation was manifesting. The authorities had found the Daemonologist responsible and were not going to look for another.

Valberik heard of the arrest and arranged for him to be sprung and taken to their secret lair to serve the cult or else be burned at the stake for his crimes.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32	36	28	32	39	43	48	30
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	2	3	4	2	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Daemonology), Academic Knowledge (Magic)+10%, Academic Knowledge (Runes), Blather, Channelling, Common Knowledge (Empire),

Dodge Blow, Evaluate, Gossip +10%, Magical Sense, Perception, Read/Write, Search +10%, Sleight of Hand, Speak Arcane Language (Magick), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Cook)

**Talents:** Aethyric Attunement, Dark Lore (Chaos), Dark Magic, Fast Hands, Flee, Hardy, Meditation, Night Vision, Petty Magic (Arcane), Very Resilient

**Equipment:** Dagger

**Part 8**

**A Matter of Timing**

At some stage the Player Characters investigations are noticed. The Brotherhood then decides to move to the next stage and arrange a public event. One of their agents is supplied with a magical amulet of the kind common amongst the Magisters of the Bright College, allowing him to cast fire balls. He is then setup in a location near the meeting with a clear shot and a swift escape route.

When the Player Characters are next out in the city, they notice a large League rally taking place a few streets away. Before they can reach the gathering, there is a flash and three balls of flame arc into the scene from the upper floors of a building. One centres on and hits Freidrich and those about him, and the others hit the crowd, each exploding on impact. Due to the protection from the Ring of Pyre's Denial, Freidrich is injured but not killed. Six League members and five citizens are not so lucky. When Freidrich goes down and the League dive in to shield him from any further attack, the ring is palmed by one of Valberik's agents to avoid the risk of it being noticed. It is highly unlikely, but Freidrich the anti-wizard being found with magical protection against the very sorcerous attack that then occurred would ruin everything and Valberik does not like to leave anything to the whims of chance.

In the confusion and mayhem, a League member is knocked down close to the Player Characters. When he falls, a bunch of posters fall out of his bag. He scuttles off to avoid being trampled and the posters (**Player Handout 5**) are left behind.

About thirty minutes later, other League members start to put up the posters while others act as town criers and read the text out loud. The extremists involved with this event printed the posters at another location in secret at Valberik's behest. Freidrich was completely unaware and will not believe the Player Characters.

The authorities will listen to what the Player Characters may say, but because Freidrich was almost killed and a number of League members died, they decide that they cannot act.

From now on, eight Watchmen are stationed outside the C.L.A.W.S. headquarters and they search all new arrivals for spell ingredients, weapons, and any sign that they may be assassins. A doctor treats Freidrich's minor wounds and he stays inside.

The agent responsible for the attack immediately goes to ground and will not emerge for a couple of weeks. He kept his hideout secret and thus will never see justice.



**Part 9  
Preparations**

In the morning, Valberik leaves his offices with his bodyguard and heads through the streets to a small, plain building with a cart outside and a 'for sale' sign in the window. This is the residence of a local Magister Albert Beinbruch. The mage answers the door somewhat warily and Valberik gives him two purses of 100gc in exchange for a wooden box.

Albert is reluctant to speak, but can be persuaded through talk or money to reveal that the lawyer wanted a potion of the most powerful kind and one designed for public oratory. In his house, it is clear that Albert is packed up and about to leave.

After listening to Valberik's needs Albert decided that a potion of leadership would suffice. It is a brief lasting potion that makes the imbiber appear like a legendary hero, with sterling oratory skills and the power of leadership like no other. The lawyer was provided with a list of ingredients and they were quickly delivered. This included blood from a soldier, a lion and a wolf heart, grapes and water from a fountain in a temple, and a sword that had taken life in a battle. In addition, for the spells that had to be cast into the potion, the ingredients of a small iron ring, the jawbone of a mule, and the tongue of a giant snake were supplied.

Albert created the potion, placed it in the hip flask that was provided and handed it over in exchange for payment. He

intends to use the money to leave the city before the League causes even more trouble. Albert assumes that Valberik has a very tricky case on his hands and intends to sway the scales of justice with a dazzling closing argument.

Valberik proceeds to the C.L.A.W.S.' campaign headquarters, where he talks with Freidrich in his office.

*Valberik:* Greetings Freidrich. I trust you have suffered no serious harm.

*Freidrich:* I've had worse. Those damn wizards almost had my measure though with those sheets of lethal flame. I lost some good supporters in that attack.

*Valberik:* Who would have thought that the wizards would actually retaliate? I mean, they played straight into our hands with that reckless stunt.

*Freidrich:* Well, as much as I'm committed to your cause, I'm not going to be martyred for it by you or anyone else.

*Valberik:* Then we should do something equally drastic to capitalise on the situation.

*Freidrich:* What do you mean?

*Valberik:* First, get every member of the League out on the streets. Tell everyone in the city that there will be a rally at dusk. Tell the population that a revelation will be made of great magnitude and import. Then, take this box. In it is a small hip flask with a potion inside that I had made specially.

*Freidrich:* Consorting with wizards? That seems most unlike you.

*Valberik:* Fighting fire with fire, my friend. You have a problem with that?

*Freidrich:* Of course not. I'm paid to speak, to organise. I leave the beliefs and the zeal to others. I don't need it. It just gets in my way.

*Valberik:* Well they will certainly remember you after tonight. With that potion, you will be able to give the greatest speech of your life. It will allow you to speak with a voice of greatness, like Magnus the Pious, or Sigmar himself. Your words will live through the ages and people will never ever forget them, so make them good, and make them inflammatory.

*Freidrich:* A shot at immortality, eh?

*Valberik:* And a shot for us to break the wizard's stranglehold. After this, you need not fear another attack, for they will be terrified of you.

*Freidrich:* Sounds good. And you still want no part of this?

*Valberik:* I and my brothers are the law of the city. We must be seen as objective when we try to defend and simultaneously to prosecute the guilds and colleges. Only by being impartial can we truly put muzzle and leash on the spellcasters of the Empire.

*Freidrich:* I will brief the troops immediately.

*Valberik:* Good luck.



Valberik then heads back to the house of

the Brotherhood to relax and chat with the other members as they anticipate the imminent riot.

The C.L.A.W.S. operatives are briefed and the League take to the streets and start to tell everyone that at sundown there will be a meeting of great importance, and that no one should miss the revelation that will be unveiled. The meeting will be in The Great Park.

As news spreads, troops start to gather at the Guild of Wizards and Alchemists and other locations linked to wizards. Hans and many other wizards make for the Guild where they will be better protected by a large number of troops.

### Part 10 The Speech

Freidrich stands up amongst a solid throng of wary-eyed guards and supporters who pummel anyone who tries to get to Freidrich. The Watch are present in force to tackle any other assassination attempts and to contain any trouble resulting from the rally. After taking a reassuring swig from his hip flask, Freidrich begins his speech.

The words are electrifying. Freidrich's virulent condemnation of wizards is so potent that even player character spellcasters feel themselves being convinced. The huge crowd is entranced and the moment it ends, people and even some of the Watch storm off to make the spellcasters pay.

Mob mentality feeds on the magically enhanced words. Freidrich sees that the potion was even mightier than he thought and that he has accidentally started a city wide riot. Mortified, he heads back to the headquarters as other League members help aim the mob in the right direction and keep their blood boiling. The remaining Watch leave as do the workers and all but four guards.

The people attack anyone who looks educated, and storm wizard's abodes as well as the colleges. The troops seek to stop them and fighting breaks out. More Watchmen are called in and during the course of the night there is destruction, a few fires, some serious injury, and a few deaths.

Valberik is very happy with the level of violence as he and some friends watch over cigars and brandy from the Brotherhood's headquarters.

Freidrich grabs his pay, empties the League's funds, and tries to slink out of the city. If he is confronted, he tells the

guards to kill the Player Characters because they are assassins. If the guards are killed, he grovels for his life, blabbing all he knows, and offers them half of the pay if they let him go.

Unless he is stopped, he escapes on foot and heads for Bretonnia to start over again. By morning, there is a 100gc bounty for his capture. This rises to 400gc by the end of the week once the guilds and colleges contribute.

Shortly after Freidrich leaves, arsonists cast kegs of oil into the large building and set it ablaze. They were arranged through Valberik's leaning on one of the local crime bosses and the arsonists will not know anything save that a purse of gold and a location for them to destroy was anonymously provided.

### Part 11 Ending the League

In the morning, the city quiets down. The Watch arrests League members and they are charged with a variety of crimes ranging from causing civil unrest, disturbing the peace, instigating mass violence, and endangering Imperial personnel, right up to charges of accomplice to murder and destruction of private property. If the Watch has the files and papers from the C.L.A.W.S. headquarters this will be a lot easier and more comprehensive.

If Freidrich is captured, he is charged with the whole lot. Valberik sees to it that a member of the Brotherhood fails to acquit him while another acquires a significant sentence. He tries to call on Valberik for aid, but the lawyer does not even acknowledge him. Even if the letter in Freidrich's office is unearthed, it will strangely go missing before it can come to light in the proceedings.

### Part 12 Into the Pit

There are a number of reasons why this final event may be run. If the player characters are continuing their investigation as to who was behind the League, or starting to ferret into the dealings of the Brotherhood, then they will have to be disposed of. Valberik may also want to have the Player Characters brought to the Pit of Justice as revenge for their meddling, the killing of the Bloodletter, thwarting plans, getting on his nerves, or just out of pure chaotic whim.

There are several tactics Valberik may employ to achieve this, and he will use some, one, or all in order to kidnap the Player Characters. One is to simply have a covert agent slip some hefty doses of sedative into their food or drink, and this can be in conjunction with the gang they use to abduct their quarry. Adding Zornig to the equation may make this easier. The best time for the gang to charge in is during the night when their targets have no head armour to ward against the *Strike To Stun* talent. Once subdued, they are stripped, bound, blindfolded, and taken swiftly to the house of the Brotherhood. Their possessions are left where they were dropped and these items will probably still be there when they get back.

Another tactic is to have a messenger bring them to the back room of a bar that has been paid for to ensure discretion. A man tells them that he knows all about the League and needs their help. He orders drinks that come and are all laced with three doses of a potent sedative called Grintwort. The footpads

#### Grintwort

**Cost:** 50gc      **Availability:** Rare

A favourite of bounty hunters and those who want to take their victims alive and undamaged, Grintwort is added to food or drink. Virtually undetectable except to the trained palette, the substance requires a successful **Very Hard (-30%) Prepare Poison Test** to detect. The difficulty is lessened by one step per additional dose. A target consuming the drug must make a **Hard (-20%) Toughness Test** for each dose, failure resulting in the character experiencing dizziness after a number of rounds equal to their TB (resulting in a -10 penalty to all characteristics). If any Characteristic is reduced to zero as a result of the drug, they fall unconscious. The characteristics are regained at the rate of 10% per hour.

then rush in to attack, two per character at the front while a third sneaks up behind to catch them from the rear. Those knocked out will have a dagger put to their throat and their comrades ordered to surrender.

**Abductors for the Brotherhood of Judgment**

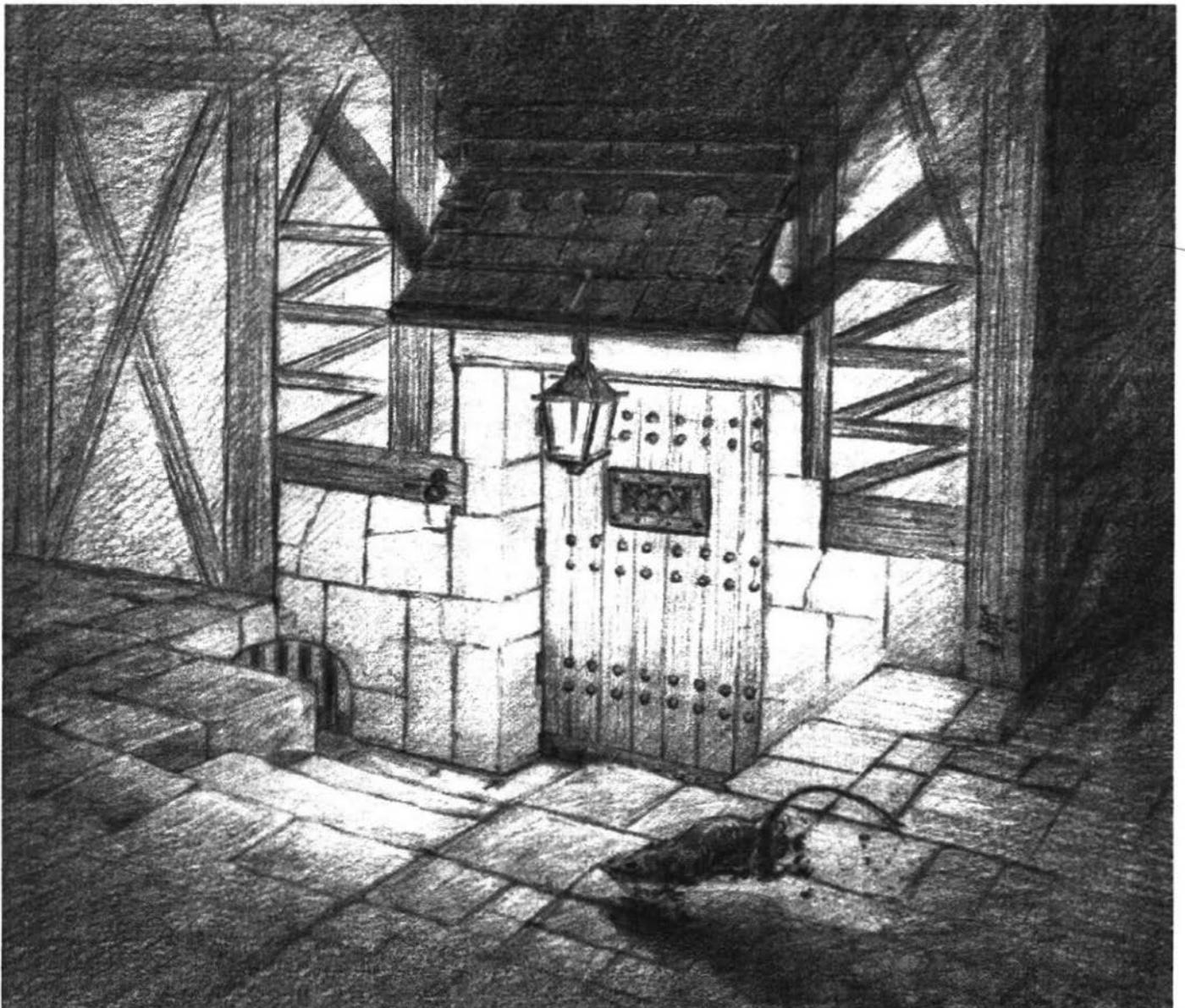
These former footpads are dedicated and loyal to the Brotherhood, but only out of fear of being sent to jail, or ending up in the Pit themselves. After all, who would believe a footpad against the word of the city's best and most respected lawyers. They have received some combat training from Zornig and live quietly in a modest part of town far above what they could ever have hoped for in their previous career. They know that the Brotherhood delivers vigilante justice of the fatal kind, but are unaware of their Chaotic fealty. (Use the same profile as the C.L.A.W.S. Guard pg.46.)

**The Pit of Justice**

This is the gladiator pit where the Brotherhood's victims are brought to face the cult in combat to the death. Consider it a Khornate thunderdome that was once used to despatch the

criminals the group wanted to bring to justice, but now serves the cause of the Blood Gods indiscriminate slaughter. Those successfully abducted will find themselves here:

*You are in a sizeable underground hall with a deep gladiator-style pit with sawdust sprinkled liberally over the stone floor. It is twenty yards wide. The walls around you are five yards high. They are smooth, splashed with blood spray, and have a series of downward facing spikes at the top to dissuade climbing. Only a single iron gate accesses the floor of the pit. Placed along the walls are a number of weapons of various types and all are of superior quality. There are some spears, swords, axes, hammers, flails, a couple of bucklers, and a shield or two. There is a small one-yard-high barrier that surrounds the top of the pit and it is painted with skull designs and has numerous torches spaced along it to provide light. Standing behind this wall are a number of robed figures with sinister hoods and loaded crossbows at the ready, the contours of platemail can be seen beneath the dark cloth. There is an elderly man and woman standing near you, and they are holding each other and staring up at the figures with fright.*



On the wall there is a flail, two swords, two hammers, two hand axes, a two-handed sword, three spears, a left-handed dagger, two bucklers, and two shields. The portcullis accesses a short corridor and then a spiral stair that rises to an area of the observation level and the winching mechanism. A set of stairs then rise to access a secret door in the meeting room of the house.

The innocent pair are Ralf and Brunhilde Braun, a pair of traders in their fifties. They are too terrified to fight, though trying to protect them may cause player characters extra complications.

*Let Battle Commence:* 'You have meddled in the affairs of the Cult of the Sundered Head. Our Lord of Death, the almighty Khorne, demands your blood, and we shall give it to him freely.' The gate then cranks upward and armoured figures emerge with weapons at the ready. Valberik and Zornig lead the way and if there are three or more party members, there will be one cultist for each of the additional characters.

Valberik and the cultists like to toy with their prey, but Zornig goes for the kill without delay. The others seek to disarm and parry a lot unless they are taking wounds in which case they press for the kill. Those they disarm are mocked and told to go and get a weapon that they think they can keep hold of in their dying grasp.

If you think the Player Characters can handle the situation then Valberik mutates in a Chaos Spawn:

*There is a thunderclap and a terrible ripping sound echoes through the chamber as the elderly bodies open up. The skin splits and bursts, sending blood outward in all directions. The gore seems to animate and flows instantly towards the howling form of Valberik. It rolls up his body and where it touches the metal warps and alters. It becomes thickens and acquires a brazen quality. It manifests skull shaped rivets and curling spines, screaming face designs and impossibly intricate runes and sigils. His arms suddenly lose their shape and hollow until they form into armoured tentacles.*

Valberik now has Chaos Armour that gives him an extra Armour Point on all locations and +10 on all Magic Tests. He also has tentacles for arms. On his death the following takes place:

*Valberik hollers and his whole head swells until it is as large as his body. His torso retracts, leaving him a walking head as his amour becomes molten and dribbles from his body. Dense scales rise upon his skin as his eyes drift together into one huge orb before it erupts out on a fleshy stalk. His legs warp and become cloven hooves as his arms atrophy and wither away to nothing. The whole grotesque creature suddenly trebles in size before its entire structure becomes translucent and crystalline.*

It is up to you whether the other cultists watching above the pit decide to avenge Valberik's death or are so horrified by how their allegiance has been punished that they flee. Those who flee immediately seek to erase every hint of their Brotherhood membership in their homes and offices and will abandon their Chaos worship. Some will seek to take holy vows and enter

the priesthood, others will flee the city. Those who stay are dedicated to slaughter and do not use their crossbows, rather they will rush down the stairs, raise the gate, and seek hand-to-hand carnage.

**Valberik Ziegel** (Pit Fighter, ex-Cult Acolyte (of Khorne), ex-Scholar, ex-Litigant, ex-Student)

*Appearance:* Tall with short dark hair and a small thin beard.

*Persona:* Cold, calculating, utterly ruthless and devoid of all pity and mercy. All he cares about is enjoying himself, and this means taking delight in killing people.

*Background:* Valberik was an only child, born to a family that owned and ran a moderately prosperous roofing business. His parents worked very hard to ensure that he could gain an education and elevate himself to a better life. He was intelligent, if easily distracted and restless, and he ended his studies when he chose to sell his skills as a scholar.

However, he soon saw where the real money was and went back to college to commit himself to the law. He proved an excellent lawyer and soon made a great deal of money. His frustration with work and its dry tedium caused him to find others who were equally irritated by their vocation. They told themselves that they were disgruntled by those who escaped justice through bribery, trickery, or technicality, so they started a small and secret group whose purpose was to ease their sense of resentment by bringing those who defeated them in the courtroom to justice.

The acquitted person would be abducted and brought to a secret location where the group would wear their hooded robes and pronounce sentence. Valberik and his colleagues would then sit back and eagerly watch the very brutal pit fighter in their employ and confidence proceed to beat the captive to death. This veneer of purpose quickly started to slip and it was not long before they started to have normal folk abducted as well. Their interest in the combats grew and they began to get involved in the execution process themselves. The group trained with professional tutors, honed their combat skills, and took ever-increasing delight in killing people.

With all scruples erased by their term as lawyers, it was not long before they began to worship carnage and slaughter just for its own sake. Through their encounters with Chaos and its followers in the legal system, they knew who was most akin to such a mentality, and so they adopted the patronage of Khorne though even Valberik did not fully understand the price such worship could exact.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
51	32	39	45	39	70	57	50
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	17	3	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Astronomy), Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Law) +20%, Academic Knowledge (Magic), Blather, Charm, Common



Knowledge (Bretonnia), Common Knowledge (Empire), Common Knowledge (Kislev), Dodge Blow+10%, Gossip, Haggle, Intimidate +10%, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%, Speak Language (Kislevite), Trade (Cartographer)

**Talents:** Cool Headed, Dealmaker, Disarm, Etiquette, Hardy, Inured to Chaos, Lightning Reflexes, Linguistics, Public Speaking, Savvy, Seasoned Traveller, Specialist Weapon Group (Flail), Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying), Specialist Weapon Group (Two-Handed), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Suave, Super Numerate

**Mutation:** Iron Hard Skin (Right Arm)

**Equipment:** Expensive clothes. In the Pit of Justice he also has a Breastplate, Plate leggings, Helmet, Full Mail Armour, Gauntlets, Buckler, and a Claymore. All of his armour has the emblem of Khorne etched into it along with decorative spines, thorns, skull designs, and other sinister decorations

**Zornig Andersson** (Judicial Champion, ex-Veteran, ex-Pit Fighter)

*Appearance:* A squat and massively build man with a bald head. He is missing an eye and several teeth and has a great many scars crisscrossing his frame.

*Persona:* He seems like the strong silent type, but this is only because his brain functions only on the most rudimentary level. When Valberik tells him to do something, he does it instantly

and with utter commitment, to the death if necessary. He has not processed the fact that he is involved with Chaos worship, and because he never speaks he cannot accidentally let anything slip.

*Background:* Born in the gutter and none too bright, he was a strong arm for whoever convinced him to follow. He was talked into pit fighting for the profit of others and one day he was arrested for killing some spectators when he became confused as to whom he was fighting. Valberik spotted him and saw a chance to gain the executioner they required for their newly formed judicial sect of vigilante justice. Valberik represented Zornig and got him acquitted. He was treated to wealth and luxury, and served them well in the Pit of Justice. When the lawyers wanted to learn how to kill for themselves, he taught them the basics as best he could before they went to professionals to further their skills. Nowadays he serves more as Valberik's bodyguard and champion.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
76	45	53	50	42	22	41	23
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
3	18	5	5	4	0	0	0

**Equipment:** Leather jack, Pot helm, Buckler, Sword, Dagger, Knuckledusters. In the Pit of Justice he also has Full Plate Armour, Buckler, and a Morning Star.



**Skills:** Common Knowledge (Empire), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow +20%, Gamble, Gossip, Intimidate +10%, Perception, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel).

**Talents:** Disarm, Quick Draw, Lightening Parry, Specialist Weapon Group (Flail), Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying), Specialist Weapon Group (Two-Handed), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strong Minded, Very Strong, Very Resilient, Warrior Born, Wrestling.

**Cultist of the Brotherhood** (Pit Fighter, ex -Litigant, ex-Student)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	FeL
40	28	31	42	34	43	33	35
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	3	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry), Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Law) +10%, Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (Empire), Dodge Blow, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Classical), Speak Language (Reikspiel) +10%.

**Talents:** Etiquette, Linguistics, Public Speaking, Savvy, Specialist Weapon Group (Parrying), Specialist Weapon

Group (Two-Handed), Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure.

**Equipment:** Expensive clothes. In the Pit of Justice they have full mail armour, buckler, and two handed swords. The armour has the emblem of Khorne etched onto plates fused to the chain.

**Part 13  
Aftermath**

Details of the Brotherhood that become known will be covered up to avoid embarrassing the legal community and authorities. Houses are stripped of evidence and the Watch disposes of all traces of what was going on. The Empire's cities often have cultist problems and the Watch is more adept at covering up these crimes than rooting them out in the first place.

The League becomes an outlawed organisations and life returns to normal. If the Player Characters continues to pursue the matter of the League and the Brotherhood, then Watchmen intercept them and rather firmly insist that they come for a quick chat with the Watch Captain. In a private room, they are told to forget about what they saw and heard, else they be the ones who are not seen and heard of again. He implies that the Watch has been ordered to orchestrate a cover up for the good of all, and this has been at the behest of the city powers which cannot afford the matter of Chaos worship in the judiciary system becoming public. Therefore the Watch is not going to tolerate adventuring scum bringing all their efforts to ruin.

If the adventurers have done good, they have been paid, they may have other looted booty on the side, and they are alive. They should be happy with that and not seek to be made heroes at the cost of bringing down the upper echelons of the city.

**The Danger In Our Midst!**

Good Citizens of the Empire, have you ever feared the stare of a wizard? Do you cross the road when you see a robed form coming your way? Did you lose loved ones or property in the Storm of Chaos? Do you trust Elves? Does it unnerve you to know that men with unknown goals are motivating forces beyond our knowledge and understanding? Does it concern you that the fell Daemonologists, Necromancers, and Chaos wizards that plague our lands were once unfettered by the law of normal Sigmar fearing folks? If you are concerned at this threat then come and support C.L.A.W.S.

**C.L.A.W.S.**

The Citizens League Against Wizards and Sorcerers

Good people of the Empire, last night's violence against out mutual enemy was not sponsored or organised by the League. Our peaceful protests and the campaign to have spellcasters made accountable for the villainy they perpetrate will always seek to stay within the law and therefore have the law of the people bring down our foe. A small fringe within our League tried to take matters into their own hands, and we cannot permit this, not even from our own loyal followers. These misguided men and women have been arrested and will be tried for their foolhardy and misdirected actions. I implore all those who would see our campaign succeed to refrain from any similar direct action. We must be patient and calm, and we will prevail.

**C.L.A.W.S.**

The Citizens League Against Wizards and Sorcerers

## DO NOT MEDDLE IN THE AFFAIRS OF WIZARDS

Or they will kill you and all those you love and curse your soul to an eternity of damnation at the hands of their Daemonic lapdogs.

The cowardly and treacherous attack upon a peaceful C.L.A.W.S. rally only goes to show that this deranged and violent menace to normal Sigmar-fearing folk must be stopped. Good men, women, and even children perished in sheets of flame when fell wizards of this decent city took it upon themselves to silence our voices. The authorities do nothing, and why? Because they are held at bay by fear of the very same wizards. Our Electors, our Emperor, all are dominated by spells to control the mind or just through threat of murder by undead and monstrous Daemons. The Empire is being strangled by these liars and petty despots who profess their servitude in our defence and then kill us when we do not agree with their dominion.

Rise with us, people of the Empire!

**C.L.A.W.S.**

The Citizens League Against Wizards and Sorcerers

Player Handout 5

*For the attention of Freidrich Streitsuchtig*

*We understand that you are a skilled orator who, it is said, is willing to represent worthwhile causes. I represent the Brotherhood of Judgment and we are concerned citizens who believe that those with the ability to manipulate magic are a danger to our city, our people, and the Empire itself. We would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you this evening, at the attached address, concerning our views, and the possibility of you accepting the post of president to a League that we would ask you to run for us to preserve our anonymity. You would of course be amply funded, and you yourself would be handsomely compensated.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Valberik Ziegel*

## League Proposals for Dealing with the Arcane Menace

1/ Those who practice the vile forms of magic start to mutate or otherwise develop distinctly unnatural characteristics. There should be a physical examination by a priest of Shallya every three months. This will nip the diabolic in the bud, and because such wizards almost always cause loss of life, the strictures of Shallya will offset the chance of any interference. All wizards must be licensed. Those practicing the magical arts should be sentenced to death. Any officer of the law should be able to demand a licence be shown and licences must be declared on entering any town.

2/ If a wizard is found to have embraced evil or Chaos, the authority responsible for issuing them their licence should pay a very hefty fee and handsomely compensate all those who may have been bereaved or orphaned by the actions of their fool comrade. They should also be forced to pay a monthly fine until they have brought the villain to justice, making them responsible for capturing or killing their own. Magic against magic, rather than local militia or Watch facing a Necromancer or Daemonologist. Because this hits them in the pocket, they will be far more energetic in their processing of potential wizard candidates.

3/ The license requires a co-signature, and should the wizard turn evil, then they are also responsible and should pay. Generally, this person is from a religious sect and this will make them more careful as to whom they sign for. With men of faith taking a more active interest in those they give a licence to, then this will be a great step in catching those who become diabolic, or dissuading them from that path in the first place.

4/ An Imperial Komission that will be comprised of non-spellcasters with an office in every guild and college of magic. They will keep an eye on things. Wizards must make a report on what they are researching and why. Eventually we will find out what sort of experiment tends to lead to disaster and then we can start having it banned rather than letting wizards who haven't bothered to see if anyone else tried it before just dive on in and then level part of a city.

5/ The scroll tax in Middenheim was a good idea. A tax on ingredients though is far more fair. Your average honest hardworking student has no need for Daemon brains and Dragon gonads in his work. Make the wizards, who are getting rich off their dabbling, give some of it back to the people.

6/ Heavy fines for any guild or wizard who teaches or passes information to those who have not passed through the system. A wizard teaching spells to another wizard without checking his license allows the evil ones to acquire lore years after their license has expired. Any wizard found to have taught a non-license wizard should be fined, their license revoked, their goods and chattels confiscated, and a jail term imposed. Is it too much to ask of the magic community to check and see a valid license before they teach 'the arcane sheet of doom that levels mountains to some strange wanderer passing through town with a bag of gold and nasty hiss in his voice?

7/ Any authorised Imperial agent or body should be allowed to commandeer the assistance of a wizard should it be needed. When local militia find a Daemonologist sacrificing and summoning with impunity, they should be able to call on the local wizard to help them if there is one, and not be dismissed out of hand because 'he is in the middle of something important. When the lives of Imperial citizens are at stake, then *that's* important. The same should apply everywhere. If a village is plagued with chaos sorcerers or other arcane monstrosities that cannot be fought without magic else great loss of life be sustained, well, rather than bankrupt themselves hiring protection or asking for Imperial troops to be sacrificed, why can't they just go to the nearest guild and get some wizards to deal with it? After all, the villain responsible was probably taught at one of their guilds in the first place. They have stores of magical weapons and defences, have the ability to smash regiments of troops with their spells, and yet when it comes to getting involved on a local level, they are just far too busy with matters of arcane and eldritch import. Those who refuse should have their license permanently revoked, incur heavy fines, and be afflicted with a jail sentence.

Player Handout 3

Player Handout 2

# “A System of Complex Signalling Machines”

**A GUIDE TO USING THE SEMAPHORE SYSTEM OF THE EMPIRE  
BY ALEXANDER J. BATEMAN**

One of the first great works commissioned by the Emperor Karl Franz, shortly after his accession to Emperor, was a collection of great civic works in the Reikland region of his birth, including, along with improvements to the roadways and canals, the establishment of a network of semaphore towers. These towers, which Karl Franz believed would allow high speed communication throughout the Empire, now radiate out from Altdorf along four main routes that run to Nuln via Castle Reikguard and Kemperbad, Marienburg via Carroburg, Helmgart via Bogenhafen and Fort Denkh via Bad Hohne and the Middenstag. A fifth route connects the fort at Ubersreik to Castle Reikguard via the village of Rottfurt.

Principally envisioned as a way of greatly increasing the military efficiency of the region's defenders, the semaphore towers were the brainchild of the ageing Reikgraf Kasper von Jüdel, who created them as a precaution against Bretonnian attack. The Reikgraf originally envisioned them as a network of communication towers connecting all the border forts with his offices at Castle Reikguard, although this centre point was quickly changed to Altdorf once the scheme achieved the backing of the Emperor.

This has proven one of the most ambitious and expensive engineering projects the Empire has ever known and the semaphore system was not only expensive to establish, but has also proved expensive to maintain. The Altdorf to Nuln run alone requires thirty towers, each staffed by two operators on full military pay with bonus, amounting to a wage bill of over 3000 gold crowns each year. In addition to this there are other running costs, such as the ever-growing maintenance bill. Due to these high costs, negotiations with Middenland and Talabecland to implement further routes have currently proved fruitless, although in the aftermath of the Storm of Chaos, the military success of the Fort Denkh to Altdorf route has greatly increased interest in such projects.

## A Tower

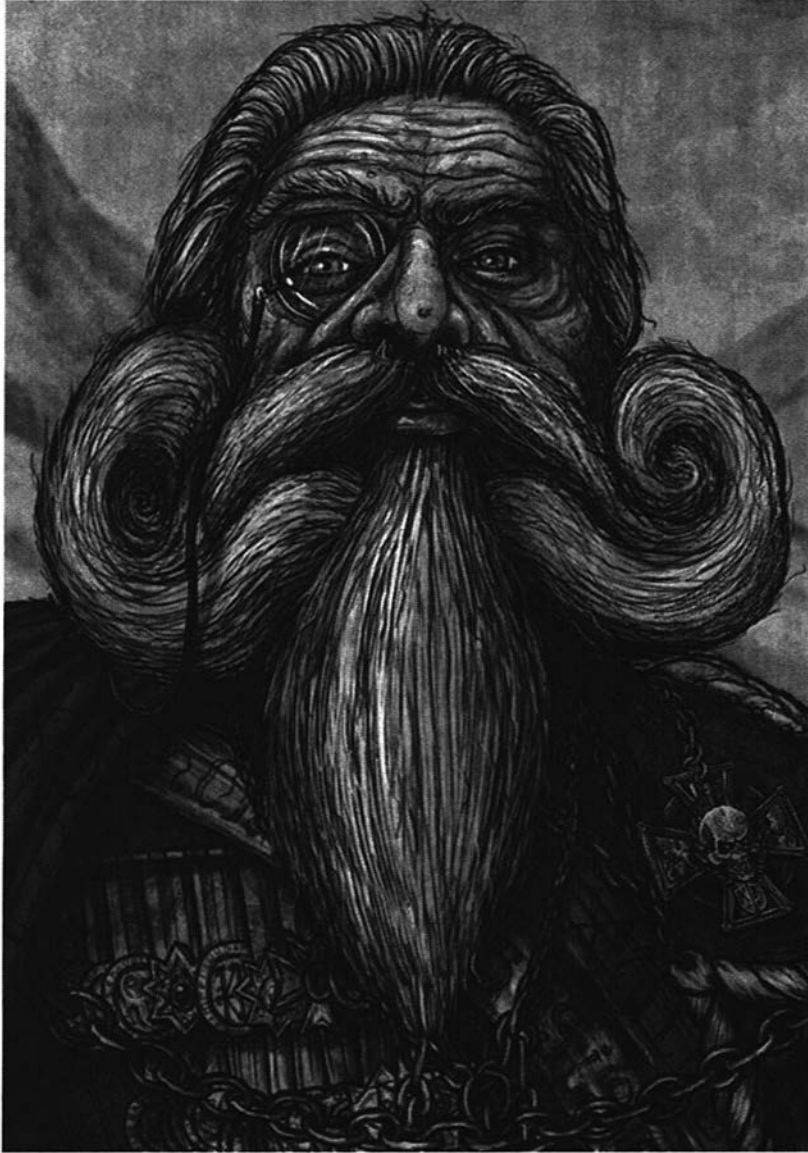
A typical tower is built upon a hill, with a three to five storey stone structure to raise it 75ft above the ground. Upon this rests a wooden scaffold, raising the signalling apparatus a further 25ft. To be operational, towers must be situated no more than ten miles apart, dropping to as close as six miles in unsuitable terrain. Most towers are designed so that the signal can be seen from both directions, with the signalling device extending upon a pole from the centre of the building. Others take advantage of the angles in the route and only have the signal facing in one direction, typically seen by two stations, both at angles from it. These towers contain the signal protruding from a covered hut built upon the scaffold on top of the stone tower.

The first of these towers were commissioned from members of the Dwarven Engineers' Guild of Altdorf, by appointment of the Emperor himself. The actual system of the Flaggenalphabet, used to transmit the signals, was created by the Dwarven Engineers' Guild of Altdorf refining a basic code of flag signals already in use by the Imperial Fleet. In addition to this the Dwarfs created a system where nighttime operation is theoretically possible, by the mechanism of a large beacon lit within the tower, which with mirrors and iron shutters, can be used to transmit simple messages. However this functionality requires the sending of a signal during the day requesting the semaphore operators stay at their posts after the usual hours, which not only limits the usefulness but is also more expensive.

Upon the death of von Jüdel in 2512, overall control of the semaphore system passed out of military control and came under the direct auspices of the Reikland Direktorat. This change reflected a realisation that the majority of semaphore traffic was of a commercial rather than military nature. This transformation was purely due to how useful the connection between Altdorf and Nuln became and the commercial

advantage first nobles and then merchants gained by using it. However this transfer of control created some issues, with the Byzantine and bureaucratic Direktorat operating in a far different way to the straight-forward and structured approach of the military. This change also marked a reduction in state funding, as the Reikland Direktorat attempted to transform the system from a financial military millstone to a profitable commercial service. This resulted in the later towers created under the auspices of the Reikland Direktorat being built under a policy of submitting the work for tender, which has reduced both costs and the quality of the work involved. However this decision of the Reikland Direktorat to employ typically Human rather than Dwarf labourers and engineers has not proven universally popular, and many a Dwarven agitator has taken to the streets of Altdorf or Kemperbad protesting over the situation. Some Dwarfs go further still, and occasional campaigns of tower sabotage still persist to this day, although the Dwarven Engineers' Guild of Altdorf has been quick to disavow any knowledge of those responsible.

As well as issues with the Dwarfs, the Reikland Direktorat also faces problems in Middenheim and Marienburg, where the semaphore system has spread into regions where the Reikland Direktorat has no official mandate to operate. It is principally these conflicts of authority which have



**REIKGRAF KASPER VON JÜDEL**

proved such a barrier to further expansion into the Empire, with Middenheim and Talabheim in particular wary of sacrificing any of their sovereignty to the Reikland. Several times since the route to Fort Denkh was constructed, angry mobs of Middenlander peasants have stormed and set alight semaphore towers, convinced that they were a symbol of the Ruinous Powers. Officially however, the Reikland Direktorat can take no action over this, as Reikland troops cannot operate within the Middenland, while the local nobility has not proved supportive in enacting any retribution upon the peasants involved. This situation has only served to exacerbate the

population of the southern Empire seeing these cities as peripheral backwaters, cut off from the news of the day.

Of course the Reikland Direktorat no longer manages the semaphore system directly. Instead the Direktorat created a Burgerlich Kommission to deal with the minutiae of the system shortly after its acquisition. Known simply as The Kommission of Semaphore and Signals, it is this organisation which is responsible for the employment of all the Signalmen, Scribes and Litigants employed by the system, as well as tendering out

to engineers the contracts to maintain and expand it. It also occasionally hires mercenaries to deal with issues, but as a representative of Reiksmarshal Kurt Hellborg sits on the board of Kommission directors, often a unit of the Reiksguard itself is sent to sort out any problems, citing the military importance of the system as the justification for their endeavour.

Within Altdorf's Amtsbezirk district stands the forbearing Kommission building, adorned with four great signal towers that seem almost constantly in use. This Gothic styled building acts as the hub of the communication system, with almost every message passing through it at some point. The structure bustles with activity, with four separate offices branching off the main corridor to deal with commercial messages along each of the four

routes, as well as other offices prioritising the messages of the various other Burgerlich Kommissionen of the state. The building also extends deep underground, here within the cellars of the Kommission offices is the scriptoria, where a team of scribes is employed to keep a record of all signals sent through the system and more importantly, by whom. These records are stored in the Kommission's vaults, along with various charts, maps and plans pertaining to every tower and tower route. These plans also contain cutaway drawings of the various engineering methods that have been used to drive the semaphore flags over the system's lifespan.

In each town that the semaphore routes pass through an office is established to deal with the many messages that need to be transmitted. These are bustling places that are often ludicrously overcrowded, with signalmen and scribes sat translating and transmitting messages almost constantly during working hours. The walls, desks and every piece of available space are full of books of ciphers, reports and quickly jotted notes. Anyone hanging around the office should be given the impression that they are constantly getting underfoot, obstructing the work of everyone from the head signalman to the Halfling pie man arriving with everyone's breakfast. Most offices will also have a few guards present, ranging in scope from several dedicated watchmen in Marienburg to a single ageing bailiff in Bad Hohne. By far the most secure of the semaphore offices is located in Castle Reikguard, where the office is actually housed next to Kasper von Jüdel's old offices, which are located within the compound of the Reiksguard Knights.

In each office is also located a member of the Reikland Treasury, the Chancellor of which is Count Siegfried von Walfen - "the Witchtaker". These so called treasury-men, (who are typically scribes or lit'igants,) have the responsibility of monitoring and preventing messages that spread sedition, treason or signs of obedience to the Ruinous Powers. Officially the duty of the treasury-men is taken seriously, as the semaphore system's ability to spread discord was proven during the Great Fog Riots of Altdorf, when subversives captured a signal tower in the nearby village of Gluckshalt and used it to send false news of the Emperor's death throughout the system and beyond. The ease in which these rumours spread shocked von Walfen, and lead to him making a concerted effort to make sure the same could never happen again. In reality, however, messages are typically so long and tedious that very few treasury-men

actually read them, although they may well decide to do so in the case of anyone unusual showing up and sending a message, typically so that they can censor out all mentions of the rats of unusual size. Minor cases of impropriety are most often overlooked, while anything a treasury-man deems suitably dangerous and urgent in content will typically be reported by carrier pigeon to the Reiksguard or local Witch Hunters.

### Flaggenalphabet and other Secrets

Each Imperial semaphore tower has two arms, each capable of being placed in one of seven positions. In addition the connecting crossbar can also be placed in four possible positions, resulting in 196 possible combinations. The first 100 of these are reserved for letters and punctuation, the rest are used for coded communication in a system known as Flaggenalphabet, which was partially based upon Dwarven Runic Script. Flaggenalphabet uses the remaining 96 symbols in pairs, resulting in a lexicon of 9216 phrases which can be speedily transmitted. This system was originally designed for the military, and because of this messages communicated in Battle Tongue translate the best into Flaggenalphabet. However recent pressure by lobbyists representing various merchants' guild factions has resulted in several new codes being devised for common commodities, following numerous incidents of incorrect prices due to items such as smoked herring being clipped to fish. Therefore messages in Guild Tongue can now also be translated into Flaggenalphabet with relative speed and accuracy.

Trying to transmit coded messages over the semaphore is problematic, as this means that the message typically cannot be reduced at all, leading to long transmissions taking many hours to relay. Errors also easily creep into these messages,

## SIGNALMAN

### BASIC CAREER

The typical signalman is a Human or Dwarf who is literate, mechanically minded and does not mind sitting on his own in an isolated tower for days upon end. When the Tower is situated near or within a settlement the signalman often has accommodation nearby whereas in more remote locations the signalman simply sleeps in the tower itself. Hours are long and dull, and the job is often perilous with undue attention being paid to signal towers by enemy scouts and ruthless brigands convinced that the towers must hold some form of treasure.

If you roll up a Toll Keeper during character creation you may instead choose to play a Signalman with your GM's permission. If you do so you may choose to have your character originate from Marienburg if you choose the option to have the Common Knowledge (the Wasteland) skill.

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I
+5%	+10%	-	-	+5%	+10%	+10%
A	Dex	Ld	Int	Cl	WP	Fel
+5%	+10%	-	-	+5%	+10%	+10%

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Engineering) or Consume Alcohol, Common Knowledge (the Empire or the Wasteland), Gossip or Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Battle Tongue), Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Secret Signs (Flaggenalphabet)

**Talents:** Linguistics or Marksman, Super Numerate

**Trappings:** Crossbow with 10 Bolts, Light Armour (Leather Jack and Leather Leggings), Telescope, Uniform and Semaphore Tower

**Career Entries:** Bailiff, Coachman, Messenger, Roadwarden, Toll Keeper

**Career Exits:** Engineer, Mercenary, Scribe, Soldier, Spy, Toll Keeper

with none of the signalmen able to verify and correct the message as it is being transmitted.

The secrecy of semaphore messages is a huge problem, as it transmits using large visible towers anyone within around ten miles of the route can see them. Although Flaggenalphabet is supposedly known only to the Signal Corps, a growing number of spies can be found watching the towers in the hope of obtaining significant information. Methods vary for dealing with this. For example the Imperial military often sends its orders accompanied with false information that can be identified and discarded by the receiver, while the Reikland Direktorat relies upon transmitting its secrets within huge blocks of bureaucratic information, in the hope that the sheer work involved in translating the whole message will make it simply not worth the time of any self respecting spy. Several notable Engineers' Guilds have attempted to solve the secrecy issue, the most notable being the SHARK<sup>1</sup> system of decoder boxes created by the Dwarven Engineers' Guild of Nuln. However SHARK and other such systems are still massively time consuming and error prone, resulting in there still being no way to reliably and quickly send coded information through the system.

**Sending a Message**

To send a message a character must first find a semaphore office. This should be an easy process, as it is typically one of the tallest buildings around. For example, in Wursthaim the signal office is located just off the village's market square, a stone tower of five storeys and the highest structure in the settlement.

Although Wursthaim is only a large village, its signal tower office still bustles with activity, with local sausage traders queuing alongside road wardens sending reports back to Nuln. Here too are many messengers, most of whom have rode out to Wursthaim in the hope that it will be quicker to send their message from here than to face the endless queues at the signal office at Nuln. The situation here is exasperated by the fact that Wilveidriaan Kopfgelder, the tower's head signalman, regards most people as unworthy of his time. Anyone who is not the equivalent to a Merchant or Noble Lord, or at the very least not able to present the seal of a powerful Merchant or Noble Lord, can expect to be stood queuing outside the building for quite some time, with their social superiors being allowed to 'cut in' as often as they need to. Street vendors, often Halflings,

**Clipping**

Messages get simplified en route if they can be; words that do not exist as distinct symbols within the Flaggenalphabet get replaced with ones which do. As the system is mainly geared to military or guild conversation, other subjects can be badly mangled. For example a wizard sending the message "Cast the ritual of awakening upon the body of Gorzon Stoneclaw when his head is hit by the first ray of dawn," will probably find the receiver only gets "Cast spell on Orc at 6am." This can obviously cause problems.

work the queue offering local sausages, hot soup or Ochsenvriit – a hot salty drink somehow made from oxen. Other traders sell lucky charms, fortune readings or offer games of chance, confident that people will be willing to do anything to briefly escape the tedium of hours of queuing.

Inside the tower things are chaotic, with the reception room taken up mostly by a desk where three scribes frantically write down messages before runners take them to the signalman above. Wilveidriaan deals with important clients by personally standing behind a scribe and criticising everything the poor man does. There is little to no privacy here, with everything said being heard throughout the office and probably quite a few in the queue by the door. Very important people circumvent this by demanding the office be emptied, further delaying everyone else. Two other scribes deal with received messages,

**Table 1-1: Semaphore Transmit Speed and Prices**

Language used	Transmitting Speed over 10 miles*	Cost per 10 miles
Battle Tongue	2 Words per Minute	10d a word
Guild Tongue	1 Word per Minute	1s a word
Reikspiel	2 Letters per Minute	1gc a word
Code	1 Letter per Minute	5gc a word

\*Note that these times are approximate at best and misleading at worst. Many factors may delay the message, ranging from an operator taking a five minute break to torrential rain stopping operation for the whole week. As with many things, the GM may assume that semaphore typically travels at the 'speed of plot.'

**Table 1-2: Semaphore Signal Loss**

Roll	Effect
01-05	Misleading: whether by malice or simple incompetence your message has been changed in transmission and its meaning has been totally distorted. The GM should substitute a new message of his own choosing.
06-10	Garbled: Your message is incomplete and incoherent; all that comes out at the other end is a nonsensical string of words and letters. If the message was transmitted in code it may take several hours to verify this has happened.
11-35	Major Clipping: Your message has been condensed for brevity, with any elaborate words being simplified, but apart from that loss of detail its meaning is essentially unchanged. Treat coded messages as garbled instead. Messages in Battle Tongue cannot be clipped further and count as a Perfect Transmission.
36-75	Minor Clipping: Your message has been clipped where it is sensible to do so, but is essentially unchanged. Coded messages however have large parts of their meaning destroyed and only half of the message gets through. Messages in Battle Tongue or Guild Tongue are not clipped further and count as a Perfect Transmission.
76-00	Perfect Transmission: The message is conveyed perfectly.

<sup>1</sup> See *Cold Warriors in Warpstone* 24

typically by standing at the door and bellowing the recipient's name to see if he, or more likely his messenger, is present. If no-one answers the message is placed in a large out-tray in the office, and awaits someone arriving, and queuing, for the privilege of collecting it. Costs are determined by both the length of the message and the language it was given in, with **Table 1-1: Semaphore Transmit Speed and Prices** being used to determine costs and how long the message took to be transmitted over the system.

In general, messages are sent on behalf of the rich and important. At any time the semaphore offices in important towns will be full of heralds and messengers representing Guild Houses, important nobles and even generals of the Empire. Therefore the idea that the vital business of commerce and state should be put on hold for some smelly adventurers who have just come from the sewers raving about rats of unusual size will be universally regarded as preposterous. That being said, typically, as long as they are prepared to wait until the very end of the queue, their messages will be transmitted, at the lowest possible priority.

All messages must be vetted by Hartwig Schenk the treasury-man before they are sent, but in practice this means he gives them a quick glance and passes them on unless he spots anything obviously seditious or forbidden. Wilveidriaan often gets involved in this stage as well, censoring anything he personally feels is unbecoming of being transmitted, although he would not dare censor anyone important. Another way to remove the possibility of interference, and indeed speed up the whole process is, of course, bribery. However, due to Wilveidriaan's ridiculously inflated ego he will require at least 10gc to even consider the simplest of requests, which may well be doubled in the case of anyone he regards as particularly unworthy of his time.

Once the sender has successfully negotiated all of these problems, he can rest knowing his message is speeding upon its way. This is not automatically trouble free, however, and the character should roll on **Table 1-2: Semaphore Signal Loss** to determine how successfully their message was communicated.

#### The Cursed Tower

The so called "cursed" tower number six on the Altdorf to Nuln route has always had a troubled existence. Built upon a ruined tower containing a secret laboratory and library of a necromancer known as Dagnar, this structure still attracts ghouls and other foul things. Additionally bad luck is said to plague anyone residing in the tower, regardless of how many times the local priest has been called in to bless or exorcise the building.

#### Using the Semaphore Towers in WFRP Adventures

Plots involving signal towers will often revolve around either intercepting or transmitting information. Typically this involves the characters either having to send vital information via the semaphore system or having to stop someone else sending information via the system. These situations are usually easy to work into a scenario, and will either be resolved via bribery, fast talking and corruption or alternatively by a good old fashioned punch up.

#### The Marienburg Towers

If anything highlights the transformation of the Imperial semaphore tower system away from Kasper von Jüdel's vision of a military warning system to a tool of trade and commerce, the fact that the tower system now extends to Marienburg is surely it.

In 2514 the burgomasters of Marienburg, seeing the advantages gained by merchants trading between Altdorf and Nuln, paid the Reikland Direktorat a substantial sum to extend the tower system from the Empire-sympathetic town of Kalkaat into the city of Marienburg itself. This expansion almost tripled the amount of signals transmitted each day, and it is widely known within the Direktorat that the fees paid by Marienburg merchants are what actually keep the system afloat.

Today the information transmitted through the semaphore system plays a vital role in ensuring Marienburg's economic dominance, and the burgomasters will go to great lengths to ensure its stability. Almost any of the plot ideas that involve working for the Reikland Direktorat could be run with the PCs working for representatives of the burgomasters instead.

Of course with the information transmitted being so vital, there are many merchants who could gain significantly from their rivals' messages being blocked or even changed to information which is slightly misleading. It is this competition that places Marienburg at the cutting edge of semaphore design, with merchants hiring inventors to create better codes, signals and anything else which may give them an advantage.

Remember that access to the semaphore is often restricted; it essentially sends messages on behalf of generals, important nobles and merchants of distinction, not a bunch of hooligans marching in off the street raving that they have to stop their Tilean crime lord from being assassinated. Characters that lack the obvious credentials (high military rank, an important sounding title or obscene amounts of cash) to send urgent messages may well have to run around and find a patron willing to authorise their message, which could be particularly problematic if many people would benefit from the victim in question's death.

Another classic scenario is the idea of a race against the system. The characters failing to prevent the villainous lawyer sending his scurrilous lies about the niece of the Mayor of Helmgart, must now race the semaphore using fast horses in the hope they can overtake the message and arrive at Bad Hohne before the Witch Hunters there can put her to death, all the time pursued by the local protagonists the lawyer has hired to stop them.

Using the semaphore tower as an actual location for a plot is also possible. Tower number six is not the only semaphore tower that was built on an abandoned building, and many towers could have cellar complexes or even barrows below that could need clearing. Alternatively the tower could have fallen into enemy hands, ranging from a band of Bretonnian herrimaults who have captured the tower in an attempt to sabotage closer Breto-Imperial relations, to a band of Orcs who have simply



captured the tower as a convenient fort to base their raiding from. Typically problems like this will result in the semaphore system ceasing to work and lead to fears that sensitive information may be being compromised. This would quickly result in the Reikland Direktorat hiring someone to go out and investigate the situation and then restore the tower to working order.

To turn the tables, instead of being employed to help the Reikland Direktorat, the characters could be employed by one of its opponents. Dwarven agitators, angry over what they will describe as the “backstabbing Elf-like actions of the Direktorat”, are setting up their own semaphore system, with the aim of commercially competing with the pointlessly-tall official one. However the Direktorat has hired thugs to break their equipment, and they need the PCs to guard their tower. Of course things are complicated when a bunch of Reiksguard Knights turn up to confiscate the very large demolition charge that the Dwarfs are storing in their tower.

Alternatively, for a less combat orientated scenario, the Bretonnian Council of the Brethren of l’Anguille could hire the characters. Always looking to equal or even surpass Marienburg as a trading port, l’Anguille sees the semaphore system as technology they desperately need to adopt. The players could be hired to broker peace with Claude l’Chappe in Marienburg, to try to woo him into working for the council. Alternatively they could be sent to have a clandestine meeting with the Dwarven Engineers’ Guild in Altdorf, who, if they were persuaded to forge an alliance with the Brethren of l’Anguille, would rock the Empire to its very core. Finally Duke Taubert of l’Anguille is probably going to be less than impressed by a series of strange windmills he does not understand springing up between l’Anguille and Couronne or Marienburg. This means that the characters could be hired by agents of the Duke to storm and destroy the towers, or even hired to stop a bunch of Bretonnian knights errant from doing the same.

Of course it does not have to be obvious that the tower is in enemy hands. Imagine a Cult Acolyte of Tzeentch sat in the Empire’s information system, occasionally subverting messages just enough to slowly bring his master’s plan to fruition. Alternatively he may feed sensitive information to fellow cultists who act as agitators, resulting in widespread panic as the various arms of the Imperial spy network try to clean house. Such a plot may take several sessions to uncover, perhaps starting with clues found on the agitators, leading to the corrupt tower and then leading to the Cult Magister behind the whole scheme.

Indeed the semaphore system as a whole is fertile ground for a more investigative style of play. The characters could be told that someone along a particular semaphore route is intercepting messages and be authorised to find out who is responsible and stop them. The problem here is the signal towers can be seen from miles around so the players could spend months combing the area for the spy unless they work out some way to narrow things down, perhaps by use of false messages to try to force the spy to act in a specific way. Alternatively the players’ investigation could start when they find a dead spy carrying a recorded semaphore message, which the party will probably

### The Kommission Council

The Reikland Direktorat appoints a council of nine who effectively rule over the Kommission of Semaphore and Signals. This is divided into three chairs held by representatives of the state, three chairs held by members of important guilds and three chairs held by members with specialist knowledge.

The chairs held by Reiksmarshal Kurt Hellborg, Count Sigfried von Walfen and Margrave Reinhart von Mackensen theoretically represent the Empire’s military, exchequer and nobility. In practice all three men are far too busy to attend any meetings of the Kommission, and send representatives in their stead. This is particularly true of Margrave von Mackensen, who insisted he was granted a chair on the committee in exchange for the passage of the system through his town of Helmgart to the fort based there. While Helmgart has gained immensely from traders, often Bretonnian, using the semaphore system, von Mackensen has little interest in expanding it beyond the Helmgart to Altdorf route.

The three Merchants upon the council theoretically represent the Reikland’s trading needs, but are actually heavily biased towards Altdorf. The outspoken Gustavus Seidehandler of the Altdorf Merchants’ Guild holds one chair, with the silk merchant Tomas Fahber of the Altdorf Mercantile Society taking the second. These two men rarely agree upon anything, with Seidehandler’s open contempt of the nobility clashing with Fahber’s sycophantic, if somewhat bitter, stance. Luthor Machholt of Kemperbad, an up-and-coming brandy merchant holds the third chair, and it is he who has been quickest of the traders to use the system to ensure a network of contacts throughout the Reikland, and is one of the few on the council who is actually dedicated to expanding the network, even when it relates little to his brandy business.

The University of Altdorf is represented by Professor Karl Friedrich Gaussenhagen, a military historian with a keen interest in both geodetics and engineering. Of all the council, Gaussenhagen is the most interested in expanding the technology, and offers a small reward to any student who comes up with any practical method of improvement. Graf Anishalia von Liebwitz is a somewhat distant cousin of Countess Emmanuelle von Liebwitz of Nuln. Rumour says that the Countess herself negotiated Anishalia on to the council, as a way of banishing her somewhat attractive and much younger cousin from the social scene in Nuln. Whatever the truth of these rumours, the Graf and Countess converse frequently through the semaphore system and these communiqués are said to provide much in the way of interesting gossip for those who transmit them. The final seat is reserved for Zakhazkal Zamaminson, the Master of the Dwarven Engineers’ Guild of Altdorf. However, as an act of protest, Zakhazkal operates an ‘empty seat’ policy, and has refused to attend or send representation to a single meeting of the Kommission since it first tendered the construction of a tower to Human engineers.

lack the skill to read. They then try to find out who the dead man was, who killed him and why the message he was carrying led to his death.

Finally, the characters may be on a more nefarious quest. The Tilean crime lord that often hires them needs them to break into tower six and substitute a message that his rival is sending for a message of his own. This requires the characters to break into the tower, incapacitate the guards, have someone with the Secret Signs (Flaggenalphabet) Skill send the replacement message and finally escape. Of course this is all complicated by the fact that ghouls are breaking in from the crypt, Bretonnian herrimaunts are assaulting the tower and the signalman turns out to be a Cult Acolyte of Tzeentch.

## NPCs

### HEIMAR GEBÜHR Signalman (Ex-Soldier)

Assigned light duty at the age of 45 after losing his leg in a



skirmish against Forest Goblins within the Drakwald forest, Heimar leads a quiet life at the remote Signal Tower Number 22 on the Altdorf to Nuln route. Between answering messages and working on the rather large and somewhat illegal still he has built in the tower basement, Heimar often spends his days chatting to

the adjacent towers during the space between official messages. Sometimes mistakes are made, and more than one merchant has been perplexed by the occasional insertion of phrases such as "So how is your eldest doing?" in his weekly herring price reports.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
38	42	25	28	37	31	36	26
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	13	2	2	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Animal Care, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Drive, Gossip +10%, Intimidate, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Battle Tongue, Guild Tongue), Secret Signs (Flaggenalphabet), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Hardy, Marksman, Mighty Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Sharpshooter, Specialist Weapon (Gunpowder), Sturdy, Super Numerate

**Trappings:** Crossbow with 10 Bolts, Crutch, Light Armour (Full Leather Armour), Sword, Telescope, Uniform, Semaphore Tower, 1d10 bottles of Contraband Firewater

### CLAUDE L'CHAPPE Engineer (Ex-Signalman)

A Bretonnian by birth, Claude l'Chappe fled to Marienburg at a young age, following some scandal with a Duke's second daughter, fifty feet of copper wire and an exploding wild boar. Investing what assets he had, he now operates a small workshop where he works on ways to revolutionise the semaphore system. Claude is a deeply morose and paranoid individual, prone to drinking vast quantities of Bretonnian brandy, firing employees on a whim and locking himself away for days at a time. Despite these personality flaws he is a brilliant inventor and many of the important merchants within Marienburg and beyond often make use of his services.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
39	49	32	32	46	51	41	37
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	15	3	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Engineering +10%), Academic Knowledge (Science), Common Knowledge (Bretonnia, Tilea, the Wasteland), Gossip, Perception, Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Battle Tongue, Guild Tongue), Secret Signs (Flaggenalphabet), Speak Language (Breton, Reikspiel, Tilean)

**Talents:** Linguistics, Savvy, Super Numerate

**Trappings:** Engineer's Kit, several cases of Bretonnian Brandy, Small Lab in the heart of Handelaarmarkt, various half completed projects all liable to explode.

### SIEMEN HALSKE Cult Acolyte of Tzeentch (Ex-Signalman)

Siemen always knew he was different, somehow apart from those in the village. As a boy he always came and sat on the hill for hours, a habit he continued when the men came those twenty years ago and built their strange tower with the strangely swaying arms. He abandoned his father's trade of cartwright to join the Signal Corps, marvelling in the secrets of gears, cogs and steam they taught him, before allowing him to return to his beloved hill, now elevated by its temple to science.

By studying the messages Siemen found a deeper message within them, confirming that science was the one true god and that Sigmar, Morr and the others were a lie. They promised him a prophet would come to save him if he did the good work,



and told him that the secret name of science is Tzeentch.

Now Siemen serves his dark master by perverting messages and spreading words of truth to the faithful. Science has rewarded him with an additional purple eye in the middle of his forehead that allows him to better see the semaphore, and he hides this under his hat when outsiders are about.

**Talents:** Ambidextrous, Controlled Corruption, Coolheaded, Dark Magic, Dealmaker, Etiquette, Inured to Chaos, Linguistics, Petty Magic (Chaos), Public Speaking, Resistance to Magic, Savvy, Schemer, Suave, Super Numerate, Very Resilient

**Mutations:** Third Eye ( +5% bonus to all vision-based Perception Tests)

**Trappings:** Crossbow with 10 Bolts, Wavy Bladed Dagger, Light Armour (Leather Jack and Leather Leggings), Uniform, Low-brimmed Hat, Best Quality Cult Vestments, Telescope, Religious Symbol of Tzeentch and Semaphore Tower

SP

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
38	40	27	29	41	54	37	53
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	2	2	4	1	4	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Daemonology, Engineering, Law), Arcane Language (Daemonic), Channelling, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire, the Wasteland), Disguise, Evaluate, Gossip, Magical Sense, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Battle Tongue, Guild Tongue), Secret Signs (Flaggenalphabet), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**But we are not in the Reikland!**

Just because you are not in the Reikland, does not mean that you cannot use semaphore. Following its success during the Storm of Chaos, Middenheim or Talabheim could follow Altdorf's example and could either have the semaphore extended to their cities or simply set up their own system. Other cities could do the same; Kislev is a prime example of a country needing high speed communication, while Tilea is famed for matching Imperial technology. Perhaps most interesting would be a Border Prince campaign where the characters have to fund and build a system of their very own, with each tower costing over 4000gc, and staff to employ and train. This sort of project requires serious funding unless you wish to empty the entire coffers of your kingdom.

Skaven or agents of the Von Carsteins could also be good candidates for establishing a system of semaphore towers. Obviously this does not make a great deal of sense if you actually think about it, but both the Vampires and the Skaven are all insane anyway and any mere minions questioning their orders are asking for a very unpleasant end. This is a fantastic chance to get really creative with large amounts of bottled lightning, Warpstone studded mechanisms, strange necromantic technology and even more bottled lightning.

**WILVEIDRIAAN KOPFGELDER**

**Litigant (Ex-Signalman)**

Wilveidriaan is a short fussy individual who was promoted to



running the Wurstheim Signal Office due to a combination of his ability to defer to superiors and an utter lack of any mechanical or scientific aptitude. Extremely conscious of social rank and standing, as well as being versed in Imperial Law, Wilveidriaan gives the impression that he is the ruling authority in Wurstheim, constantly alluding to the fact that his signal tower put the village on the map.

SP

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
27	33	32	30	41	42	36	47
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	13	3	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry, Law), Blather, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Speak Language (Reikspiel), Consume Alcohol, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write, Secret Language (Battle Tongue, Guild Tongue), Secret Signs (Flaggenalphabet)

**Talents:** Dealmaker, Etiquette, Linguistics, Public Speaking, Savvy, Suave, Super Numerate

**Trappings:** Telescope, Good Quality Uniform, Book of Imperial Laws, Writing Kit, Purse with 2d10 gc

# BENEATH THE SURFACE

A Scenario by Michael Madsen



*Beneath the Surface* is a non-linear adventure set in the village of Elbing in the League of Ostermark but with a little work any small village in the Empire can do.

## The Central Plot

Three weeks ago the village priest Bernd Junghaans mysteriously disappeared and since then the village has been struck by some tragic accidents. A lot of gossip has flourished in Elbing but still no one knows the cause of the disappearance.

Bernd was killed by Andreas Kohl, a local horse merchant. The motive for the killing was jealousy as Andreas is madly in love with Bernd's wife, Frau Ilse Junghaans. After attacking the priest he panicked and went to his loyal henchmen, Felix Bühnenfelt and Jörg Bauer, and paid them to get rid of the body. Together Felix and Jörg dumped the body in a river just outside the village with heavy stones tied to the legs of the dead man. They did not know that Bernd was not quite dead and knew what was happening to him. Bernd sank to the bottom of the river and was taken by a submerged stream to a hidden cave in a rocky outcrop where he began to rot. The hidden cave is an old Skaven lair forgotten by the vermin kin. The combination of the wrath of Bernd's spirit and traces of

Warpstone has caused his spirit to rise as a revenant - an undead creature seeking revenge upon his murderers.

Felix was the first one who had a rendezvous with Bernd Junghaans. The mere sight of the rotten carcass of Bernd frightened him so much that his hair turned white and he lost his mind. Felix, now the village fool, spends his time drinking rotgut and talking gibberish to the people he meets. Bernd's revenge on Andreas Kohl is more sophisticated.

Bernd's spirit haunts the stables and causes terror in Kohl's horses. The stress and the presence of his angry undead soul has resulted in stillborn or mutated foals, which will lead to the ruin of Kohl in the long run. Jörg has not yet experienced a haunting but it will happen during the scenario.

What Kohl, and everybody else, does not know is that Frau Ilse Junghaans is a follower of Slaanesh and the brains behind the murder. Her plan is to cast a blasphemous Slaaneshi ritual that will give her mighty seductive powers. One of the ingredients for the ritual is the holy symbol of a murdered Sigmarite priest. Therefore she seduced Andreas Kohl and tricked him into killing her husband. The central plot of the adventure is to investigate the disappearance of Bernd Junghaans and prevent Ilse from completing her research and casting the ritual. She intends to perform the ritual at the next full moon in a ruined stone circle deep in the forest - she thinks the chance of success is greater if the ritual is cast at the right time in the right place. When the PCs arrive in Elbing there are seven days to the next full moon (Mannslieb).

There is no single entry to the adventure since no one hires the PCs to find Bernd Junghaans. The PCs have to observe, talk and interact with the inhabitants of Elbing and in this way discover the evil act. However, if the GM has inexperienced players, he may consider letting the PCs hear rumours about the excellent horses of renowned horse merchant Andreas Kohl, which he is selling very cheap. Another possible reason for becoming involved is that the PCs, while travelling towards Elbing, hear rumours of merchants being attacked by Beastmen. They could be hired by busy roadwardens to look into the matter or by a desperate merchant who has lost too many "Karls" to Beastmen raids. Once the PCs are investigating in Elbing you can easily involve them further in the other plots. Certainly, if the PCs are planning to leave Elbing then they can be confronted with the ghost.

If you would like to give your players more of a hook to get them interested then you could consider one of the following options. The PCs could be approached by Albers Junghaans, Bernd Junghaans brother. Albers is worried by recent correspondence from his brother. Albers tells the PCs that his brother was concerned about something he suspected was happening in the Elbing although he did not elaborate. Albers will offer a small reward if the PCs investigate and offer any assistance his brother requires. Another possibility is to have the PCs approached by Manfred Reifsneider who is a member of the village council. Reifsneider approaches them in secret and says he is worried about Bernd Junghaans' disappearance and that something does not feel right in the village although he cannot say what. He cannot offer any explanation for this but will ask the Council to offer a small purse to the PCs should they discover something.

### The Revenant

The angry spirit of Bernd Junghaans cannot find rest in Morr's realm before it has taken its revenge on the people who killed him. It will not rest before it has fulfilled its vengeful oath or a priest of Morr has ordered it to rest by prayer. The sight of the revenant is a terrifying one in the form of Bernd's bloated, rotting carcass fettered in rusting shackles. His hands have changed to sharp talons and a fiery, vengeful fire burns in his rotten eye sockets.

The spirit of Bernd becomes a revenant because of a strong desire for revenge against those it believes wronged it in life. The spirit does not get a divine insight, which is why Bernd is not haunting Ilse Junghaans - it simply does not know of her foul double-dealing. (It is possible for a revenant in a different scenario to focus its vengeance on someone who is actually innocent though a plain misunderstanding of the circumstances of its death.)

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	25	40	42	30	42	38	18
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag <sub>6</sub>	IP	FP
2	18	4	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Concealment, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Strike Mighty Blow

**Talents:** Natural Weapons, Night Vision, Terrifying, Undead

### Special Rules

**Rebirth:** If the revenant is killed before it has fulfilled its oath it will rise again. The only way it can be destroyed is by fulfilling its oath or by being laid to rest by a Morrite priest. It will rise again the next night. If those it seeks vengeance against are put to justice by others then the revenant will find the peace of Morr's cold embrace.

**Terrifying Appearance:** The mere sight of a vengeful revenant is terrifying. If the person, who the revenant wishes to kill because of its unholy oath, sees the revenant he must make an **Average Willpower Test**. Failure results in 1D5 Insanity Points gained, with 1 Insanity Point for a successful Test.

### Arrival in Elbing

The main reason for travelling to Elbing at this time of year is to head towards Heffingen to participate in the yearly horse festival. As a GM you could feed the players with rumours saying that they could earn money by selling horses at the festival. In Elbing they have the opportunity to buy horses from some of the local horse traders.

On their way to Heffingen they travel through Elbing where they have to stop for the night. They seek out the local tavern in search of food, ale and lodging. Elbing is a small village built along a single dirt track. The village consists of 35 half-timbered huts, houses and farms in various states of repair.

Elbing is a small village with a population of 56 adults, situated on *the veldt*, a large grass steppe perfect for horse-breeding which is the source of wealth for Elbing.

### The Village Council

The village does not have a mayor but a council that makes all the important decisions. The members of the council are Bernd Junghaans (Village Elder), Manfred Reifsneider, Laila Oppenfrantz and Dieter Brauer. When a vote is tied then the Village Elder's vote counts as double. The council has determined that if Bernd Junghaans does not show up within two weeks a new Village Elder must be elected among the members in office.

### The Staring Cow

One of the largest buildings in the village is the local tavern *The Staring Cow*. The two storey building is owned by Karl Lalderman. The lower storey has a central drinking and eating hall with a bar opposite the entrance. Behind the bar is a door leading to the kitchen where his wife Emmanuelle does the cooking. The upper storey consists of the private quarters of the Lalderman family (Karl 30, Emmanuelle 33, Elsebeth 9, Markus 3) and ten small rooms for rent.

When the PCs enter the tavern Karl is in a fretful mood. Emmanuelle has told him that something odd is bustling about in the basement where he keeps his supplies. He went down to look only to discover that some large rats have moved into the basement and turned it into their nest. Karl has always been frightened of vermin and he barricaded the trapdoor. Now he cannot get supplies. Therefore he lightens up a little when he sees the PCs walk in – hoping to strike a deal with them.

Karl will invite the group into the kitchen and tell them about the little problem of his. If they clear out the basement he will become a lot friendlier towards the PCs and offer free rooms and food during their stay.

Once inside the kitchen the PCs will see Emmanuelle talking to Hilda, a young pregnant woman. The young woman is crying and the innkeeper's wife is trying to calm her down. Emmanuelle gives her husband a sour look as he enters and the two women leave and go into a small privy next to the kitchen to talk in private. Perceptive PCs can hear parts of their conversation if a **Challenging (-10%) Perception Test** is made. Those who succeed hear the following:

*"...I tell you Emmanuelle – I sometimes wake up in the middle of the night because I'm freezing. Sometimes the air in our bedroom gets so cold that you can see your own breath – I have told Jörg to fix the windows but he says I'm being hysterical..."*

*"...last night the floor in our bedroom upstairs was soaked by water – even though it has not rained! I tell Jörg he is a pig and ought to clean up the mess himself but he just keeps telling me it ain't him and I can clean it up myself!..."*

The sudden drops in temperature and the traces of water were left by the revenant who tried to scare poor Hilda. This is part of the revenant's revenge on Jörg. If the PCs confront the pregnant Hilda she will be reluctant to tell complete strangers

the cause of her distress. In part because she considers this private and in part because she knows it will anger her bully of a husband. A **Hard (-20%) Charm Test** is needed to convince her to talk.

The PCs can talk to Emmanuelle once Hilda has left the tavern. She will tell parts of Hilda's story on a **Challenging (-10%) Charm Test**. Emmanuelle is convinced that the sudden drops of temperature and traces of water are due to the poor condition of the Bauer's house. She thinks that Jörg is "one lazy piece of man" only capable of bullying other people and knocking poor Hilda up.

### The Basement

The steep, wooden staircase leads into the dark and damp basement. On a successful **Challenging (-10%) Perception Test** the PCs can hear the rats. The rats have entered the basement by gnawing a hole on the outside of the tavern and will now fight to defend their new lair. There are ten giant rats (OWB pg. 95-96) in the basement.

If the PCs kill the rats they discover several half-eaten chunks of ham dangling from the ceiling. On a wine rack are twenty bottles of poor Bretonnian red wine and seven bottles of good Reikland Riesling. In some beer kegs they find two kegs of Averlandisher Doppelbock Dunkel, twenty bottles of rotgut, one keg of Bechafen Hefe-Weisbeer, one keg of Dwarven mountain stout and finally a keg of Bugman's XXX lager.

### Karl Laldermann

Karl Lalderman (30 years old) is a greedy, unfriendly person. He knows he has some power in the village by the fact that he owns *The Staring Cow*. He has a tendency to exploit others for his own ends and likes to think of himself as the king of Elbing. Karl knows the secret of the "Beastmen" raids near the village because he sometimes buys parts of the booty (mostly beer, wine and spirits). If he is confronted he will lie and claim that he was forced into buying it or the tavern would be burned to the ground by the gang.

As owner of the tavern he is an easy source of information about the people of the village. If the PCs spend some time drinking and gossiping in the bar Karl will offer some of the following rumours (particularly if the PCs have killed the rats):

- The village has suffered some tragic events lately. First the disappearance of Bernd, the village's Sigmarite priest, and lately the insanity of Felix Bühmenfelt and disappearance of the young Klausner.
- The hunter Jürgen Fitzanck claims that something large roams the nearby woods.
- Peter Oppenfrantz, the neighbour of Andreas Kohl says that Andreas' horses often make a lot of noise at night, like they are in panic. It is about to turn him crazy because of lack of sleep. (This rumour may be linked to the one about something roaming the woods.)
- Dieter Brauer the Brewer uses bad ingredients and pisses in the ale he produces. (This is false. Karl has a grudge against the brewer because he sells his ale to the people of Elbing, making him lose profit). If he thinks some of the PCs are the seedy type he may try to hire them into destroying the brewer's equipment as a lesson.

### The Drinking Hall

When the PCs enter the main room of the tavern there will be several locals, a group of horse dealers and the insane Felix Bühnenfelt.

Felix sits alone at a table drinking himself senseless with rotgut. Once a feared ruffian on the pay-roll of Andreas Kohl he is but a shadow of his former self. Together with Jörg Bauer he dumped the body of Bernd in the nearby river. One night nearly three weeks ago the spirit of Bernd paid him a visit which resulted in the loss of his sanity. Due to the rotgut he has lost his ability to see. If the PCs try to talk to him he will just reply with gibberish. If the PCs pass a **Hard (-20%) Perception Test** they will be able to understand the words "Bernd", "revenge" and "Morr". If some of these words are said to him he will repeat the words louder and clearer.

The horse dealers are a bunch of smart arses travelling from the city of Bechafen. They are loudly playing cards and drinking wine, and flirt with any woman who talks to them. Their stay in Elbing is to buy horses from Andreas Kohl which they have done before. This time he told them, in an unusually unfriendly manner, that he has none to sell. They are worried that he has found some other buyers as they could hear horses in his stable.

### Further Investigation

The PCs' first hours in the village may have unearthed some of the following pieces of information.

- The insane Felix Bühnenfelt says things like "Bernd", "revenge" and "Morr".
- Andreas Kohl, the horse dealer, will not sell his horses.
- Andreas Kohl's horses are noisy at night.
- Felix used to work for Andreas Kohl.
- The Sigmarite priest Bernd Junghaans mysteriously disappeared three weeks ago.
- Something large is roaming the woods.

What the PCs have learnt will dictate their further investigations. The following encounters describe key locations and encounters. A number of rumours are also given.

### The Horsefarm of Andreas Kohl

Andreas Kohl lives alone outside the village on his horse farm. The farm is in a generally good state of repair but signs of neglect are beginning to show. No horses are out grazing which is highly unusual this time of year.

If the PCs do not sneak in then Andreas Kohl will meet them with his blunderbuss ready demanding to know what they want. His henchman Jörg Bauer will stand behind him with a scythe. Andreas looks tired and does not want to chit-chat with the PCs.

If they ask him why he did not sell his horses to the horse dealers he tells them to mind their own business. If they make a more gentle approach Andreas will listen to them. If they are behaving sensibly he will invite them inside his home telling Jörg to get back to work. Inside he will offer them a drink and tell them a modified part of his story.

Andreas says that a most horrifying undead creature stalks his stables at night and is scaring the nine hells out of his horses. He has been trying to fend off the unholy abomination but it scared him too much and he had to flee. He will tell

### Rumours

- The meat from the butcher has tasted strange the last few weeks.
- I went out one night a week ago to scare away a fox in my henhouse and overheard a discussion between a man and a woman. I'm pretty sure the two were Andreas and Ilse! I did not know Ilse had an interest in horses! (If you feel this is too obvious then the PCs could notice this meeting.)
- When the hunter Jurgen Fitztanck gets drunk he usually starts talking about something large roaming the woods. It is the raiding Beastmen, I tell you!
- It is a damn shame for the Klausners! Losing their only child to the thingy in the woods...
- I'm sure I heard a child crying from inside the Klausners' house. Perhaps he has come back to haunt the place as a punishment for the parents for not looking after him!
- I tell you one thing, one day Ralph Wechsler is going to beat the shit out of Jörg Bauer. How long is he going to listen to his slander?
- I've heard that Ralph cut off his own foot to get a ticket home from the battles at Bechafen during the Storm... and a lifelong military pension!
- I tell you, Dieter Brauer's new brew "The Dead Horse" is capable of delivering a good kick – and it tastes good too!
- I tell you, it is the old hag in the woods who has taken the Klausners' child! Turned him into a pretty stew, I say.
- I'm owed the rights to half the money Andreas Kohl gets for his black stallion at the Heffingen market since his mare was mated with my stallion – but the son-of-an-Altendorf thug denies it!
- The fastest horses for sale in Heffingen are Karl von Reichmark's riding horses. They are almost silent because their hooves never touch the ground!
- I've heard that Felix Bühnenfelt lost his sanity in a game of Three Emperors Bluff versus a forest spirit!
- I've heard howling from the forest – it is from the hunter Jürgen! He is a child of Ulric.
- The church is the oldest building in the village and was built by the ancient Elves!
- Old Helmuth Pötz is a bit too fond of his animals – if you know what I mean.
- The miller puts sand in the meal to increase the weight!
- You can create mice by mixing some water and grain. Put it in your shed and wait for three weeks. Sometimes they are created faster!
- The local rooks in the forest are as smart as humans! Some say that the rooks in the rookery are the inhabitants of a cursed village.
- Jürgen Fitztanck, the hunter, likes to be praised for his marksmanship. This is an easy way to get a discount on his animals.
- Dieter Brauer wants to be the new leader of the village council. That is why he sells his ale so cheap – it is easier to be elected if you are popular!
- If you chew an oakleaf from an oak near the old stone circle with your right molars while you are saying a prayer to Mórr you will be able to put the living dead to rest!

them that the undead creature did not follow him and it seems only to be after his horses. It is about to ruin him since he cannot sell the terrified horses. Some of the horses have been scared to death and he had to sell them to the local butcher, Gert Pötz. He is willing to pay the PCs 15gc each if they can stop the unholy abomination haunting his stable.

Andreas does not tell them that he knows who the undead creature is and why it attacks his farm. He sees the PCs, as strangers, as a way out of his trouble without revealing anything. Andreas will not participate in the fight and tells them that he is too scared to face the undead creature again. The revenant will fight the PCs if they attack first and they will be its new enemies. It knows it will be reborn the next night and can continue its quest for revenge.

**Jörg Bauer**

Jörg Bauer (25) is a vicious thug who will do almost anything for money. He currently works for Andreas Kohl who pays him well but that is as far as his loyalty goes. He is feared in the village and he loves the feeling of power and respect. His only soft spot is for his pregnant wife Hilda Bauer. As Andreas' trusted henchman he knows a lot of his secrets (e.g. that he sells corrupted meat to the butcher Gert Pötz, he had an affair with Ilse Junghaans and killed her husband, the priest, out of jealousy).

Bauer knows that the spirit of Bernd haunts Andreas' stables. However, he has not yet seen the connection with the spirit of Bernd and the temperature drops and traces of water in his own house. Bauer has a dream of becoming the leader of the village's militia and therefore he often mocks the militia for being a bunch of sissies who would wet their pants at danger.

One day as he was doing a job for Andreas he saw the innkeeper Karl Lalderman sneak into the woods north of town (on his way to doing business with the gang of robbers). Bauer jumped to the (wrong) conclusion that Lalderman was having an affair with old Gerda Mümmelman. He now tells anyone who will listen, "Lalderman is having an affair with the hag Gerda. Since when has the road to Heffingen been through the forest, heh? Strange taste for older, ugly women, heh?"

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
45	29	44	33	40	28	42	39
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	15	4	3	4	0	2	0

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Gossip, Heal, Intimidate, Perception, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Coolheaded, Disarm, Resistance to Poison, Specialist Weapon (Parrying, Throwing), Street Fighting, Focused Strike, Strike to Stun, Strong-minded, Very Strong

**Trappings:** Knuckle-dusters, Sword, Buckler, 2 Throwing Knives in belt, Leather Jack (AP body 1, arms 1), Purse with 4gc 15/7

**Andreas Kohl**

Andreas Kohl, at 37 years old, has long been too selfish to marry. However, he is madly in love with Ilse Junghaans and does not realise that he was just a tool for her. He is crushed by the fact that she does not want to see him again but thinks she will come back to him when her conscience no longer bothers her so much. It is Andreas who has talked Jörg Bauer into wanting to become leader of the militia. He thinks that his own power in the village will increase if his lackey controls the militia.



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
36	45	37	34	44	50	51	41
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	3	3	5	0	2	0

**Skills:** Animal Care, Animal Handling, Charm, Common Knowledge (the Empire) +10%, Drive, Evaluate, Gossip +10%, Haggle, Perception, Read/Write (Reikspiel), Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Reikspiel), Trade (Horse dealer)

**Talents:** Dealmaker, Fleet Footed, Marksman, Savvy, Super Numerate

**Trappings:** Hand Weapon, Good Quality Clothes, Purse with 12gc 4/10 (in his house he has a further 20gc), 10 Scared Riding Horses in the Stable

**Ilse Junghaans**

Ilse Junghaans is a secret follower of Slaanesh. Her devotion to the Lord of Pleasure started when she was sixteen years old and a student at the university in Nuln. There she met other likeminded students and together they began worshipping



Slaanesh under the leadership of the tutor Bernhard Deschamps. The young students were easy to lead into corruption and temptation because all of them wanted an easy way to satisfaction and pleasure. The Chaos cult, "The Sisters of Instant Pleasure", survived in secret for a year until it met a violent and brutal finish when the witch hunter Klaus von Richter and his henchmen attacked the cult in the middle of an orgy. The cultists were burned at the stake together with Deschamps. Ilse escaped the pyre as she was bedridden that day.



As soon as she was well she left the University with some of Bernhard's unholy books and she has been studying them over the years. Junghaans is now researching a blasphemous ritual, The Awakening of Unquenchable Lust, which will make her irresistible and allow her to seduce and manipulate her way up the social ladder. Her unsuspecting husband Bernd and her lover Andreas were just pawns in her evil plan. Because she has seduced Andreas Kohl

she knows many of his secrets. Ilse thinks that Slaanesh is protecting her since Bernd is haunting Andreas and not her.

Ilse is obsessed with self-indulgence and will stop at nothing to gratify her inner secret desires. She is morally bankrupt but until now she has managed to hide her true personality from the villagers of Elbing. She is the beauty of the village and many local men send her secret admiring and lustful glances.

Ilse has a secret room in the attic of the village church dedicated as a temple to Slaanesh. Although no-one comes in to the attic she has hidden the temple with a rough, removable wooden wall just in case. The altar dedicated to Slaanesh is a large wooden four-poster bed. The bed is decorated with carvings of the sins of lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride. Junghaans keeps her blasphemous tomes hidden in a secret compartment in the headboard of the bed. Finding the secret compartment requires a **Challenging (-10%) Search Test**.

In the village Ilse plays the part of a widow in mourning and will talk to the PCs in a most obliging and friendly manner. If she discovers the PCs are investigating her she will abandon her plan until they give up. If they start investigating her house she will try to kill them in secret. If the PCs are closing in then she will flee the village and seek her revenge later.

The research of the ritual is almost complete and if the PCs do not stop her she will cast it in the stone circle at the next full moon in seven days. Afterwards she will leave the village

and head for Bechafen where she will try to seduce the elector count Wolfram Hertwig by the use of her ritual.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
38	37	34	29	46	62	32	65
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	3	2	4	2	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Daemonology), Channelling +10%, Charm +10%, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Disguise, Gamble, Gossip +10%, Magical Sense, Performer (Dancing), Read/Write, Speak Arcane Language (Daemonic), Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Aethyric Attunement, Dark Lore (Slaanesh), Dark Magic, Etiquette, Inured to Chaos, Keen Senses, Night Vision, Petty Magic (Chaos), Savvy, Streetwise, Suave

**Trappings:** Widow outfit, Townhouse, 7gc, various Slaaneshi Tomes, best quality Dagger, Religious Symbol of Slaanesh

**Mutation:** A total of four extra toes (2 on each foot)

#### The Gang of Robbers

A group of outlaws has its base in Elbing. The members of the gang are locals: Hansi Bertold the grocer, Karlo Lotti the Blacksmith and Berti Vogts the carpenter. Cautious and largely inexperienced, the group has only robbed merchants who travel alone. When they attack they are disguised as Beastmen which usually scares the merchants away without a fight. Until now nobody has been killed and the booty is so low it has not really attracted the attention of the roadwardens.

The gang attacks in the early morning when the light is low because their disguises are poor. They know that if the merchants see through their disguises they have to kill them. The gang go to *The Staring Cow* and talk with the travelling merchants over a beer or two to get the information they need. At night one of them sneaks into the merchant's wagon to remove possible hidden weapons in case the merchant tries to defend his cargo.

The gang has a secret hideout in the forest in an old abandoned bear cave where they store their booty, weapons and disguises. They hide the entrance with branches. Only one non-gang member Karl Lalderman knows of the gang. He buys stolen beer, spirits and wine from them to sell. Once a month he tells his wife that he is going to Heffingen to buy new supplies but instead he travels to the secret hideout where he stays for two days before returning home with a wagon full of stolen alcohol. The booty Karl cannot sell is sold in Hansi Bertold's shop.

If the party enters the forest the GM should make a secret **Average Perception Test** for the PCs. Success means the party discovers the tracks of a wagon. If the tracks are followed (**Easy (+10%) Follow Trail Test**) they lead directly to the secret

hideout. The hideout currently contains:

- 1 blunderbuss with the initials H.S. (Helmuth Schilling) on the butt. The blunderbuss was removed from his wagon the night before the gang attacked him.
- 2 weeks of rations (air-dried ham and fruit).
- 1 keg of Bugman's XXX lager.
- 2 large barrels of Reikland riesling from the chateau of Pieter van Haagen.

If the gang and Karl are discovered they will try to bribe the PCs. If the PCs do not take the bribe the gang will try to kill them, first by poisoning if possible, otherwise by a desperate ambush.

### The Old Hag in the Woods

In the forest lives old Gerda Mümmelmann. She was once married to a charcoal burner but he died many years ago. Gerda lives alone and is skilled in the use of herbs and plants and acts as the village's healer and midwife. Gerda has slowly withdrawn from village life and she is aware that many young people of the village fear her and she uses the fear as a way of getting peace.

Her little cottage is full of strange herbs, jars and bottles and small stuffed animals. There are also numerous woodcarvings of strange woodland creatures and men with antlers.

Sometimes mistaken for a witch, she is a follower of the Old Gods and particularly devoted to Rhya. If the PCs come to her house she will be wary but not unfriendly. If the PCs are friendly she will loosen up and offer them some food and drink.

She is a friend of Jürgen Fitztanck the hunter and is worried about his tales of something large lurking in the forest since she can sense it too. She thinks it is a creature of punishment sent by the Old Gods as a punishment for the villagers' decadent lives and lack of devotion. Gerda is aware of the location of the old stone circle in the woods. She once saw Ilse Junghaans investigating the stone circle and therefore thinks she is a follower of the Old Gods too.

She has nothing of value besides strange herbs and plants (which require Trade (Apothecary) or Heal skills to make use of). In her lean-to are the old trade tools of a charcoal burner and outside is a small pigsty with three pigs.

### The Village Militia

The village is protected by the local militia, led by Ralph Wechsler a retired, crippled war veteran from the Elector Count's army. Besides Ralph the militia consists of five part time local men: Günther Fitztanck, Manfred Reifsneider, Tobias Pötz, Heinrich Brauer and Tomas Brauer. They meet every Angestag to practise the noble arts of sword fighting, fire extinguishing and marching in step. It is not a burdensome job to be in the militia. Sometimes you have to follow a local drunkard home or calm down the foreign merchants.

### Ralph Wechsler

Ralph (41) is a hard working man and proud of his job which he takes very seriously, perhaps a bit too seriously for the villagers who dislike the discipline and the drill. He is a well trained soldier who served the colours of the Elector Count of Bechafen. Unfortunately he lost his left leg in a battle against

a band of ravaging Beastmen. Ralph is a bit of a charmer and is very fond of women. He thinks it is just a question of time before the Beastmen and mutants attack the village itself and not just caravans passing by. Furthermore Jürgen Fitztanck says something large lurks in the forest.

If the PCs talk to Ralph Wechsler he will be interested in

### The Ritual of Ilse Junghaans

Ilse has been studying the blasphemous magic of Slaanesh for years. She is currently studying a ritual in one of the unholy tomes she took from her teacher back at the University of Nuln.

### The Awakening of Unquenchable Lust

Type: Arcane

Arcane Language: Daemonic

Magic: 2

XP: 200

**Ingredients:** The defiled holy symbol of a Sigmarite priest murdered in jealousy or lust, one candle made from the fat of a person the caster has had sexual intercourse with, one victim.

**Conditions:** As the first step in the casting of this ritual, the caster must light the candle. In the second step, which must take place while the candle is burning, the caster and the victim must share sexual intercourse. Typically the victim is seduced by mundane means by the caster. The victim seldom realises that magic is being used, except if the victim succeeds a **Sense Magic Test**. However, victims with Sense Magic will typically be restrained during the sexual intercourse. The caster must wear the defiled holy symbol during the ritual but not necessarily visibly.

**Consequences:** If the Casting Roll is failed the caster falls madly in love with the victim.

**Casting Number:** 16

**Casting Time:** Minimum 30 minutes

**Description:** By performing this ritual, the inherent carnal lust of the victim is focused permanently towards the caster and amplified to the point of being virtually the primary consideration of the victim. The victim feels an unquenchable desire and will do almost anything to accommodate the caster.

The victim is not entitled to a **Will Power Test** to resist the ritual, but if the caster commands the victim to do something that is downright out of his nature, the victim receives a **Will Power Test** to resist his impulse to accommodate the caster. The victim is, however, still influenced by the ritual and will probably do whatever the caster instructs on another occasion.

It is possible for the victim to realise that his love is corrupted and that the caster is a follower of Slaanesh. It does, however, require a successful **Will Power Test** to act upon this information and a further successful **Will Power Test** for this act to be anything, but self-destructive.

foreign rumours and gossip. He is friendly and if he sees any potential in the PCs he will ask them to settle down in Elbing and join the militia. If they refuse he will ask them to teach his men some of their tricks.

He thinks Jörg Bauer is a real pain in the arse who is after his position. Wechsler would like to beat him up but he is afraid of losing his job. He knows that Bauer has powerful backing in Andreas Kohl.

Wechsler lost his leg because of an infected wound. As a wounded war veteran he receives a small monthly pension but it is nowhere near enough to keep him alive. Therefore he has settled down in Elbing as the leader of the militia. A bit of a ladies-man, Wechsler is looking for a wife and he will try to charm any female PC he takes a liking to.

**The Klausner Family**

Jürgen and Dorteia Klausner have spread the rumour that their child Tobias has gone missing. In fact they are hiding him in their basement as he has begun to mutate. Tobias bathed in the river in the forest and came too close to the revenant's lair. Long tentacles are beginning to sprout from his arms and legs. If the PCs find Tobias the parents will beg for mercy.

**The Creature in the Forest**

The hunter Jürgen Fitztanck will contact the PCs if they do not contact him. He is worried because he has on several occasions found some tracks of an enormous creature deep in the forest. He will ask them if they are able to help him kill it if he can track it down. He thinks the creature has taken the poor Klausner child. If they accept the mission he will join them and lead them to the spot deep inside the forest where he last saw the tracks.

The creature haunting the woods is a giant spider (OWB pg. 96) that has made a nest near the village. So far it has not killed anyone but it is just a matter of time.

Jürgen will lead them deep into the forest and start following the tracks. After a while gigantic cobwebs start to appear and it becomes clear to all what lurks in the forest. Some of the cobwebs have remains of large animals like deer trapped in them. The giant spider lurks until the right moment to ambush but can be seen on a successful **Hard (-20%) Perception Test** against the spider's Concealment. If the spider wins it attacks the surprised PCs from above. It will try to poison one of them and run away with him instead of fighting the other party members.

If the PCs outmatch the spider you can make it a mating pair. If the PCs kill the Giant Spider their reputation will increase in the village. There is no sign of Tobias Klausner at all.

**Jürgen Fitztanck**

Jürgen Fitztanck (25) is a quiet, shy person and a follower of Taal and Rhya. He likes to visit Gerda Mümmelmann since she is a devout follower too. He is unmarried and too shy to talk to younger women. When he finally makes a move he is always stinking drunk and starts talking about his bow and marksmanship – not the best way to find a wife.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
40	46	37	35	39	35	40	35
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	16	3	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Common Knowledge (the Empire), Concealment, Follow Trail, Gossip, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Search, Secret Language (Ranger Tongue), Secret Signs (Ranger), Set Trap, Silent Move, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Hardy, Marksman, Rapid Reload, Rover, Specialist Weapon (Two-handed), Very Resilient, Very Strong

**Trappings:** Good quality Longbow, 2 Animal Traps, Antitoxin Kit, Leather Jerkin (Body AP 1), Igc, Various Furs

**Bernd's Revenge on Jörg Bauer**

One night the revenant will come to the house of Jörg Bauer. The spirit will put its cold undead hands upon the belly of the sleeping, pregnant Hilda Bauer. Poor Hilda will start screaming and after a few seconds her heart will stop due to the shock. Jörg will wake up and when he realises what has happened he will start screaming and try to wake his wife. The revenant leaves the house laughing while it shakes its heavy rusty shackles.

The heartbroken Jörg cannot stand the loss of his wife and unborn child, and jumps out of the window with a rope around his neck. He is found dangling in the early morning. Bernd has taken his revenge on Jörg Bauer.

If the PCs investigate the bedroom of the Bauer family they will find traces of water on the floor and the body of the pregnant Hilda in the bed. She has the mark of a hand frozen upon her belly and a horror-struck expression upon her face. A successful **Follow Trail Test** will lead the PCs to the nearby pond where the trail disappears into the water.

**The Underwater Cave**

If the PCs follow the murky waters of the river they will find the cave. where the rotten corpse of Bernd Junghaans lies. The cave is an old abandoned Skaven lair. Still the lair contains small traces of Warpstone which PCs with **Magic Sense** might be able to sense. (For swimming and diving rules see WFRP pg.136 and *The WFRP Companion* pg.27.)

The water in the foot of the cave is infested with Reikworms (*The WFRP Companion* pg.28).

The spirit of Bernd Junghaans will stop haunting if it is taken to the surface and laid to rest by a follower of Morr. It is necessary to get hold of the body if the PCs want to put the spirit of Bernd to rest. If the PCs kill the revenant in battle it will rot away in a few seconds and return the next night. A character who witnesses the decomposition of the body must make a successful **Average Willpower Test** or receive 1 Insanity Point.

# The Great Nuln Tournament by David Perry

# Joust for Fun

*"O-yay! O-yay! Let it be known that Knights Crusader and Order of the Blazing Sun, with the blessing of her most righteous Countess, will hold a tourney at the Great Field on the Sigmarzeit and the preceding day, which will be proclaimed a holiday to celebrate this auspicious occasion. The tournament is open to any man, noble or common, who carries their plated armour and weapons upon their war-horse."*

*Nuln Town Crier*

As part of a very long running WFRP campaign, a situation occurred where a meeting of the Electors was called for. Political tensions being rather high at the time meant that strict rules were laid down about the size of each Elector's entourage, particularly their accompanying troops.

Nuln decided, if it was going to be restricted in its troops, it would compensate by taking only its best. For this reason Nuln's

Knightly Order was expanded to include The Knights Crusader. However to ensure that only the very best got into the Order (and to avoid offending various noble families by rejecting their sons) it was decided to hold a tournament to discover the finest Knights.

This left the GM with a difficult decision. He did not want to run every combat of the tournament blow-by-blow, nor decide the fate of NPCs who could become a vital part of the campaign with just one dice roll. Therefore a compromise was arrived at, a system that would allow for the excitement of the tournament without taking hours of dice rolling.

To ensure our involvement, each player was given several NPCs to play in the Tournament. What started with us story-telling each event as we saw it in our minds, became the swapping of boasts and insults in-character and eventually spun off into vendettas and plotting as the NPCs interacted with each other in ways we never imagined.

Hence the tournament is meant as not just a set of rules that can be used in this and other tournaments but as a free-form scenario in which your PCs can take part in any way desired. As well as several sub-plots, also included are other competitors for the PCs to interact with and perhaps to inspire new plot ideas for individual GMs.

*"It is a disgrace! I can trace my ancestors back through twenty generations of knighthood and now... and now... I have to fight, to fight... this peasant."*



### Entrance Requirements

One of the things that makes the Great Nuln Tournament unique and which may attract the PCs' interest is that the competitors do not have to be nobles (although those accepted into the Knights Crusader will be knighted if necessary).

This is a rare opportunity for social advancement in a very rigid social system and should be grabbed with both hands by PCs with ambition.

The reason for this strange state of affairs is that the tournament has been arranged with the help of the templars of Myrmidia, specifically the Order of the Blazing Sun. The order insisted that all sufficiently skilled and honourable warriors should be given an equal chance of competing. The nobles of Nuln, seeing possible war clouds on the horizon and wishing to curry favour with potential allies, reluctantly agreed.

This is not to say the nobles have not tried their damndest to ensure that non-nobles cannot get in. They have made it an entrance requirement that all competitors must provide their own weapons, a trained war-horse and a suit of full plate armour.

If the PCs have this small fortune in gear and can pass several basic tests of warrior skill (have the Ride Skill, at least one Specialist Weapon Skill and at least 45 in BS and WS) then they are in.

If they do not have the gear but are desperate enough there are still options. Loan-sharks can be tapped for the money to buy this equipment, at massive interest rates of course. Rich patrons may provide promising young warriors with the right equipment, provided this favour is re-paid later. Both methods will prove highly dangerous if the PCs fail to qualify and probably even more dangerous in the long-run if they succeed. This is Nuln, where all debts and favours are collected, with interest.

### Timetable

The tournament is to be held over two days. It begins with a service, which all combatants must attend, led by the Arch-Lector of Nuln, and attended by all the other cults. Grand Countess Emmanuelle von Liebewitz and the Grandmasters of the Knights Crusader and Order of the Blazing Sun are also there. They will then inspect the competitors who are organised into a long line.

The events are split over the two days but overlap to some degree, so there is always something going on. The first day starts with the Sword and Shield event and the Wrestling starts after lunch. Fewer take part in the Wrestling, as many nobles consider it beneath their dignity, and so the event is usually the shortest event. The day finishes with the final fight of those events and the early rounds of the Rapier and Main Gauche event, although this will usually not get much farther before the light starts to go. The Countess disappears after watching the first fight.

The night is filled with feasting, drinking and celebrating. This presents lots of role-playing opportunities for romantic assignations, sabotage, assassination, drugging, boasting, bar brawls, drinking contests and generally a chance for the PCs to ruin their chances the next day by giving themselves crippling hangovers. The Countess holds an exclusive party to which

only the highest ranking nobles are invited.

The morning of the second day starts bright and early (probably too bright and too early for those who over-did the celebrating the night before) with the finals of the Rapier. The most popular event, the Joust, begins after lunch. Near the end of the day, the Countess and her entire court arrive to see the final rounds. The late afternoon will see the tournament wind up with the Grand Melee and the closing ceremonies, including the knighting of any new knights and the tournament winners' induction into the Knights Crusader.

### Organisation

All the tournaments, with the exception of the Grand Melee, are fought in the same manner.

The GM decides which contestants have chosen to enter that particular contest. Then they are divided into groups of four. Within each group every contestant must fight all the others. The two contestants who win the most fights will go through to the next round. (This may seem overly complex but it prevents contestants from being eliminated by one unlucky fight or good contestants eliminated by drawing the best fighter in their first fight.)

If there are three extra contestants, they will fight each other with the weakest being eliminated. If there are one or two spare contestants then they simply get a pass into the second round. When it comes to contestants getting a free pass into the second round the judges will invariably choose nobles.

In the second round the winner from each group fights the second man from the next group. The loser in these fights is eliminated. (i.e. The winner of Group A will fight the second man from group B. The winner of Group B will fight the second man in Group A.)

Assuming four groups, this will leave you with four contestants for the third round. The contestants then go to simple knockout fights (though try to square off contestants who have not fought each other yet, it keeps the crowd interested). The two knocked-out at this level each receive a wreath of ash leaves.

In the final round the two survivors fight. The winner receives a laurel wreath from a pretty maiden (and almost certainly a place in the Knights Crusader); the loser receives a wreath of oak leaves from a slightly less pretty maiden.

For the Grand Melee you simply put everyone in the same field and shout "Let's go!" Last man standing wins.

### Getting in

There are seven places open in the Knights Crusader. The winner of each event will receive one of them unless they display some truly dishonourable conduct on the field.

The other two are in the hands of the three judges. While possessors of ash and oak laurels will be considered, so will those with style, etiquette, finesse and popularity with the crowd. (Naturally any influential patrons the contestants have will also have great bearing on the matter.)

But be brave, honourable and impress the crowd and it could be you.

It is also known that impressive runners-up will be offered places in the Foot-Knights of Nuln's army. While this is a

military unit not a knightly order and so does not have the influence and prestige of the Knights Crusader it is still a chance for glory. Also it is well known that those who distinguish themselves in the Foot-Knights are often offered a place in the Knights Crusader.

### Playing the game

This is a tournament not a battle and so the manner in which the contestants fight is almost as important as how well they fight. Both the crowd and the judges are watching carefully and will approve of gallantry, fair play and restraint. Conversely opponents who crudely insult their opponents, fight dirty and lose gracelessly are going to be roundly booed and are not likely to catch the judge's eye. Similarly flashy swordplay, style, inventive manoeuvres and playing to the crowd will be almost as important as actual skill.

Most important of all however is that this is a tournament not war. Competitors are expected to accept an opponent's surrender or pull back if an opponent goes down. The armed marshals will, if necessary, pull contestants disobeying this away from their opponents. This sort of behaviour will almost certainly lead to being expelled from the contests and the destruction of their reputation in the eyes of the nobles and the common folk.

### Story-telling

The whole point of the scenario is to build the atmosphere and spectacle of the tournament in the PCs' minds. To this end GMs should use the dice rolls to make a story of each conflict. Describe the blows as they spill blood and break bones. Do not describe wounds as Light or Serious but as mere grazes or deep gashes pumping blood into the summer air. Let the PCs (particularly if they are taking part) know how the crowd responds to each fight, who it cheers for style and bravery and who it boos for cowardice and incompetence.

Have the PCs take the part of competitors who strike their fancy and have them describe how they see the blows affect the competitors they are playing and their opponents. Between yourself and your PCs build a picture of the battles and the interplay of all the competitors.

Do not be afraid to run all the fights; it may sound boring to do all the NPCs' battles but you will soon change your mind with your players running the NPCs and getting involved in the combat and the storytelling of it.

This can be particularly exciting if the PCs have their own reasons for wanting the events to go a particular way. A match involving Jurgen Eckhardt will be so much more involving to the PCs if one of them is still seething about the way the son-of-a-bitch pushed him into the mud just when he was getting on so well with that pretty countess. Or Guiseppe Alberoni's Joust will mean much more if the PCs have 100gc, borrowed from Nuln's nastiest loan-shark, wagered on his opponent.

Use the plots and personalities to give the PCs a personal interest in the events, whether praying for new friends, cursing new enemies or just looking for a profit.

### Combat made easy

Each combatant is assigned a Weapon Skill between one and

ten in the four weapons that the events will be fought in; Jousting, Rapier and Main-Gauche, Wrestling and Sword and Shield. Six is as an average Skill for the highly trained warrior.

*For example, Pietr Harlsdadt has Jousting-5, Rapier and Main-Gauche-4, Sword and Shield-8 and Wrestling-8. Pietr is a commoner seeking to better himself. A hardened mercenary, he is extremely capable with the Sword and at Wrestling but is much less familiar with the noble pursuits of the Joust and the Rapier.*

For existing Characters simply take their normal WS and round to the nearest ten, divide by ten, and add one. This Skill applies to all weapons the PC has the skill to use. If fighting with a

## Summary of Combat Rules

### Sword and Shield, Rapier and Main Gauche

1. Both combatants roll D 10 and add WS for event (on a roll of 10, roll again and add both rolls)
2. The loser is wounded, with the number of Wound Levels calculated on the difference between the rolls
  - 1-3: 1 Wound Level
  - 4-6: 2 Wound Levels
  - 7-9: 3 Wound Levels
  - 10 +: 4 Wound Levels

Add the Wound Level(s) to the current the Wound Level to find the Wound Level: 1-Light, 2-Moderate, 3-Severe, 4-Lethal (i.e. If a Lightly wounded character received 1 Wound Level, they would now be Moderately wounded).

### Wrestling

-30 on all roles on Critical Table

### Joust

Use the following instead of Stage 2 above;

2. 1-3: Glancing Hit: Horsemanship (Jousting) roll required to stay mounted
- 4 +: Un-horsed: Roll under TB or treat as Severely Wounded

### Combat Example

Gunther has a WS of 63. This rounds down to 60, which is then divided by ten to make six. Then add one to give him a skill of 7. However, he does not have the Skill Specialist Weapon – Fencing Sword and so his Rapier and Main-Gauche is only 4.

In the Sword and Shield, Gunther squares off against Lothar. Gunther has a skill of 8, Lothar has a skill of 7. Gunther rolls an eight for a total of 15 (8 +7=15), Lothar rolls a three for a total of 10 (7 +3=10). Therefore Gunther wins by 5.

As Gunther wins by 5 he has inflicted two wound levels on Lothar. If he had won by 7 or more he would have inflicted 3 wound levels on Gunther.

weapon for which he does not have the Speciality Skill half their score with that weapon. A character entering the Rapier and Main Gauche event must also have the Specialist Weapon – Parrying skill.

### Seconds Out

When the two contestants fight, roll a D10 for each and add their Weapon Skill to the total. Whoever rolls highest has won. If the contestant rolls a 10 then he rolls again and adds the result of the second roll to the ten and his skill.

For every three points the winner beats his opponent by he inflicts an extra wound level. So if he wins by one he inflicts one wound level, by four he inflicts two wound levels, by seven three, etc.

### Wound Levels

Every contestant has four wound levels: Light, Moderate, Severe, and Lethal. These are cumulative, so if a contestant receives a wound level he is Lightly Wounded, if in the next round he receives another two he will then be Severely wounded. A contestant cannot go beyond Lethally Wounded.

A contestant who is Lightly Wounded has merely taken heavy bruising and light cuts. Only the wimpiest contestants will withdraw at this stage (and you can bet they will be roundly jeered by the blood-thirsty crowd and have to endure the

contempt of their fellow knights).

At **Moderately Wounded** the contestant is starting to pick up some deeper cuts. However, in the martial culture of the Empire for a knight to withdraw now will still be seen as weak unless it is obvious he is completely out-classed by his opponent.

At **Severely Wounded** the contestant has suffered deep wounds. The GM should roll a D100 to determine the location and then roll a D100 on the Critical Table (WFRP pages 133) using a +2 Critical. This is the stage that all but the most driven or psychotic will yield the field to their opponent.

At **Lethally Wounded** the GM should roll a D100 on the Critical Table using a +4 Critical. Only the truly insane will continue fighting at this stage although to do so is to win the immediate approval of the crowd for sheer, raw courage.

### Toughness

Unless otherwise stated all contestants have a Toughness Bonus of 6.

## The Events

This is a **Tournament**, an expression of chivalry and knightly glory not just a fight and so there are certain forms of etiquette that must be followed for each event. Those not following the forms will be roundly booed by the crowd for their boorishness and will lose points with the judges.

It should be pointed out that the 'field of honour' will (in all but the Joust) simply be a roped-off square of land, with the outer edges patrolled by the marshals to keep the crowd back. Competitors may manoeuvre around the square as much as they want.

Competitors pushed out of the arena into the crowd are not disqualified, but are just pushed right back in, possibly with a few kicks if the crowd does not approve of their performance.

The Jousting arena looks just like it does in the movies.

### The Sword And Shield

In the Sword and Shield event the opponents will approach the designated area with weapons sheathed. Contestants may use any hand weapon and must wear full armour. On the marshal's command they draw their weapons and salute the marshal by placing the hilt of their sword to their nose, with the blade flat against their face and pointing upward. They then salute the crowd and finally each other.

The two then assume their standard combat stance. There



follows a short period where they can exchange boasts or threats. This is not found in any formal treatise on chivalry, but is a well-known part of any tournament. Here the competitors will try to psyche each other out or simply show off for the crowd.

The final part of the ceremony is the same for all the events. The marshal will raise his baton; when he drops it to the ground the contest begins.

### Wrestling

The Wrestling is unsurprisingly the least formal of all the events. Officially all that is required is a bow between the two combatants. Unofficially, however, as the competitors are bare-chested (and wear no armour) for this event both are expected to pose and display their muscles for the appreciation of the crowd (Fritz Schmidt in particular will enjoy this part of the tournament.)

Wrestling is run just like any other combat apart from an automatic subtraction of 3 (to a minimum of 1) from all the D10 rolls on the Critical Tables the contestant makes when they have suffered a Severe or Lethal wound. This is to reflect the lesser chance of inflicting life-threatening injuries.

Also, when a contestant takes a Lethal wound he is automatically knocked unconscious although he still must make the rolls to see what wound he has suffered.

### Rapier And Main Gauche

Combatants may only wear leather armour in this competition as it is about finesse and speed. With this event, the competitors' squires will arrive first on the field holding their masters' sheathed weapons. Then the competitors appear, the squires kneel and offer weapons to their lords who draw them from the scabbards, keeping the points downward.

The competitors will then turn and bow to each other. They will then bring their weapons up and assume a combat stance. When the Marshall indicates, they begin.

### The Joust

Jousting is slightly more complicated than the other combats and so requires different rules.

Scores are compared as normal. However if the winner beats his opponent by three or less he has scored a glancing hit where his lance has not struck his opponent's shield properly, merely bouncing off it.

If this occurs the struck opponent must make a Horsemanship roll. Basically he must roll equal to or under his Jousting skill on a D10. If he succeeds, he is rocked in his saddle but remains on his horse; if he fails he is knocked out of his saddle. If the character does not have the Ride (Horse) skill he is automatically knocked off.

If a contestant beats his opponent by over three he has scored a solid hit, striking his opponent's shield dead centre with his lance and automatically unhorsing him. The contest continues until one opponent is unhorsed or receives three glancing blows.

An unhorsed knight must make a roll under his Toughness Bonus or take a Critical as if they had just been Severely Wounded.

The Joust traditionally begins with the knight's herald

appearing and declaring his master's lineage and the great deeds he has performed. While this is important in priming them, the impatient crowd will inevitably boo heralds who drone on at length and their masters will be mocked for their pretension and vanity. A good herald can grab the crowd's attention (although the knight had better do something with it); a bad one can make a knight a laughing stock.

In the Joust the competitors enter from the opposite side they will joust from. They tip their lances to the Countess if she is present. They will then canter before the crowd towards their position. This is traditionally the time in which ladies can show their approval of their favourite knight by tying their favours to the knight's lance. This is always popular with the crowd, promoting much laughter and coarse jokes. It is also a useful guide to how popular each knight is with the ladies.

Obviously the more handsome and gallant the knight the more ladies will wish to support him. Some knights regard this as frivolous and will not slow down to allow it; others revel in the attention. (Indeed Guiseppe Alberoni's lance will practically disappear under the number of favours.) Many great romances have started like this and it is not unknown for certain morally lax ladies to attach notes with their favours, arranging assignations for later.

When the knights reach their end each will turn to face the other and dip his lances in a salute. Then when the marshal signals, they charge at each other. If both survive the pass they return to their side (perhaps gaining new favours if they did well) and prepare to charge again.

### The Grand Melee

For the Grand Melee things are a little more complicated. Because of the chaos of this fight the GM should decide how each contestant is going to fight. Are they going to fight defensively, try to avoid the main skirmish and generally hang back until most of the contestants have knocked each other out? Or will they fight offensively and dive right in where the fighting is thickest, to win the approval of the crowd and the judges.

Every round each contestant rolls once and adds Sword and Shield skill to see how well they are performing. Those fighting offensively add +5, those fighting defensively add nothing. The higher they roll the better they do. An average roll is 11.

Also every round every fighter must try to roll under their Toughness Bonus with contestants who are fighting Defensively subtracting 2 from the roll. If they fail this roll by 1 they suffer a Light wound, by 2-3 they suffer a Moderate wound, by 4-5 they suffer a Severe wound.

Yes, this does mean a contestant can do massively well in the same round as he is knocked out of the contest. In the confusion of the Grand Melee even the finest fighter can be blind-sided by a sneaky foe.

While all the contests should be made into a story by GM and players, the Grand Melee in particular benefits from an imaginative interpretation of the dice rolls. Describe how each contestant is doing; decide who strikes down whom after the Toughness rolls are made. These could be the foundation of life-long feuds and reputations so make it sound good.

As the Grand Melee is a free-for-all that can have only one



winner it is considered extremely low to make alliances before the fight begins. Anyone doing this will be removed from the event immediately. (That said in the chaos of the Grand Melee it is very hard to make out details so unscrupulous Knights may try this tactic. If the PCs want to go along with this, then fine, but remember that only one can win and at some point their allies will turn on them.)

### Wounds And Death

As the contestants at the tournament include the sons of some of the richest and most powerful families in Nuln the tournament is swarming with physicians and Priests of Shallya to ensure the minimum of casualties. For this reason (and for simplicity's sake) assume any non-life threatening injuries are cured between contests and the contestants will re-start the next event with full wounds.

However, wounds sufficient to be life threatening are trickier. While lives are unlikely to be lost, fractured skulls and internal bleeding are going to put contestants out of the tournament for proper long-term care. Similarly any roll that results in limb loss will mean limb loss. This doesn't necessarily mean that the contestant is out of the tournament. In play-testing, Frederick von Hummelaur lost his left hand in the Sword and Shield event and fought the rest of the tournament with his shield strapped to his handless left arm. Needless to say he was accepted into the Knights Crusader for sheer guts.

### Lethality

Lethality was an important question we considered when designing the rules. This was after all meant to be a tournament not a battle. On the other hand, tournaments are dangerous. People could, and did, die in them.

We have tried to balance these two points and felt we did. GMs who find it too dangerous should adjust it. Remember however, that this is not just a tournament for fun but a chance to join the most prestigious knightly order in Nuln and people will push themselves and risk their life for that chance.

## Contestants

These are the contestants who will fight in Nuln. Many of the contestants have individual abilities to represent their backgrounds. These are all explained and GMs are encouraged to come up with unique talents for any NPCs they involve in the tournament.

### Joseph Schielmenn – Jousting-5, Rapier-4, Sword and Shield-8, Wrestling-7, Toughness Bonus-7

A mere year ago Joseph was a stable-lad in the household of Count Jacob Corleone-Sigmar. Then the Count was required to travel to Kislev on a vital mission and Joseph was dragged off to look after the horses. In the white hell of Kislev Joseph went from terrified stable-lad to reluctant squire to hardened knight and (to his everlasting amazement) hero.

Joseph has the patronage of Count Corleone-Sigmar (one of the judges), a brand new set of armour and a burning desire to join the noblest order of knights in the Empire. He survived Kislev, how hard can this be?

While a little brash and over-confident Joseph is essentially a good man and will be one of the few nobles not to pick on the commoners.

### Maximillian Brackenberg – J-6, RM-5, SS-6, W-3

Maximillian is the son of an old and proud family now fallen on hard times. A young and idealistic knight, he is full of passion and energy and is determined to become a great knight and win honour for his family. Sadly for him, although well trained he has no actual combat experience.

Somewhat naïve Maximillian is easily led and needs a steady authority figure to look up to. If an experienced PC takes him under his wing he will gain a loyal friend for life. Alternatively unscrupulous PCs will find it easy to manipulate him to serve their ends.

### Johann von Speer – J-5, RM-5, SS-5, W-2

Johann's father is a rich merchant who purchased a title from a desperate noble family and sees his son's knighthood as a way to gain respectability for the family. He has ensured Johann has been trained as befits a 'proper' noble.

Johann himself finds all the fighting rather vulgar and would prefer to be studying but does not have the guts to tell his father.

Quiet, intellectual and refined, Johann will be teased mercilessly by the other knights and bullied by Jurgen Eckhardt. Johann could really do with a protector and his father is rich enough to make this a profitable job for a smart PC.

### Joseph von Marrs – J-8(9), RM-7, SS-4, W-3

Joseph is really Josephine von Marrick, the daughter of a Stirland noble who ran away from home to seek adventure and escape an extremely unwelcome arranged marriage.

Stifled by the limitations of what is considered proper for a woman in the Empire, Josephine loves the freedom and adventure of her new life and would rather die than go back to her stale, old life.

Josephine has only been in Nuln a few weeks but has already gathered a reputation for extreme fastidiousness by her refusal to change or wrestle with other knights.

Josephine is an excellent rider, which means that she receives an automatic +1 to her Jousting skill to resist being knocked out of her saddle *only*.

### Pietr Harlsedat – J-5, RM-4, SS-8, W-8

Pietr is the Guard-Captain for the household guards of the Grolsch family. He is entering the tournament under their orders (he personally regards the whole thing as ridiculous). They want him to win a place at the Elector's meeting and act as their eyes there.

Pietr is a tough, practical and experienced mercenary, although rather unimaginative. If he thinks a PC is also working for the Grolschs he will go out of his way to cripple them: That is his job they are trying to take.

Years of combat experience have hardened Pietr so that the first wound he receives in any fight is dropped down by one category (i.e. if he suffers a Severe wound this is reduced to a Moderate wound etc. A Light wound however will remain). In

the Sword and Shield event Pietr uses a flail.

**Wilhelm Krupps – J-7, RM-6, SS-8, W-5**

Wilhelm is the only son of a minor noble family. He is the archetypal 'Teutonic' knight: cold, formal and utterly ruthless.

**Guiseppe Alberoni – J-9, RM-8, SS-6, W-4**

Guiseppe is the cousin of Franco Alberoni, one of the most popular of the Knights Crusader. Like his cousin he is extremely charming and vain, a great ladies man and very fond of flashy swordplay and risky trick riding. He is very popular with the crowd and odds-on favourite to win the joust.

Guiseppe and his cousin Franco are two of the most popular figures in Nuln. Friendship with them is a ticket to all the best parties. Those who befriend him need the stamina of an ox, a liver of iron and be fleet at dodging the watch and angry fathers. Elastic morals are a must.

Guiseppe is so popular that no one has brought up the fact he bears a remarkable resemblance to a famous highwayman who has plagued the road to Altdorf recently.

**Hans Teuffel – J-5, RM-3, SS-8, W-8**

Hans is a common soldier who received his Knighthood during the Stirland campaign. Johann von Kliest, a Nuln noble and Templar of Myrmidia, gave him a field promotion and knighthood after he saw Hans single-handedly slay a Stirland knight. Hans will be wearing the Stirland knight's armour in the tournament as it is the only armour he has.

Hans is an intensely ambitious and determined man. He recognises that for someone of common birth his only hope for advancement is through battle and is determined to cut himself a path to glory and wealth.

**Fritz Schmidt – J-4, RM-2, SS-6, W-9.**

Schmidt is a handsome and strong peasant lad who has caught the eye of the widowed Countess of Sommersland. This doting lady looks forward to seeing her handsome hero win glory in the tournament and has provided his armour, gear and training.

Fritz is much less enthusiastic but the Countess wants him to compete and he is well aware of who pays the bills and so will do his best to keep her satisfied (pun intended).

Fritz is so strong that the first wound he receives in any fight is dropped down by one category (i.e. if he suffers a Severe wound this is reduced to a Moderate wound etc. A Light wound however will remain).

**Francis De Arragon – J-7, RM-3, SS-8, W-6**

Francis is an Estalian free-lance who wishes to be present at the Elector's meeting out of simple curiosity. He wanders the world supporting himself on his skills as a warrior and seeing as much of the world as he can.

Francis has never used a rapier in his life, hence his lack of skill with the weapon.

**Oswald von Kuhlman – J-4, RM-8, SS-6, W-7**

A duellist and high society fop, Oswald has entered the contest purely for the chance to pit his rapier against the best in Nuln. He really could not care less about joining the Knights Crusader



but cannot resist the chance to prove he is worthy of it anyway.

Oswald is a charming and light-hearted soul. PCs with similar attitudes and loads of money may find him a great introduction to Nuln's high society.

A bit of a lightweight Oswald will never fight beyond being Moderately Wounded in any contest other than the Rapier.

**Frederick von Hummelaur – J-8, SS-7, RM-4, W-5**

Frederick is a typical old-school noble. Raised from childhood on tales of blood and glory, Frederick regards a fight to the death as 'jolly good fun' and will regard maiming and killing for his city as just 'part of the game'.

To make matters worse, Frederick is almost pathologically determined to do better than his brother. To this end he will fight on even if at the point of death if he feels his brother is beating him.

**Ferdinand von Hummelaur - J-7, SS-7, RM-4, W-5**

See Frederick; the brothers are pretty much the same when it comes to personalities.

Ferdinand will use an axe in the Sword and Shield event. This has no rule effect but should be mentioned in descriptions of the fight for atmosphere.

**Maximillian von Radowitz – J-6, SS-7(8), RM-2, W-8**

Maximillian has entered the contest to show these sissy, effete, Southern, Sigmar-worshipping softies how an Ulrican fights. He is just itching to get out there and pound a few Sigmar worshippers for the glory of Ulric.

Maximillian will embrace any fellow Ulric worshipper like a long-lost brother and swear friendship. This is a mixed blessing as though a brave and loyal friend, trouble follows Maximillian like a faithful hound and it is a rare day he does not get into an argument or fight over something.

Maximillian has no idea how to fight with a rapier and intends to use it as a fist-load and punch his opponents out.

In the Sword and Shield event he will use two axes. Use the skill in brackets but add +1 to all Critical Rolls against him to represent the greater chance of him being wounded without a shield to protect him.

**Jurgen Eckhardt – J-4, SS-5, RM-5, W-6**

A Protagonist by profession Jurgen is a very nasty piece of work. A bully, a sadist and a cheat (and those are his good qualities), he loves his work and has entered the contest to hurt a better class of people.

Jurgen is loud, arrogant and vicious. He prefers to pick on the weak, striking from behind or with surprise. He will not be above trying to pick fights with the PCs (by tripping them, or ‘accidentally’ stumbling into them, or spilling his drink on them) near the marshals in the hope of goading the PCs into striking him and getting them expelled from the competition.

The crowd is well aware of Jurgen’s reputation and will boo him at any opportunity. Jurgen loves this and will seize any opportunity to play his role of the melodramatic villain to the hilt. Putting him in hospital is a fast way to earn the crowd’s approval.

If the PCs do not loathe this guy by the end of the tournament you are not playing him right.

**Steffan von Brunswick – J-5, SS-6, RM-7, W-3**

A foppish noble Steffan has entered the tournament purely for the chance to show off in front of the crowd. He is out for a good time and will enter into the contest with a cheerful and light-hearted air. While he will be the soul of chivalry and good manners he really does not want to get hurt and so will never allow himself to go any further than being severely wounded and then only if he has a good chance of winning.

**Erick von Bernstoff – J-7, SS-6, RM-5, W-6**

Erick is a professional mercenary and has been so all his adult life. However he has recently tired of the wandering life and wishes to settle down. He feels that if he wins a place in the Knights Crusader his reputation in Nuln will be such that he will have the pick of jobs among the noble families of Nuln. Then he will be able to pick out a nice, quiet job as a guard-commander and settle down.

A political innocent, looking for a quiet life. If he wins, Erick has no idea of the trouble awaiting him.

**Albrecht ‘The Boar’ – J-3, SS-7, RM-4, W-7**

An ex-pit fighter, Albrecht is a great favourite with the crowd, especially for his berserk rages in which he would hack his opponents to bits.

If it were not for the Templars of Myrmidia insisting that every warrior deserved a chance there is no way the nobles of Nuln would have allowed him in. As it is nobody is looking forward to facing ‘the Boar’ in combat.

A truly evil use of Albrecht would be for the PCs to be hired by his patron to keep him out of trouble between matches. Just think of the possibilities of having your PCs have to baby-sit 300 pounds of psychotic pit-fighter, in the most testosterone

charged atmosphere imaginable. If they accept the job they will also be blamed if he maims any important nobles, no matter how much the nobles had it coming by goading him.

If he reaches severely wounded he will automatically enter a Frenzy. In this state he adds +1 to all his rolls to hurt his opponents. However he is completely out of control and will almost certainly have to be pulled off his opponent by the marshals.

**Gephard Krausnick – J-4, SS-6, RM-6, W-5.**

Officially a retired caravan owner, Gephard is in fact an outlaw chief who has retired to the easy life on the profits of a life of crime.

Gephard is not that bothered about becoming a Knight Crusader; he has entered for fun (retirement is proving a touch boring to him). Also he cannot resist the temptation to compete as equals with people who would have him hanged if they knew his secret.

**Mattias Runkel – J-4, SS-9, RM-6, W-7**

Mattias is a mercenary with great battlefield experience seeking to advance himself. He is a quiet but determined man-of-action, rough but honest and a good man to have with you in a pinch.

Or at least that is what he would have you believe. Mattias is an agent of the Nuln assassins’ guild. The members of the Knights Crusader are the cream of Nuln society and as a member Mattias will be able to gather information that will be invaluable to the Guild.

## Scenario Ideas

### Living The High Life

**A Good Knight:** The most obvious way you can use the tournament is to simply have any noble or Free-Lance PCs enter the tournament to win glory for themselves (with the rest of the PCs acting as squire, bodyguard, spiritual advisor, valet, and so on).

However as well as fighting the other knights this is an excellent place for the PCs to make contacts that may help them later on. After all, the cream of Nuln’s noble society is fighting in or judging the Tournament. PCs who demonstrate skill, courage and honour will find themselves making friends with some of the most powerful and dangerous people in Nuln.

Of course contact with these people is not necessarily going to be a good thing. Anybody defeating one of the von Hummelaurs is probably gaining an enemy for life. And seriously hurting other competitors can start a deadly feud between the PC and their family or patron.

GMs should be careful about PCs winning, though. Joining the Knights Crusader is not a full-time occupation but they are at the call of the Elector of Nuln and are expected to keep themselves reasonably available. Most importantly they are honour bound to answer the call to arms whenever the Elector deems appropriate. No excuses accepted.

**Taking Sides:** This is Nuln though, where even the simple act of entering a tournament has political ramifications. Are the PCs content to serve the status quo, in which case they will

have friends and patrons among the Zeists and the Sigmars? Or do they wish to ally themselves with the competition, in which case they will seek patrons in the Grolschs?

This could be particularly vital if Pietr Harlsedat is eliminated from the competition, because then the PCs become the Grolschs' only contacts at the Elector's meeting and in the Knights Crusader in future. While this naturally makes the PCs more valuable to the Grolschs and so worthy of more payment it also makes getting rid of them more important to the other side.

Oh, and forget about being neutral. That just means you have no protectors at all. Everybody takes sides, everybody!

**Yes, My Lord:** Of course the PCs do not have to go straight into the big time. There are always openings for squires and servants. In this case however the PCs' job description will vary widely depending on which knight they serve.

Serving either of the von Hummelaur brothers will involve a lot of time preventing the brothers from killing each other. Indeed they will probably really end up secretly working for Lord von Hummelaur, preventing his two sons disgracing the family name.

Serving Guiseppe Alberoni will require PCs capable of tact and diplomacy and keeping their mouths shut. It will also involve as much discreet shuttling of young noble-ladies and bar brawls as polishing armour. It may even eventually involve contact with the worshippers of the God of Pleasure. This should present the PCs with a neat moral dilemma as they weigh their oath of loyalty to their lord with other moral concerns.

Serving Gephard Krausnick may well involve helping him cover up details of his illegal past and helping him maintain his contacts among the Nuln underworld.

I will not even go into what serving Mattias Runkel will involve.

**Red or Blue Blood?:** Just because the peasants are allowed in the tournament does not mean the nobles are going to give them an easy ride. Certain judges will seem distinctly biased and the competing nobles will not hesitate to let the commoners know what they think of them in great and insulting detail.

How this affects the PCs is up to them. Noble PCs who join in the insulting of the commoners will be more readily accepted by most of the nobles but may store up vendettas for later (Mattias Runkel in particular will note faces for later, lengthy vengeance). Noble PCs who defend the commoners will damage their social standing but may forge strong friendships with men who one day they may depend upon for their survival.

Common PCs may bond with their fellow underdogs under the nobles' harassment or form their own hatreds and vendettas for the arrogant nobles. If they dare answer back the nobles will return the hatred and definitely try to find a way to put the uppity peasants in their place.

Noble PCs may find Wilhelm Krupps will try to talk them into sabotaging some of the commoners, while commoners may find similar offers from Jurgen Eckhardt. Will the PCs submit to the temptation of dragging the tournament down in order to get revenge or fit in? Or will they risk the wrath of their fellows and report their scheming comrades?

These feuds may find expression in the tournament adding to the events with real hatred and desire for your opponent's death, and making them more lethal than anyone intended.

**Tragic Love:** During the joust a beautiful young lady will tie her favour to a PC's lance. The PC will discover after the joust that wrapped up in it is a message, arranging a secret meeting for late that night.

This can be a romance, as the dashing knight has captured the young girl's heart. But what is any good romance without some tragedy?

Perhaps her parents do not approve of her infatuation with some wandering knight? Then the PC will be forced to try to rise in rank or perform glorious deeds in the Knights Crusader in order to win her parents' approval, all the while continuing to see his lady in secret, with the ever present threat of being discovered hanging over their heads.

Perhaps she is already pledged to be married. Is the PC willing to defy her parents and risk a blood-feud with her fiancé? (Needless to say the fiancé should be a very dangerous man.)

Or maybe it's just a trap to get the PC in the clutches of one of the factions seeking power in Nuln.

#### Living The Low Life

**Herr Fraulein:** Agents of Klaus von Marrick approach the PCs with an extremely delicate situation. It turns out that his daughter, Josephine, has run away from home just before an arranged marriage. If this gets out the von Marricks will be publicly humiliated.

What is required is for some skilled and discrete professionals to find the girl and spirit her away and return her to the bosom of her family without anyone finding out she was ever gone. And quickly, as the arranged marriage is due to take place in a few days time.

The PCs will be provided with a portrait of her and the promise of a *very* generous sum of money, all of which is conditional on them getting her back without anyone realising she has gone.

Her family believes Josephine is in Nuln so all the PCs have to do is find her and get her back.

Finding Josephine is going to be the least of the PCs' troubles. Once they've figured out that the dashing, young knight Joseph von Marrs is actually the disguised Josephine von Marrick they then have to figure out how to snatch her from the middle of a group of the most heavily armed and aggressive warriors in the Empire, who, naturally, are not going to stand by while a nobleman is abducted by the lower orders.

Needless to say no one in authority is going to believe a word of the preposterous tale that Joseph is really a woman. The very idea!

**Evans:** The tournament is a great event and has naturally stirred up huge interest among the citizenry of Nuln. Indeed this interest has been deliberately fanned by certain parties. Now that the day has finally come they are ready to cash in on these feelings with the biggest illegal betting Nuln has ever seen.

As said parties have invested in creating all this interest it is only natural that they take the profits from this endeavour.

And Sigmar help anybody who thinks they can cut themselves in on the action.

To this end the Nuln Thieves' Guild is looking for anybody who can handle themselves to comb the crowd and remove any unlicensed bookies, particularly those bastards from Sudenland.

This is not just a muscle job. PCs accepting it will be required to ferret out the other bookies and then remove them without attracting the attention of the watch (who are present in large numbers on crowd control and will stomp flat anybody starting trouble in the crowd). Not to mention that the Sudenlanders have their own muscle squads out looking to protect their people by getting the PCs first.

This will not be a battle of gleaming swords but back-alley brawls and knives in the crowd and then away before the watch descend. This should be a secret war of assassination and intrigue all going on under the noses of the (hopefully) oblivious watch.

**Riggers:** Alternatively, smart PCs may see the tournament as a wonderful opportunity to make some money. And they are right provided they can avoid the Nuln Thieves' Guild's enforcers.

Really smart PCs may see a way to make money through betting heavily on the outsiders and then rigging the matches in their favour. How they do this is up to them but there are the standard tricks of bribing one of the stewards to disallow the favourite in one of the competitions, drugging other competitors or planting evidence that some of the competitors are using poisons so as to get them removed.

PCs can also play on the competitors' individual weaknesses to eliminate them. Letting either of the von Hummelaur brothers 'accidentally' overhear what the other brother said about him is practically guaranteed to start a brawl and get that brother eliminated from the tournament. As will letting Maximilian von Radowitz hear what (competitor you want rid of) had to say about Ulric worshippers.

On another tack Guiseppe Alberoni (the absolute favourite in the Joust event) can be prevented from turning up if the PCs arrange for a young, female admirer to distract him.

It should be pointed out that while successful use of this can net the PCs large amounts of cash they better hit the ground running as Nuln's Thieves' Guild is not going to take long to figure out what happened and they are not going to be happy.

**Morr Trouble:** The PCs should be happily watching the tournament when the crowd will suddenly part in front of them like magic and a mysterious robed figure will stride through the gap towards them. He will eye the PCs for a second and then gesture for them to follow him. Without waiting to see if they follow he will turn on his heels and walk away. Again the crowd will instantly part for him, indeed they will seem very eager not to get anywhere near him.

Any PC inquiring of the locals will be informed in reverent and terrified tones that that was the High Priest of Morr for Nuln.

Assuming the PCs are smart enough to follow they will be led to a secluded area where the mysterious figure will inform

them that he has been sent a vision by Morr. Morr has shown him that Mattias Runkel is an agent of Khaine, who cannot be allowed to enter such a prestigious group as the Knights Crusader. Therefore, he will casually inform the PCs, they will prevent this happening. Then without a further word he will walk away.

How the PCs deal with Runkel is entirely up to them. Assassination is a possibility but considering on whose behalf they are acting probably not wise. Exposing him as an agent of the assassins' guild will do the job.

Probably the PCs' best bet is to prevent him winning in the tournament. Smart PCs can drug his horse, sabotage his saddle or any other of a dozen dirty tricks. Although this should not be too easy, Runkel is an Initiate of Khaine and nobody's patsy. His gear will be watched at all times, perhaps even booby-trapped in various nasty, Khainite ways.

Of course getting caught doing this is going to land the PCs in huge trouble and strangely enough no one will remember the High Priest of Morr ever being seen with them.

Succeeding will bring no material reward but the blessing of a God is always valuable and a High Priest is a valuable ally and patron, particularly one as deeply involved in Nuln's politics. Refusing, well let us just hope your PCs are smart enough not to flout the will of a God.

**Watching It All Happen:** Of course on the other hand, the watch is massively over-stretched for the tournament and has decided to hire some plain-clothed help.

The watch is hiring adventurers to mingle with the crowd and deal with any problems they spot. While taking out the occasional pickpocket and mugger is nice, the big bonus will be if they can help shut down the huge illegal betting ring that is rumoured to be accompanying the tournament.

PCs will also be required to keep an eye on the contestants to ensure no smart-alec fixes the events as part of some betting scam.

Also, rumour has it that Mattias Runkel has some old enemies who might be after him, so they must ensure that he is kept safe at all costs.

Stopping muggers, the Nuln Thieves' Guild muscle squads, the Priest of Morr's hirelings and the odd adventuring group trying to cash in, all the while ensuring that the crowd behave and the nobles never find out about any of it, should give the PCs a full day.



# THE HAUNTING OF WESTENSEITE MINE

A Scenario by Toby Pilling  
Profiles by Alexander J Bateman

## A Ghost Story

*"If it wasn't for the cheap labour, the mine would have closed down years ago. And there's no labour cheaper than slave labour. Around Talabecland, that normally means Half-Orcs.*

*Sure, it's a harsh life for the slaves, and no wonder they try to rebel or escape now and again. 'Course, that's exactly what happened at Westenseite. Anton was the leader of a group of young firebrands who termed themselves the Strahlen. He'd been planning an escape bid for months, to free the whole compound. Weird thing was, turns out he'd been debatin' the rights and wrongs of bloodshed in the fight for freedom with the Shallyan priestess who tended the slaves. Maria her name was, but she'd sworn secrecy and wouldn't inform the camp commandant. No one knew that at the time, a 'course.*

*Anyways, fate kind of forced Anton's hand one day. One of the guards was beatin' a slave who'd collapsed of exhaustion, whippin' him to an inch of his life. Anton just lost his cool, roared in there and knocked the whip out of the guards hand, who straight away stumbled back to grab his sword, and - bash - knocked himself out on a rock! Damned fool. Both of them. I guess. Anyway, now Anton knows he's in for it, so before more guards arrive he smashes his manacles and flees into the mines!*

*Why, those mines were unsafe at the best of times, but Anton goes straight into the old workings, where the shorings were more wormhole than wood. A few of the braver guards chased him, but came running back a little while later minus one of their number, after a rumbling and a crashing signalled a cave in. Why, they were so coated with dust, they say they looked like ghosts themselves!*

*Where was I? Oh yes! So, that was that, or so they thought. But a month later, as the new moon rose, as the guards are escorting the miners into the tunnels, who came towards them from the inside but Anton! Or at least the ghost of him: they say you could see right through him to the tunnels behind. Of course, everyone fled. Who wouldn't? But there was a terrible stink. They tried to get back in the mines, but when the spectre appeared again, no one, guard or slave, went back.*

*Now, Artur, who ran the mine, knew he was losing money, and this could be the end of him, so to speak. So he sent to Talabheim for help, to get someone from the cult of Morr to*

*dispel the unquiet spirit. And who turns up to help? Ha! This is where the tale starts getting even stranger..."*

## The Scenario

Though it begins as an investigative scenario, events at the mine should soon require characters to utilise their planning, interaction and negotiation skills to the full. The conclusion of the scenario is rather free form, depending on the PCs' actions, and may well require the GM to improvise on occasion. The amount of combat will largely be determined by the PCs themselves.

## Involving the PCs

Pity the poor High Priest of the cult of Morr in Talabheim! Ever since the Storm of Chaos, the demands upon his position have rocketed. The war and a recent plague have led to a massive increase in the amount of bodies to be disposed of properly. Sadly, cracks are starting to show: where corpses have not been interred quickly enough with the correct rites, foul necromancers and other practitioners of the dark arts have come out of the woodwork to take advantage of such a rich harvest. Now he is inundated with claims of shades, spirits and shambling corpses, which take up even more time of his overstretched staff.

Still, whatever his problems, they are likely to get a lot worse, as he intends to entrust the investigation of the haunting of Westenseite mine to a band of adventurers. If they owe him a favour, or wish to gain one, such a commission should be simple to arrange. In an ideal world, a PC would be a priest or initiate of Morr. Otherwise, the monetary motive shall have to suffice. Either way, it would be wise to have the PCs known to him in some fashion before this adventure begins.

His advice is simple: Find out if there is indeed a ghost, through observation and investigation. If there is, try to find the body, and also determine the reasons why it has not departed to Morr's realm of its own accord. Doing so will help grant eternal sleep to any spirit so found. The High Priest intends to send a priest up in a few days, to tie up any loose ends and collect a fee from the mine foreman (though he neglects to tell the players this latter fact). Whatever the fee is, it shall be more than any the PCs receive.

### Adventure Setting

The mine's location is flexible, according to your campaign, but it is several days' journey from Talabheim, in a range of low hills. From a main road, the spur to the mine is not wide or particularly well kept. If GMs wish to use the adventure elsewhere, it is easily moved, though the status of the slaves may have to be changed to a race other than Half-Orcs. Similarly, if a GM does not want Half-Orcs in his campaign world, I advise using criminals, hobgoblins, prisoners of war or mutants as the oppressed group, though this will require some adaptation of the guidelines for the adventure.

### The Plot

Anton did not die in the cave-in. Wounded, he dragged himself from the rubble and wandered in the pitch black through forgotten passages until he came to a flooded area, which barred his way. Resigned to death, he took a deep breath and cast himself within, forcing himself along the submerged passage. Just as his lungs were about to burst from his frozen body, he emerged at the other end, where fresher air told him an opening to the outside must exist. He eventually stumbled upon an old ventilation shaft, and made his way up it to the sweet air and grass of the hillside. Even then, he would have entered Morr's realm, had he not stumbled at last upon the simple hut wherein the Shallyan priestess, Maria, resided. She tended his broken body and nursed him back to health, though the process was slow, and made slower by having to keep his existence a secret. As the days passed, her compassion turned to love, as did his ardour.

They began to plot the freedom of the other slaves, but swore to uphold non-violent methods. A dream came to Maria, in which she recalled that a holy relic of her cult was due to arrive in Talabheim. The Sacred Shroud of Sister Grunhilda had many legends surrounding it. Not only was it rumoured to heal the sick, it had protected Saint Grunhilda when under attack from Beastmen centuries ago: she had called upon Shallya, and her likeness had transformed into a terrifying vision, as if she were an avatar of the goddess herself. Did not the legends attest that a pure child of Shallya could once again gain such a blessing

#### *History of the Mine*

Centuries ago, prospectors discovered a vein of silver within the hillside. It proved very profitable with vast reserves, and soon the hillside was riddled with tunnels. Of course, all licences to mine precious metal were granted by Ducal authority, and in the case of Westenseite this eventually ended up in the hands of the von Krupky family. A few years ago, when the seam began getting thinner and thinner, Baron von Krupky decided to sack all the miners and work the mine using slave labour. However, even with such ruthless cost cutting, he derives slender monetary returns. Rumours constantly abound that the whole place will be shut down. No one is sure, or even curious, about what would happen to the slaves in that case.



of the Goddess at need?

Maria, leaving Anton to heal, journeyed to Talabheim, ostensibly for medical supplies. She felt she could not risk a request to her cult authorities being turned down, and that Shallya would understand and forgive any necessary deception.

Certainly, it was not difficult for her to enter her temple and 'borrow' the artefact.

On her return to the mine, she found Anton up and about. He had been exploring the hillsides for other ways into the mine, and had found another overgrown, long-forgotten and extremely dangerous ventilation shaft.

Together, they hatched their plan to try to force the closure of the mine. After a night of prayer, Anton donned the rather fragile shroud and infiltrated the mine. Putting all his faith in the blessed relic and Shallya, he confronted the guards – and his form became in their eyes that of a higher being of the spirit realms! In their ignorance they called him a ghost. And so the authorities called for help in laying the spirit to rest. The PCs are that help.

### Investigation

The PCs' efforts to uncover the truth and resolve any issues adequately are up against a strict time limit. That is because over the next few days several complicating factors shall arise.

**Complicating Factor 1**

A Talabecland noble owns the mine, and his son Stefan is due to arrive soon to investigate the sudden loss of revenue. A dedicated Templar of Sigmar, he sees the continued survival of the Empire as being dependant upon staying true to the tenets of his cult. In his eyes, this includes rooting out all goblinoid blood. If the mine is deemed uneconomical and closed, he's all for culling the Half-Orcs to cleanse their stain. He also has a few men-at-arms to back him up.

**Complicating Factor 2**

The theft of the Shroud of Saint Grunhilda did not go unnoticed. Though its loss has been hushed up, the frantic investigation to recover it has heard of the goings on at Westenseite. It is suspected that Maria's presence at both locations may well be no coincidence. A Shallyan High Priest is due to arrive to make some of his own investigations. He is still hopeful of sorting everything out amicably, with no public scandal. Some Merciful Knights of the Temple of Shallya are accompanying him.

**Complicating Factor 3**

Unless the party contains a priest or initiate of Morr, the priest that the head of the Guild of Mourners in Talabheim promised to send will arrive. Unfortunately, no more than a novice initiate could be spared, though he has been briefed on how to conduct burial rites. He's extremely nervous at this, his first assignment, and is terrified of making any mistakes (not least in collecting the fee for exorcism from the mine authorities). He is not being escorted by anyone, alas.

**Complicating Factor 4**

The erstwhile leader of the malcontent Half-Orc group who term itself the *Strahlen* is, as we shall see, in on the 'ghost' plot and awaiting events. He may think their leader has gone soft in the head, but is prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt – for now. Just in case the non-violent ploy does not work though, he has a very violent uprising and breakout planned for a few days time.

**Complicating Factor 5**

Anton's secret way into the mines was always unstable. Whether weakened through his exertions, a small land tremor, or simple ill fortune, the ventilation shaft will collapse completely at the end of the week. As the only viable infiltration point, one way or another, the haunting of the mine is going to end.

**Dealing with Half-Orcs**

Unless the PCs can build up a level of trust with the Half-Orcs, they are not likely to get far with any questioning. Not that their questions will be treated with hostility, for that would bring with it punishment. Shaken heads and some monosyllabic replies are what they will tend to get. To begin with, the PCs suffer from **-10% to all Fellowship Tests** with the slaves. However, for every kind comment, act or intervention towards the Half-Orcs that a PC makes, within sight or hearing of one of them, any party member shall gain a **+5% to subsequent Fellowship Tests**, up to a maximum of **+20** overall.

**Timing**

The timetable of events is a guide for GMs, certainly not a rule. It is perfectly possible that a good investigative party will quickly arrive at the truth of matters regarding the mine. In which case, GMs are encouraged to accelerate the rate the various visitors arrive at, even to the extent that several travel together and arrive the same evening. The attempted escape and Stefan's culling decision should, in that case, also be advanced.

**DAY ONE – AUBENTAG****Arrival at Westenseite**

Whatever the travel times, the PCs should arrive at the mine as dusk descends on Aubentag, weary after their journey. The sight that greets them is not an inspiring one. The log palisade that surrounds the slave compound dominates the vista, overlooked by the squat, glowering bulk of the hill into which the mine burrows. Some guards patrol the walkway, and pause to curiously observe the adventurers. The entrance to the mine cannot be espied, as it is within the compound, though at this time the heavy gate that bars the entrance is shut anyway. Set slightly apart from the gloomy surroundings, a large but slightly worn house is situated by the road, which peters out at its courtyard. Some shabby stables and outbuildings attend it.

The house (which is where they will be directed to, if they ask) is the home of the mine foreman, Artur Laurent, and his small staff. Visitors may be surprised that all the household servants are Half-Orc slaves. Most of them are fairly late generation and bear fewer obvious physical signs of their mixed heritage. These are the best-looked-after slaves here, and all are docile and loyal to their master. Artur is used to talking about them in the third person, and they all know their roles so well that he rarely has to address or acknowledge them.

Artur will be delighted the PCs are here, but may have to enquire where the priest of Morr he requested is. If so, it is likely he will be disappointed with their reply. However, he will treat them as honoured guests, lodging them here and doing everything he can to advance their investigation. He will also ask for updates on their progress at irritatingly regular intervals, though in a polite and (Artur feels) unobtrusive way. The truth, which the PCs may well fathom, is that Artur is terrified that his employers will come to check up on the mine personally, and blame him for its current closure.

That evening, he will hold a formal dinner for his guests, to which he invites his watch deputies and the mining adviser along too. Maria is also invited, but the slave servant sent to take the message returns with the news that she sends her apologies. It should prove a good opportunity for the PCs to interact with some of the main employees, and gain a few useful facts. Areas that might be discussed include the *History of the Mine*, *Anton*, *Maria*, *Anton's escape*, the *First ghost sighting* and the *Return of the ghost*.

**Artur Laurent**

A middle-aged Bretonnian, Artur was forced into exile as a result of some undisclosed scandal. Though a scribe and administrator, he was mere peasantry to the nobility of



Bretonnian, and still holds an abiding fear of that class.

Like all his compatriots he enjoys fine food and drink. As a native of Bordeleaux, his particular penchant is for wine, and he will bore all and sundry bemoaning the lack of any decent stocks within the Empire. His prized possessions are a few vintage bottles in the cellar.

His view of the slaves is that they are tools, nothing more, nothing less. He does not really see them as thinking individuals, and will be surprised if PCs remind him of the fact.

“But monsieur, they are not human, non?” will tend to be his uncomprehending reply. He therefore lacks any kind of empathy towards them. Having said that, he bears them no particular ill will. Tools they may be, but he is keen to have them protected and well serviced, for they are a valuable resource. He would not like to see them massacred – what would be the point? It would be such a profligate waste.

Perhaps Artur is living the fantasy of lording it over his own band of replacement peasants, whilst in reality he has voluntarily submitted himself to the employment of one of the most oppressive sets of nobles in the Empire, being unable to free himself from habitual bondage? Ah well, he’s not telling.

Though he is not a warrior, for reasons of vanity Artur has termed himself the Guard Captain. Most of the day-to-day running of the soldiers he leaves to his subordinates, Pieter and Tobias, the former being Bertand’s favourite drinking companion. As an administrator, he also knows little about mining. For that, he employs an old, crippled ex-miner, Johann.

#### Pieter Schrank

Pieter is from Talabheim, and is a tall, rugged, darkly handsome man in his early thirties, who exudes a certain brash charisma. He is also a sadistic bully and a liar. The insecurities that bred his unattractive psychology are bound to be heightened by the arrival of the PCs, especially if any are competent-looking warrior types. He is far too craven though to take out any frustrations on them; the Half-Orc slaves provide him with ideal victims.

Indeed, it was Pieter who brought Anton’s rage to the fore, through whipping an exhausted slave. Of course, Pieter will claim he was disciplining a lazy skiver, when he was cowardly attacked from behind and knocked unconscious. None of the humans here know that he knocked himself out on a low hanging rock. It is one of several myths that Pieter has constructed about his behaviour.

#### Tobias Taalson

Tobias is at least ten years older than Pieter, and is a lot more experienced. He is quiet and taciturn, used to keeping his thoughts to himself – a habit perhaps developed as a scout and outrider for various patrons over the years. He hails from Talabecland, and returned when his joints began to rebel against the cold and rain. He has travelled widely, including Kislev, and can speak Kislevarin fluently. Although this posting is a backwater, it pays adequately for now and is undemanding for the most part, which suits him well enough.

Tobias is very observant and perceptive, a good planner and



tactically competent. He could prove a most useful ally to the PCs, but his opinions generally have to be asked for, as he does not volunteer much. He had Pieter figured out as a bully straight away, but would not act disdainfully towards him in front of the men – that would be most unprofessional.

Tobias is one of the most humane guards here. He treats the slaves with respect, whilst not becoming over familiar with them, and does not tolerate cruelty on his watch. If extreme measures were proposed against the Half-Orcs, he might protest, using rational, valid arguments. He would find it difficult to betray his employer though, and would signal any opposition to their plans through a simple, dignified resignation from service.

### Johann Sondheim

In his sixties and still going strong. Well, as strong as a one-legged, one-armed man who's as crazed as a coot and as drunk as a judge. What he does not know about mining though could be written on the back of a Khornite's birthday card list. In his lucid moments, Johann can be quite profound. He may well be of use to the PCs for he is indeed a mine of information. Perhaps he is also the only one here who is not scared of the ghost. After all, he has been through worse; you try getting buried in a cave-in for four days, getting dug out, but learning you will have to have a couple of limbs amputated. Nowadays, Johann can laugh about the whole experience – with the aid of a bottle of Kislevite vodka.

#### Anton's Escape

There is little to add to the account that begins this adventure. The complicating factor is that virtually all of the humans believe (though Tobias has his doubts) the fabricated tale of Pieter. The slaves know the truth, though they will not mention what really happened in front of most of the humans, and so does Maria. She is probably the best source of the facts.

With regard to the cave-in, two of the guards and one of the *Gauners* charged after Anton. It was the Half-Orc who was crushed when the rubble came down, and the guards fled as fast as their legs would carry them. They did not exactly see what caused the cave in, as the *Gauner* was ahead of them out of sight. Certainly, they are not sure if the disaster was an accident, and suspect the whole escape may have been a murderous plot to slay them all – a misconception Pieter does his best to embellish.

## DAY TWO – MARKTAG

### The Slave Compound

A roughly semi-circular fifteen-foot palisade, about a hundred yards in diameter, contains the Half-Orc habitations. The camp is butted against the steep face of the hillside, so solid rock forms the other wall. There are four rectangular dormitories, each containing up to fifty individuals, of mixed gender and age. There is also a latrine block, a kitchen and eating area, a small school (thanks to the efforts of Maria) and a sturdy barracks building that houses the *Gauners* (Half-Orc wardens cum bully boys). All are wooden.

There's only one gate to the outside, always manned, and a curfew is strictly enforced after dark, with only one enforcer allowed out on patrol at any one time. Even he must regularly check in with the human guards on the palisade. The entrance to the mine is also contained within the camp, which is barred with a heavy metal gate, locked on the outside when not in use. Artur possesses one key, the other is held in the barracks of the *Gauners*.

Overall, it's a tidy, strictly functional place.

### Event – The School

The PCs will probably first meet Maria at the school, as this is where she spends most of her working day. There are scores of desks in the small classroom, attended by Half-Orc children of varying age. Generally Maria has a couple of female Half-Orcs as helpers. She teaches various subjects, mostly theology, history and literacy. Artur was not the only one to question the point of such an exercise, but it cost him little to set up, and it seems to keep the slaves happy. As he would say, "A happy worker eez a productive worker, non?" Maria is universally loved by the Half-Orcs; none have a bad word to say of her.

One room off the classroom holds a small shrine to Shallya, where devotees still manage to leave small offerings to the Goddess, despite their impoverishment. Another room contains a small surgery, where Maria dispenses what medical aid she can. Adequate supplies are always lacking.

If the PCs venture within, she carefully takes their measure, before asking if any of them would like to give a short lesson to the class. This could be on anything you as a GM decide, given her first impressions. So, for example, she may enquire if a Dwarf PC could tell the class something about his folk.

The children, who never get visitors, treat all the PCs with wide-eyed amazement. They generally listen politely, though a failed Fellowship Test may lead to some stifled yawns. Perhaps a cheeky one may even make a rude but amusing remark about one of them, to general sniggers.

Giving a short lecture though will create a good impression with Maria, and certainly be a plus point for the party's dealings with other Half-Orcs.

### Maria

From a mercantile family of Nuln and in her early twenties, not only is Maria attractive and intelligent, she is also caring, compassionate and scarily dedicated. She abhors the treatment of the slaves and wants to free them all, but only by using peaceful means. She's been storing what non-perishable food she can in her shack, but is aware of the shortcomings of the eventual plan she and Anton have concocted: even if the mine is closed, she does not know what would happen next. Still, it is a first step. Perhaps she can persuade Artur to release all the Half-Orcs? Or maybe, if the slaves all refuse to acquiesce in any forced move, he would be forced to free them? She is the sort of person who would throw herself in front of anyone trying to hurt any of them.

Artur tolerates her presence here, but is secretly fond of her. Pieter views her as a potential conquest – one he would like to humiliate in return for her continuing disdain towards him. Tobias feels a fatherly protectiveness towards her, and rather

admires her spirit. Johann is, well, Johann.

Be that as it may, her relationship with the PCs will be cordial and professional to begin with. Certainly, her attitude towards them will depend largely upon any compassion they show to the slaves, compassion she will attempt to encourage.

Until her plan is uncovered, she will advise that the best way to placate the vengeful ghost is to close the mine, thus removing the source of its ire. She will be curious for updates from the party, and will volunteer to 'help' when she can, which normally will involve merely observing and noting progress. If her plan is discovered, she will literally beg the PCs not to interfere and will use humane arguments to support her worthy goal. If she can enlist the PCs in her plan, or if they can improve upon it, she is only too delighted. Once her cult superiors arrive, she'll realise the game is up, but will similarly implore them to help alleviate the desperate plight of the slaves.

### The Mine

The workings are very expansive for a mine of this age, though

most of the tunnels are now disused, where veins of silver were traced and mined out. Players may note, with an **Intelligence Test** (Trade (Mining) or Trade (Engineering) Skills both add +20%), that the areas that are currently worked are very well maintained and sturdy; a fact that may surprise those who have met Johann. Indeed, he seems to become peculiarly rational when he is hobbling around the mine, and will tend to keep up a running commentary of improvements and alterations he is planning on overseeing.

There is no map of the mine within this adventure, incidentally. GMs can feel free to construct as elaborate a delving as they wish, though it should be noted that the workings are extremely convoluted. Beyond those being worked, it is a veritable maze. Here, the pilings holding up the ceiling are in various states of disrepair. Hearing and feeling the distant reverberating rumble of some section collapsing is a disconcerting but not unusual experience for all who work here.

Mostly, of course, the tunnels are in total darkness unless

they are illuminated artificially. Here and there, though, a phosphorescent glow does emanate from various algae and lichens that freckle the walls. This glow is faint, and can only be detected if all other forms of light are extinguished. Many of the disused tunnels are also partially blocked, only navigable by determined but painfully slow crawling.

It may be that the PCs decide to block all the unused tunnels, either collapsing them or building some form of obstruction. Johann will warn against the dangers of multiple collapses, but has no objections to barriers being erected. This will take time however, especially as the PCs are the only likely labour force. Such steps may inhibit Anton's movement; the extent of this is at the discretion of the GM.

### The Cave-in

Either Johann, Tobias, Pieter or one of the two guards who fled the cave-in can show the PCs to the area where it took place, though only the former two would be happy to do so. There is a lot of fear of the ghost – it is the whole reason the PCs are here, after all. No one has tried digging into the rubble. If it had been a human who had been buried, one imagines they would have tried somewhat harder. By examining the landslide, if the PCs pass an appropriate **Average Intelligence Test**, or just ask Johann, they should get the estimate that it is relatively safe now,



and that it would take about eight man-days to clear a passage to the other side (one Dwarf counts as two men for this purpose, they may be pleased to hear). Up to four can work at the obstruction at any one time. If there were four humans working therefore, it would two days to clear, two humans and two dwarves would clear it in a day and a third, etc. Tobias has other duties and Johann is not physically able to work, so that leaves the PCs. It will be hard physical work, with no possibility of extra shifts – ensure the PCs are thoroughly exhausted by the toil, if they choose to undertake it.

### *Stiff Little Fingers*

After half the rubble has been cleared, the PCs come across the gruesome remains of a body. Have fun describing how one of them, as they reach around a large rock for a better grip, clasps hold of the unmistakable stiff fingers of a cold, decomposing corpse.

“What a wasted life,” Johann will comment if present. “Still, he was nobody’s hero.”

It is the remains of the enforcer who followed Anton, a fact the PCs may surmise by the leather jack he wears. His club is nowhere to be found (he threw it at Anton moments before the collapse). For a formal identification, his body would have to be shown to some of his comrades in that group. One will probably make a coarse joke about how his crushed skull has at least improved his looks, to general guffaws.

### *Clear!*

Once the rubble has mostly been cleared, it will become apparent that there are no other bodies nearby. Perceptive characters (**Hard Perception (-20%) Test**) will find a trail of faint discolouration that might be blood. If they can follow the trail, it will lead them several hundred yards further underground, past various side tunnels, before it vanishes (Anton made a tourniquet out of clothing, tightened with the enforcer’s stave). From here, it will take about four hours to discover that all the routes and side tunnels that branch off are effectively dead ends (this takes twice as long if the characters did not discover and follow the blood trail). Splitting up, in good horror movie fashion, would save time of course. Sadly, doing so in this instance really is a good idea and does not lead to them all being picked off in the darkness one by one.

One of the dead ends though does not simply peter out at the end of a seam of metal or end in a wall of rubble. It instead is a passage that descends into icy cold water. Beside the water (**Easy Perception (+20%) Test**) a stave can be found, which seems stained with a dark, rusty colour – Anton’s blood.

### *Gulp!*

It was into this that Anton plunged when he had explored slowly and patiently all the other tunnels. He had no idea if he would emerge on the other side, or whether his last moments would be spent with the shock of cold, dark water filling his lungs. He is a very brave individual though, and realised he had no other choice left to him. The stave would only slow him or catch on something, he thought, so he ditched it here.

The length of time it takes to get through to air on the other side, where the tunnel rises again, is a full lungful. Any

character who enters the water can only remain within it if they pass an **Average Willpower Test** to begin with, failure meaning they immediately return and give up; It is bone-jarringly cold. They can try again tomorrow.

If they try swimming through, they will get a certain distance before their brain tells them that soon they will reach the point of no return; that is, if they keep going onwards, and there is no un-flooded tunnel to reach, they are going to die. It will require an **Average Willpower Test** to continue onwards, failure will mean an attempted return, with one **Average Toughness Test** (as per pg. 136 of the rulebook) as their lungs begin to burst. However, even if they fail it, they will not be forced to make another (and thereby risk drowning). Luckily, they do not know that.

Pressing on through the tunnel will require two **Average Toughness Tests** (again, as per pg. 136 of the rulebook). If both are failed – well that is it, they die: a fitting end to a foolhardy enterprise. Expenditure of a Fate Point will see them choking up foul water from their frozen lungs on the other side of the tunnel. Naturally, PCs may have various schemes and plans to aid any attempted submergence. I leave you to assess their effectiveness, as you will.

### *Beyond the flood*

It will take a PC two hours to find the ventilation shaft that Anton eventually escaped from. Does a surviving PC have a light source? If not, it will take them three times as long, even with the odd patch of dull phosphorescent lichen. A successful **Very Hard (-30%) Orientation Test** halves both times (-20% for those with Night Vision). The shaft itself can be found described under the section headed ‘The Hillside’.

### **Schlitz**

Schlitz is Anton’s deputy in the *Strahlen* group. He is the only one who knows the truth about the ghost, but has become the group leader in Anton’s absence. Schlitz is quiet, dour and tight-lipped. But what he lacks in social skills he makes up through his strength, cunning and courage. Less of an idealist than Anton, he does not scorn the use of violence in a just cause, and is keen to take vengeance on the *Gauners*, whom he views as treacherous scum. He was totally loyal to Anton, but that loyalty has been eroded somewhat since the mantle of leadership has fallen on his shoulders.

When Schlitz first saw the ghost, he was the only one who did not flee, unlike the guards and other Half-Orcs. Alone in the mine with Anton, they shared a long stare before his leader turned and walked back into the tunnels. The next day, Maria informed him that Anton was alive. Schlitz surmised, by the way Maria spoke of him that the two had become lovers. This made him strangely jealous: a feeling that has introduced some resentment towards his erstwhile leader.

Schlitz is aware of the ‘ghost’ plan, but is not convinced. To a certain extent, he is more realistic than Anton and Maria, for he can foresee that closing the mine will not necessarily end the bondage of the slaves. To that end, he has fashioned his own escape plan, though it only really caters for his own followers. The arrival of the PCs and the subsequent visitors has caused him to bring his bid for freedom forward. He

surmises, quite rightly, that the presence of a Sigmarite Templar bodes ill for his brethren. Though their presence complicates his plan, he sees it as their last chance, gamble though it is. At the very least, he intends to take out a few of the *Gauners*.

### First ghost sighting

By luck, or some other fate, it was Pieter who first saw the ghost coming out of the darkness of one of the disused tunnels. He screamed and fled, convinced that the revenant had come to extract vengeance on him alone. It is a feeling he still holds, though he attempts to hide the fact. Certainly, he is not going into the mine until he has some cast iron assurances that it is no longer haunted. Several Half-Orc slaves saw it next, who similarly fled, along with another guard and an enforcer who investigated the commotion. None, if questioned, can add anything particularly useful. Indeed, exaggeration is already occurring, consciously or otherwise. One witness is bound to say that the ghost bore horrible open wounds, proof of its crushing; another will swear a terrible moaning issued from its lips. Other embellishments occur as you see fit.

Schlitz is the only witness who stood his ground, encountered a silent Anton for a few moments and then loped back out of the mine after everyone else. He is not telling anyone his story though, and will simply lie and say he did not even see it. Tobias noted that he was the last out, though he does not see it as suspicious – someone had to be.

### Return of the ghost

Information from the second sighting should prove more useful. After much discussion, it was finally decided to send an armed party into the mine to investigate further. Pieter was happy for once to let Tobias assume command, who duly led a small group of guards into the tunnels. Anton managed to get behind them, and when he appeared the rear guard panicked. Fear soon took the whole group, except Tobias, but he could do little other than lead his men back to safety. He did catch a glimpse of Anton though, and noticed that the ghost seemed to be limping. He can put to bed any rumours of open wounds, a missing head, and so on.

The rear guard shot a crossbow at Anton, but did not wait to see whether he hit. He claims though that he saw the bolt pass right through the ghost – after all (he reasons) that is what must have happened. It certainly makes him sound rather more heroic, as well as a being a better story. If the PCs question him, they get to hear his tale, which is rather long and now well rehearsed. No one has been back in the mine since.

### Location of the sightings

Tobias can identify where they encountered Anton the second time. Investigating the scenes of the sighting will yield only one useful clue. Buried in a thick timber which supports the roof is a crossbow bolt. If it is removed there are no blood stains, but a tiny scrap of old, fragile, slightly off-white material is attached to it – a fragment of the shroud it caught. Anton did not notice the tear as he pulled away. The material bears few clues – it is not glowing and is not magical. There is some old, tattered sacking hanging around the mine as a curtain of sorts, which can offer a red herring, though the perceptive will

notice the difference in colour.

As for searching the mine's abandoned tunnels for a way out they may suspect exists, suffice it to say that in the timeline of this scenario they will have no chance. Johann can inform them of this, but if they choose to waste time doing so, by all means let them

### The Hillside

The hill upon which the mine is built is large and thickly wooded. Maria chose to have her dwelling built upon the hillside some distance from the mine because, as she will declare to any who ask her, the misery of seeing the compound every hour of every day would break her heart. Though she was warned of the dangerous folly of such a choice, her faith in the protection of Shallya does not yet seem to have been misplaced.

### Maria's cottage

Her cottage is a small and simple wooden affair, with a little herb garden outside and a kennel for Maria's dog, Rudi. It only has a ground floor, which consists of a few functional rooms. Since Anton has lived with her, the shutters for any windows are normally closed. If he is not within the mine, or travelling to or from it, Anton will be here. He always tries to enter or leave only at dawn or dusk and is very observant and careful. Rudi the dog has grown used to him now, but will make a din if it detects any intruders nearby. It is average sized: not a fighting dog or a trained tracker.

### The woods and other mine exits

Tracks do criss-cross the woods, established by animals over many years. Anton is pretty stealthy, but PCs who spend a lot of time searching may be able to detect the odd boot print or sign of forced passage into a deep thicket with some **Hard Search** or **Average Tracking Tests**. Scouring the area for lost entrances to the mine is a slow process, but it is possible to stumble across one. For each full day that a PC or group searches, in an area apart from any fellow searchers, they have a chance to discover such an entrance on a roll of a 10 on a d10. The presence of someone with experience working or living underground adds one to the die roll, as does anyone with Mining or Tracking Skill. Also add one for each day of searching after the first. Such a roll then allows an **Average Search Test** for each PC in that searching group, success indicating an entrance has been found.

There are three entrances to find, all of them largely covered by vegetation – roll randomly to determine which is found:

1. Anton's escape route – a narrow shaft leads into the ground, wide enough for an individual to clamber down. A normal Perception Test can indicate some faint blood stains on the rock inside. After a short while, the shaft opens into a tunnel, which is where Anton eventually emerged after his escape.
2. Dead End – another narrow shaft, leading into another tunnel. Several hours of exploration will indicate that all the tunnels hereabouts are blocked. Passing some **Hard Search Tests** will reveal the scorched remains of a small fire (where Anton kindled fire to light his

lantern) and the gnawed remains of his provisions – a rind of cheese.

3. The path of the ghost – Anton's eventual way back in is another narrow shaft. Passing an **Average Search Test** will indicate some muddied boot prints within it where his several journeys have left their mark. Within the tunnels, there are few clues on the right path. Anton has left a few markers to show the route, but has disguised these to be relevant to him alone. A PC with the Tracking Skill could notice some of these by passing a **Very Hard Perception Test**. A **Hard Perception Test** (Mining Skill +20%) will also inform characters that the area around the shaft looks very unstable. Three days of searching should find the way back into the worked part of the mine.

#### Event – Your Friendly Neighbourhood Slave Trader

Just before evening arrives, (or whenever the players retire to their quarters) a creaking and rumbling wagon arrives. It carries what can only be termed a large cage, within which are half a dozen downcast Half-Orc slaves. Werner Blindt and his bodyguard pull up by the manor and hail Artur. The two are well acquainted, and Werner has arrived to see if he can sell some new stock. Of course, with the mine currently closed, Artur has no funds to purchase any. However, Werner will attempt to tempt him with a particularly fine female specimen. The players will see that she is young, not unattractive, and displays no obvious signs of Orcish blood. Artur's lascivious interest is piqued, but he doubts the legality of her status. Werner proudly displays a certificate of authenticity, stating that she is one-eighth Hobgoblin, from the Kislev borders, a document signed by the relevant Boyar himself. Pieter has no doubts, so steps forward, offering five gold crowns to buy her for himself.

The players can only watch as she throws herself weeping at their feet, claiming, in broken Reikspiel, that she knows nothing of Hobgoblins, except that they raided her village in her great-grandfather's day, and that the Boyar was corrupt and declared the whole village Half-Orc, in order to seize their lands and sell them to slavery. What will the players do? Other Half-Orcs are watching, so impressions count.

Whatever transpires, Werner will stay for the night, before leaving the next day. Conversation around the evening meal will reveal him as a grasping man, totally lacking in humanity. It should be sickening to realise that the manpower shortages forced by the Storm of Chaos are making men like him rich.

He is interested to hear the mine is having problems, and makes sure that Artur is aware he is willing to buy slaves should the ghost, alas, force the closure of the mine.

#### Anton

Proud and passionate, Anton may look somewhat fierce, but there is a glint of intelligent discernment in his eyes. He is what would be described as a 'natural' leader. His words are measured and considered, his actions lithe and assured. Certainly, he challenges the Half-Orc stereotype.

He became acquainted with the teachings of Shallya through Maria, and as their love blossomed he decided that the mercy the goddess had shown him deserved repayment. He has

therefore forsworn violence. He sent word to Schlitz through Maria, but is worried that his deputy's patience is not boundless – a worry that will accelerate when the Templar arrives. He realises the ghost plan has shortcomings, but at least the closure of the mine would remove a death trap for his people. If at risk of discovery, Anton may attempt to flee or hide, but will not offer resistance. If he finds the game is up, he will submit with dignity, and is not shy about admitting the plan. He will try to take as much of any blame on himself, in order to protect Maria. If he feels the PCs may be somewhat sympathetic to his cause, he will appeal to their humanity and reverence to Shallya, beseeching their aid.

#### Anton's dream

The night after Anton had been blessed with the aid of the shroud for the first time, he dreamt of three doves on the roof of Maria's home, one of which flew away as he watched, with a feeling of beatific peace. The night after the second blessing, he dreamt again, and one of the remaining pair took flight. Anton now believes that he has one last use of the shroud remaining to him, and he is indeed right. Why? None can know the mind of a Goddess.

#### The shroud

The shroud is actually the old cloak of St Grunhilda. It is centuries old, so is fraying and likely to fall apart given much more abuse. It does not register as magical, as its powers are imbued divinely. Anton has been granted one more use of the relic, which grants him a ghostly appearance and the ability to inspire fear for a few minutes. Obviously, this power will only be granted to him in a worthy, non-violent cause, which I leave to the GM to judge. Beyond that, the shroud is fairly unremarkable, but is treated with extreme reverence by all the Shallyans.

#### The Strahlen

Anton was the founder of the group. He gathered together a group of the young males, disaffected and rebellious, who were not afraid to take action to gain their freedom. It was when Maria arrived that plans for escape began to change. Both Anton and Maria were committed to the ideals of freedom, but were opposed, initially, on the means to achieve that aim. They had debates, often quite fiery, over the morality of violence. Eventually, Anton became increasingly swayed by the Shallyan's views. His own escape, and miraculous survival, convinced him.

Apart from Anton and Schlitz, there are nine other members. All are committed to the cause of escape, whatever the means. Only Schlitz knows the secret of the ghost, and they now all regard him as their leader. In truth, they are quite proud of Anton's spirit, which they deem is tormenting their enemies from beyond the grave. Certainly they are keen to gain vengeance, bearing particular enmity towards the *Gauners*. It should be noted that all revere Maria, but view other humans with differing degrees of dislike. If faced with the reality of Anton's survival, their loyalty is likely to switch back to him.

## Day Three – Backertag

**Event – A Mission from God**

Dusk heralds another visitor on Backertag. Stefan von Krupky arrives, accompanied by six mounted men-at-arms. The soldiers bear the device of the von Krupky Barony (choose some heraldry to fit your campaign), and are therefore not allied to the Order of the Fiery Heart. Stefan on the other hand is bedecked in his full Templar armour and regalia. His profile offers a guideline to his personality and actions, but at the evening dinner he will press the PCs and Artur for the results of the investigation so far. He himself sets the deadline for dispelling the ghost at midnight on Angestag. He is unashamed of proposing his own solution if his deadline passes, though he has sense enough to order out all the Half-Orc slaves in the room first.

**Stefan von Krupky**

In his late twenties, tall and vigorous, Stefan exudes power and breeding. He joined the Templars of the Fiery Heart some time ago and is steadily climbing the ranks. His manner is formal and polite, but also haughty and not a little cold. He seldom laughs and sees frivolity as childish. In the recent war he played an active part, and has just returned from campaigning around Middenheim. Perhaps unusually for a devout Sigmarite, he feels no antipathy towards followers of Ulric; even the Templars of the White Wolf he regards merely as professional rivals.

One of his main beliefs, which he will readily espouse, is that the Storm of Chaos was turned back only with the help of the Gods, and that it is the role of men to revere and honour them properly. He also believes that the Empire is stronger now for its ordeal, that the men who survived have been tempered also, and that the Empire is better off without many of the weak that fell.

“Be true to the strictures of the Gods! I have looked upon the face of Chaos, and I know that only the purity of our beliefs saved us from extermination.” Taking this literally, Stefan believes that all goblinoids should be rooted out and destroyed. To him, the compromise regarding the status of Half-Orcs within Talabecland was a mistake, even if the Sigmarite Arch Lector of Talabheim supported it. He took the chance when it was offered, to come here and bring the impasse to a conclusion. Though he would not sabotage a family resource if the mine is indeed salvageable, he would be only too happy to institute a cull of this nest of goblinoids, in line with his perception of the strictures of Sigmar.

**The Gauners**

This group of eight Half-Orc slaves have been accorded special privileges in return for acting as wardens inside the compound. They have their own quarters within the camp, and are allowed to carry staves. One advantage of their status is a freedom to choose female bed companions from amongst the slaves. Mund is their leader, with Schnee as his deputy. Whether it is the circumstances of their upbringing, their treatment as slaves, or their Orcish blood that is to blame, they are all rather brutal, cruel and vindictive. They are, needless to say, universally hated. Realising that fact, they are totally loyal to their human

overseers, who are the key to their survival.

**Solving the Half-Orc problem**

Stefan will have his men begin the construction of a gallows the morning after he arrives. Not that he is likely to believe the ghost is anything but a restless spirit at this time, but he might need use of it. Indeed, in his experience a gallows has a galvanising effect on friend and foe alike – motivating the former and flushing out the latter.

If the truth about Anton comes to his attention, he intends to have him executed, before forcing the Half-Orcs back to work, on pain of death. Similarly, if Stefan believes the ghost is dispelled, he will force the slaves back to work. Should the *Strahlen* escape bid occur, any who are caught shall also be promptly hung.

If the ghost remains at large on Angestag evening, Stefan will announce over dinner the impending closure of the mine. He will ban all Half-Orcs from the area, then retire with all the men, except any Shallyans (“I have no wish to offend you, good sirs, with matters anathema to the Goddess”) and debate with all those who are left the best way of removing the goblinoid stain most efficiently. He does not wish to cause a panic amongst them. Perhaps they could be removed, a cartload at a time, to an execution waiting some way down the road? Should he use a rota of men to undertake the executions, so as to not distress the men overly? What should be done with the bodies? What about getting the *Gauners* to carry out the deed, under supervision, with a promise of clemency for their loyalty?

Stefan is quite logical about the whole thing. He is somewhat open to persuasion though. Arguments to sway him might be:

1. Dead Half-Orcs are a waste. Better to sell them, so the money then gained can be poured into the fight against the Ruinous Powers.
2. Better still, as a resource to be exploited, their toil can contribute to the enrichment of the Empire, and hence the fight against the Ruinous Powers.

Even if, with some successful **Average Fellowship Tests**, Stefan is persuaded to spare some Half-Orcs for economic reasons, he will still insist on losing the useless, unproductive mouths. Hence, the women, the very young, and the old will be removed, ostensibly for resettlement, and murdered as quietly and efficiently as possible. The productive male slaves will be spared, and probably sold, so they can continue contributing to the wealth of the Empire. At least, Stefan realises, removing all the Half-Orc females is a way to ensure the goblinoid blood will eventually die out. Whatever the eventual plan, he intends to enact it the next day (Festag).

## DAY FOUR - BEZAHLTAG

**Event – Merciful Knights**

Leonard Steinbern is a Priest of Shallya with some standing, and he arrives at the mine Bezahltag evening accompanied by two members of the Merciful Knights of the Hospitals of Shallya (see *Warpstone* 10 for details). The reason he will give for visiting is to monitor the well-being of the mission here. He will feign surprise at the news of the ghost, but will enquire carefully about it. If he is queried about his intense interest, he

will reply smoothly that all suffering should be alleviated where possible, including that of unquiet spirits. Of course, his main reason to be here is to investigate the missing shroud, and he will be keen to interview Maria (who will display obvious nerves to observant PCs). However, he is equally keen to keep the true relationship between the ghost, the shroud and Maria secret, if at all possible, to avoid embarrassment to the cult.

#### Profile - Leonard Steinbern

Leonard is a high-ranking priest within the Shallyan cult, in his early fifties. For a Shallyan, he is fairly conservative, and believes strongly that idealism must be tempered by realism in order to effect positive change. He has a sharp, enquiring mind and was chosen especially to carry out this investigation – as a committed pragmatist, he lacks the naivety of some of his peers. Though he may be sympathetic to Maria's aims, he realises the damage any conflict with the nobility or the cult of Sigmar could do to the cult politically, and is especially concerned to avoid the role of Maria and the shroud becoming public. If all Maria's aims could be achieved peacefully and secretly, Leonard would not necessarily stand in her way, but would need much convincing. One factor that would probably sway him or enlist his aid is an observation all so far have missed, so that we will leave the PCs to notice if they can: if the legends speak of the shroud as a holy artefact, that only those blessed by the Goddess can utilise, does that not prove that Anton and Maria's enterprise is blessed by Shallya?

#### Leonard's Investigation

After learning all he can from the PCs regarding the ghost, Leonard plans to visit the school within the stockade the day following his arrival, accompanied by his men and Maria. He then requests a private interview with her at her cottage. Confronted by his suspicions, Maria will admit the plot, but begs for secrecy and a few more days to see the plan reach fruition. Otherwise, she threatens to admit all to everyone at the manor, and shame Leonard's inactivity in the face of inhumanity. He is certainly keen to keep the whole affair under wraps, but will demand the return of the shroud, to which she will acquiesce. He will give her until Festag, when he intends to return with her to Talabheim to face a hearing before her cult superiors.

Note that all these interactions may be influenced by the actions of the PCs, and should be used only as a general guide.

### DAY FIVE - KONIGSTAG

#### Event – Morr, help us!

Kurt Ollmann is only an initiate of Morr, and arrives this evening. The youngest son of a knight, he is extremely nervous about this, his first proper assignment, especially as his advancement in the cult may be affected by his success. He has been trained to carry out the funerary rites ritual, which is normally enough to lay the spirit of the fallen to rest, providing the body has been found. If he finds this is not the case, his nerves will get even worse. Whilst he will attempt to maintain composure, Kurt lacks confidence and will rely largely on the advice of the PCs. Confiding in him the truth about matters at

the mine may be unwise, given his fragile mental state: relief at the lack of a ghost may turn to worry over being implicated in a fraud. If the PCs could invent a way to make it seem as if Kurt has dispelled the ghost, with or without his knowledge of the actual facts, and gain the payment due from Artur, they would be most likely to enlist his support.

If he remains in ignorance, with no influence from the PCs, Kurt will most likely attempt to carry out the funerary ritual within the mine at the last known position of Anton, some time the day after his arrival. He will then press Artur for the payment of the fee for the Mourners' Guild. Artur is only likely to resist if the truth about the ghost has come out, or it appears again after the ritual has taken place.

### DAY SIX – ANGESTAG

#### The Breakout

The *Strahlen* have amassed a small stock of easily concealed, sharp, bladed articles, enough to equip them all. The stash is well hidden in their quarters, along with a small amount of provender, some torches, candles and fire-making tools. As evening draws in on Angestag, Schlitz will pass a message to Maria to give to Anton – the two of them are somewhat literate, having been taught the rudiments by Maria. This informs Anton that the *Strahlen* will attempt to escape tonight, and intend to rendezvous with him in the mine, where he can lead them out. If Anton has been revealed by this time, Schlitz will instead ask Maria for news of the hidden exit, or support in terms of provisions. He will adapt his plan to the circumstances, so that one way or another a bid is made to escape.

The initial plan is to tempt one of the patrolling *Gauners* into a dormitory by making some merrymaking noises (which is strictly forbidden). They will ambush and incapacitate him, before Schlitz steals his clothes and cudgel and takes his place. They hope that in the darkness, the human guards at some distance away will not notice the change. Before suspicion is aroused, Schlitz will enter the *Gauners'* guardroom, where he knows the keys to the gate of the mine are kept. He expects there to be one of them awake (there usually is), who he hopes to overpower quickly and silently with the benefit of surprise. Depending on the alarm level, the other *Strahlen* can either rush to reinforce him, forgoing stealth, or wait until he has sauntered out and over to the mine entrance. Just as he is getting a shouted query from a human guard, Schlitz will have the mine open, and his comrades will be dashing across the camp to join him. He will shout a proclamation, claiming that they have enough provisions for several weeks, and will hinder any forced re-opening of the mine, unless their demands are met, and they are freed. He claims that he will return to hear their reply at sunset tomorrow, by which time of course he will be long gone; he hopes to find Anton waiting for him, whereupon the group can follow him to freedom, making off into the forested hills.

If Anton is still able to do so, he has little choice but to support their plan. Either way, Maria and/or Anton may inform or involve the PCs, depending on their relationship so far. They would like to have all the slaves escape, but also feel that such a large group would be easy to track in the hills, and also might



draw suspicion by 'escaping' into the mine. They would also like to urge Schlitz not to resort to bloodshed, especially not to kill anyone. Quite possibly it would only be the PCs who could concoct a reason to enter the compound after lock down, as even Maria is not allowed to do so. By this stage they should also be aware of Stefan's plans for the slaves, which may sway their decisions.

It may be possible for the PCs to pick up hints that something is afoot with Schlitz and the *Strahlen* even without any hints from Maria or Anton. By chance or design, they may overhear whispered snatches of the plot, or see preparations being made. The extent of this is for the GM to decide. Tobias is the only other person who may notice something is up, though it is most likely to be a 'bad feeling'. He may decide to share his suspicions with the PCs, depending on his relationship with them.

Schlitz will only delay his plan if he has word from Anton. He may alter it if the PCs make some good suggestions, depending on the relationship they have with him so far.

### DAY SEVEN – FESTAG

#### Reaction to the Escape

If the escape plan fails, Stefan will be quite ruthless with the plotters, as previously described. If any slaves make it into the mine, he will similarly become convinced that the mine is uneconomical, and will begin the purge of goblinoid blood, after consultation as to the practicalities. He will advocate bringing the mine down on the heads of the rebellious slaves.

#### The Sealing of the Mine

Sometime after the sun sets on Festag, the shaft that Anton had been taking advantage of to gain entry to the mine collapses. Anyone left within will be trapped, with only the main entrance or the freezing underwater route that he initially escaped through as ways out. Though the strong may survive the water, if they are lucky, most others would be doomed to drown.

#### Conclusion

Almost anything could happen at the mine, from wholesale slaughter and bloodshed to the escape and eventual freedom of all the slaves. Maria could be unmasked, and the cult of Shallya implicated in the plot, or it could remain a secret forever. Stefan may even be appeased if he believes all the Half-Orcs are dead, when they are in fact not – a possibility that enterprising PCs may pursue. The experience point rewards, I also leave to GMs to allocate, though I encourage bonuses to be given to PCs who avoid alienating as many of the parties present as possible. Well, except Pieter, perhaps.

One intriguing reward is the possibility of a blessing of Shallya being bestowed upon the party, if they fulfil certain criteria. These are:

1. All the slaves are released or escape.
2. Maria and Anton's role remains unknown to the mine authorities.
3. No one is injured through violence (or if you are feeling generous, no-one is killed through violence).

Any such blessing should remain enigmatic, unobvious, and quite possibly not manifest for some time. It will work best if the PCs are will not even aware they have received it, but merely perhaps 'count their blessings' at some time in the future. Perhaps the PCs future children are all hale and hearty. Perhaps he avoids picking up a disease at some stage in the future, without realising he has dodged a proverbial bullet. The Gods work in mysterious and subtle ways, after all. Use your imagination.

### THE CAST

Profiles for all NPCs are available at [www.Warpstone.org](http://www.Warpstone.org).

#### ARTUR LAURENT

Bretonnian Bailiff (Ex Scribe – Ex Foreman)



WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
38	34	35	42	45	46	48	55
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	14	3	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Genealogy/Heraldry, Law), Charm, Command, Common Knowledge (Bretonnia, the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Gossip, Haggle, Perception, Performer (Singer), Read/Write, Ride, Secret Language (Guild Tongue), Speak Language (Breton, Classical, Reikspiel), Trade (Calligrapher)

**Talents:** Etiquette, Linguistics, Public Speaking, Streetwise, Suave, Super Numerate

**Armour (Light):** Good Craftsmanship Clothing with Leather Jack and Skullcap

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

**Weapons:** Sword (Hand Weapon, 1d10 +3)

**Trappings:** Whistle, Writing Kit, Illuminated Book on Wine, Riding Horse with Saddle and Harness, Small collection of Good Craftsmanship Wine in cellar

**PIETER SCHRANK**

**Jailer (Ex Protagonist - Ex Thug)**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
41	27	46	41	44	25	39	44
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	4	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol +10%, Dodge Blow, Gamble, Gossip, Intimidate +10%, Perception, Ride, Search, Secret Language (Thieves' Tongue), Sleight of Hand, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Disarm, Hardy, Lightning Reflexes, Menacing, Quick Draw, Resistance to Disease, Resistance to Poison, Specialist Weapon Group (Entangling), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Strike to Stun, Suave, Wrestling

**Armour (Medium):** Mail Shirt with Leather Jack

**Armour Points:** Head 0, Arms 1, Body 3, Legs 0

**Weapons:** Whip (1d10 +1, Snare, Special), Knuckle-dusters (1d10 +2, Pummelling), Mace (Hand Weapon, 1d10 +5), Net (Snare)

**Trappings:** Bottle of Wine, Tankard, Purse with 10 gc, Riding Horse with Saddle and Harness

**WESTENSEITE MINE GUARDS**

**Jailers**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
31	31	38	31	30	33	38	30
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	10	3	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Command, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Consume Alcohol, Dodge Blow, Gossip, Heal, Intimidate, Perception, Search, Speak Language (Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Coolheaded, Resistance to Disease, Resistance to Poison, Specialist Weapon Group (Entangling), Very Strong, Wrestling

**Armour (Light):** Leather Jerkin

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

**Weapons:** Whip (1d10-1, Snare, Special), Sword (Hand Weapon, 1d10 +3), Net (Snare)

**Trappings:** Bottle of Wine, Tankard

**TOBIAS TAALSON**

**Jailer (Ex Outrider - Ex Scout - Ex Sergeant)**

**JOHANN SONDHEIM**

**Jailer (Ex Miner)**

**MARIA**

**Initiate (Ex Student)**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
32	28	28	37	48	42	44	51
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	2	3	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (History, Philosophy, Theology +10%), Charm +10%, Common Knowledge (the Empire), Gossip, Heal, Perception, Read/Write, Search, Speak Language (Classical, Reikspiel)

**Talents:** Lightning Reflexes, Linguistics, Public Speaking, Seasoned Traveller, Strong-minded, Suave

**Armour (Light):** White Shallyan Robes embroidered with a Red Heart Symbol

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

**Weapons:** None

**Trappings:** Silver Cloak clasp embossed with the Dove and Heart symbol of Shallya, Text book on Theology, Text book on History, Writing Kit, Small Cottage in the Woods, Dog

**WERNER BLINDT**

**Slaver (Ex Tradesman - Ex Merchant)**

**WERNER BLINDT'S BODYGUARD**

**Kislev Bodyguard (Ex Streltsi)**

**STEFAN VON KRUPKY**

**Templar of Sigmar (Ex Noble - Ex Squire)**

**STEFAN VON KRUPKY'S MEN**

**Veterans (Ex Soldiers)**

**KURT OLLMANN**

**Initiate of Morr (Ex Squire)**

**LEONARD STEINBERN**

**High Priest (Ex Initiate - Ex Friar - Ex Priest - Ex Anointed Priest)**

**MERCIFUL KNIGHT OF THE HOSPITALS OF SHALLYA Knights (Ex Temple Guardians - Ex Squires)**

**The Half-Orcs**

As there are no rules for Half-caste Orcs in the second edition of WFRP, these characters have been created using generic humanoid rules, which can be used to represent Half-Orcs, Kurgan, Strigany or any other group by replacing the Common Knowledge (Eastern Steppes) and Speak Language (Tribal) skills with something more appropriate.

**ANTON**

**Half-caste Orc Brute (Ex Miner)**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
58	34	52	54	47	32	44	32
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	18	5	5	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Animal Care, Command, Common Knowledge (Eastern Steppes), Concealment, Consume Alcohol, Drive, Dodge Blow, Intimidate, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Search, Speak Language (Tribal, Reikspiel), Trade (Miner)

**Talents:** Hardy, Orientation, Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed), Street Fighting, Strike Mighty Blow, Strike to Injure, Very Resilient, Warrior Born

**Special Rules:** Anton is in the process of learning the Read/Write and Heal skills

**Armour (Light):** Poor Craftsmanship Clothing

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

**Weapons:** Club (Hand Weapon, 1d10 +6)

**Trappings:** The Sacred Shroud of Sister Grunhilda (See Text)

**SCHLITZ**

**Half-caste Orc Bondsman (Ex Miner)**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
42	30	46	43	34	34	32	23
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	14	4	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Animal Care, Common Knowledge (Eastern Steppes), Concealment, Consume Alcohol, Gamble, Gossip, Intimidate, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Speak Language (Tribal, Reikspiel), Trade (Miner)

**Talents:** Hardy, Menacing, Orientation, Savvy, Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed), Stout-hearted, Strike Mighty Blow, Very Resilient

**Special Rules:** Schlitz is learning the Read/Write skill

**Armour (Light):** Poor Craftsmanship Clothing

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

**Weapons:** Poor Craftsmanship Pick or Spade (Improvised, 1d10 +1, Special)

**Trappings:** None



**HALF-ORC MINER/ STRAHLEN**  
**Half-caste Orc Miner**

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
35	25	40	45	30	25	30	20
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
1	12	4	4	4	0	0	0

**Skills:** Animal Care, Common Knowledge (Eastern Steppes), Drive, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Scale Sheer Surface, Speak Language (Tribal, Reikspiel), Trade (Miner)

**Talents:** Hardy, Orientation, Specialist Weapon Group (Two-handed), Very Resilient

**Armour (Light):** Poor Craftsmanship Clothing

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

**Weapons:** Poor Craftsmanship Pick or Spade (Improvised, 1d10 +0, Special)

**Trappings:** None

**HALF-ORC GAUNER**

**Half-caste Orc Thug (EX Miner)**

**HALF-ORC HOUSE SLAVE**

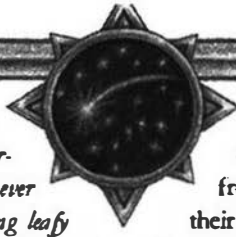
**Half-caste Orc Servant**



by Robin Low

# Zoats





*The Zoot sat on its haunches at the centre of the shadowed glade, gazing up at the star-filled sky. So beautiful, it thought, that I never tire of watching. The wind picked up, rustling leafy branches, causing the Zoot to look down and sniff the air before returning its gaze to the night sky. The Chaos Moon had emerged briefly from behind a stray cloud but swiftly disappeared again, drifting off on its incomprehensible course. The Humans called it Morrslieb; the Zoot could never understand why they would insult one of their gods in such a fashion. The Zoats simply called it the Vessel.*

*The sky brightened suddenly. A streak of light far above illuminated the glade and was followed by a hot, rushing wind. Shortly, the Zoot felt the ground tremble a little as something fell to earth. The Zoot pushed itself up from the ground and sniffed again; the air was tainted. A little more of The Stone had fallen. The Zoot bitted, sighing wearily.*

*Holding its staff-mace aloft, the Zoot began to sing very softly. As the heavy black stone cylinder of the mace-head began to glow a warm red in response, the Zoot swept the staff in effortless arcs in the direction the fallen star had travelled. At a certain point in each sweep a melodic metallic chiming coincided with a blue glow from the carved metal that patterned the stone mace-head. The Zoot ceased its song, lowered the staff-mace and trotted heavily out of the glade and into the woods. It had a direction, and a duty to perform.*

### Ancient History

An eternity ago, in an unimaginably distant place, there existed a horrific race of creatures known as the Tyranids. Forming a parasitic swarm of groups and countless individuals of diverse and mutable body-form, each Tyranid was part of an overall hive-mind. They travelled in massive hive fleets, crossing the spaces between planets, between the stars and even between the galaxies themselves as they plundered living worlds in search of minerals, fuel and new genetic material to incorporate into their own. In the process they reduced countless living planets to lifeless, airless rocks. The Tyranids used all the material they stole to breed more Tyranids in countless new body-forms and varieties, adapting to the changing needs and environments their race was challenged with; they also used it to create horrific bio-engineered weapons, sometimes separate from themselves and sometimes extensions of their own bodies. And sometimes they used the stolen resources and genes to fashion whole new races of slave creatures. One such race was the Zoats.

Unlike many of their other slave races, the Tyranids designed the Zoats to be independent, thinking creatures, capable of operating comfortably on planets, especially high-gravity worlds. The Tyranids, being a predominantly space-faring race, were far more comfortable in zero-gravity environments and believed it was useful to have a strong and intelligent race of slaves capable of working on the planets they were stripping of resources. The Zoats were designed to be physically strong, robust and more than capable of defending themselves against hostile forces, but also able to learn and adapt their behaviour to suit the situation.

The Tyranids also bred into their slaves obedience and a natural inclination to work, which was

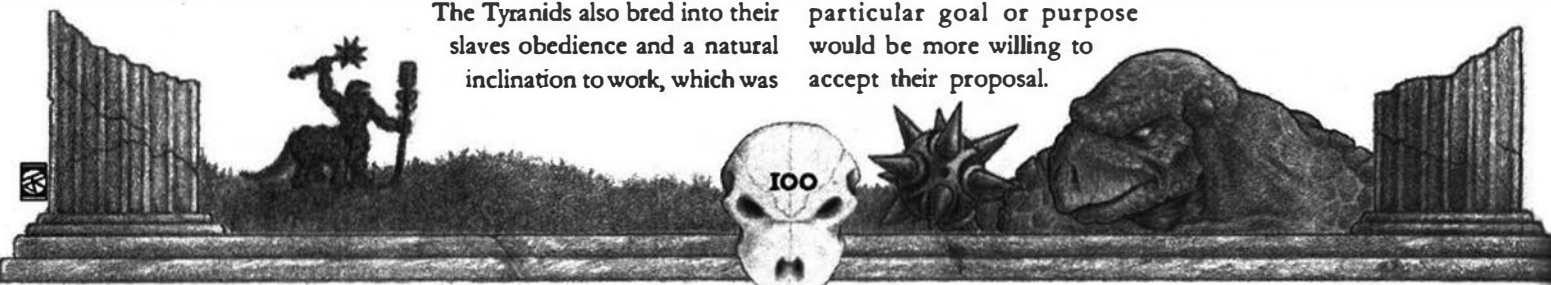
reinforced with a slave-hormone designed to suppress any desire for freedom which the tyranids secreted from their own bodies.

However, few methods of control are perfect and there were always some Zoats able to resist the slave-hormone. Instead of attempting to orchestrate the liberation of their fellows (nigh impossible given the scale of Tyranid power and resources), these few would flee alone or in small groups. Given the scale of Tyranid depredations, it was also common for some groups of Zoats, particularly scouts and explorers, to lose contact with their masters for long enough for their sense of independence to assert itself; these too would run and seek permanent freedom. Some Zoot exploration teams could consist of a thousand individuals. The Tyranids were rarely bothered by these escapees, who were few on a Tyranid scale and easily replaced.

Having successfully escaped slavery, renegade Zoats were left with a different problem: lack of purpose. Another characteristic bred into Zoats was a drive to *do*. With no masters, Zoats were left with an intense sense of motivation, but no idea what to be motivated towards. For many, this would become intolerable: some would attempt to get back to their erstwhile masters; others took their own lives. However, they were created to be intelligent and adaptable, and many were able to find a purpose for themselves. Some found themselves abandoned on worlds without any other intelligent life and set about building a world of their own, often starting as farmers and developing from there. Others fought with indigenous intelligent creatures for dominance of territory or whole planets, often making rapid technological advances in the process. Their intelligence, unusual knowledge and skills meant that among peaceful, open-minded races Zoats could become respected teachers and advisors. Others found themselves on worlds where their strength made them useful to others, and they became labourers and mercenaries; little more than what they were before, admittedly, but free to choose their masters, at least. Communities of renegade Zoats tended to be relatively small, scattered across the galaxy and highly diverse in nature.

Even in the immenseness of the galaxies, these tiny scattered groups of Zoats did not go unnoticed. One race in particular that took special notice of them was the Old Slann, a race of amphibious frog-like humanoids. Perhaps second only in age and wisdom to the race known as the Old Ones, whom many Slann served and allied themselves with, the Old Slann often took an interest in younger races. Given that the Old Ones and the Old Slann both practiced genetic engineering on a large scale, it was not surprising that the Zoats stood out as something special. The Slann began to seek out renegade Zoats across the galaxy with a view to studying them and putting them to use.

The Old Slann approached numerous Zoot communities, but predominantly those that had yet to establish themselves particularly strongly on the worlds they had come to. The Slann predicted that Zoats who had not found and committed to a particular goal or purpose would be more willing to accept their proposal.





The Old Slann made a simple offer: come with us to other worlds and work for us on the planetary-modification projects we undertake for the Old Ones; in return, a place and purpose in these worlds will be made for you. With their previous experience of asset-stripping planets, many Zoats leapt at the chance to put their skills to use again, but in a more creative manner. One of the largest Zoot teams assembled travelled with the Old Slann to a planet designated WW1983/HAP.BA, where they participated in the project to shift the planet's orbit, re-shape the continents and catalogue its resources, animal, vegetable or mineral. Some also served as overseers of the Lizardman worker races; the Zoats were unimpressed by these creatures, and whilst not cruel, they were hard and demanding masters, which is perhaps why the Lizardmen still fear Zoats today.

The fall of the Old Slann and the Old Ones, and the collapse of the polar warp gates, have been documented in other works; the details are vague at best, contradictory at worst (see **So, Just Who Were the Old Ones?**). All that is certain is that the poles were ravaged by a flood of raw Chaos (both solid Warpstone and fluid warp potential) and warp entities (Daemons and worse) and cut off from any outside support. The Old Ones were apparently completely destroyed and the once powerful Old Slann were almost entirely wiped out. Today, the natural descendents of the Old Slann of the First Spawning are aggressive tribes of lean and savage warriors, almost forgotten and hidden in the depths of the Lustrian jungle, although the bloated Slann Mage

Priests of the Second and later Spawnings who rule the Lizardmen hint at the former power and glory of the race. Of course, although the collapse of the Gates was sudden, the fall of the Old Slann did not happen overnight. In the face of terrible adversity they took time to plan several different projects and see them put into operation, all aimed at the long-term protection of the planet.

The collapse of the warp gates was devastating to the lands around them, resulting in an uncontrolled breach into warp space, a place of raw Chaos. The transforming potential of the warp roared out, along with Daemons and other terrible beasts. The lands surrounding the poles were permanently twisted and distorted into Realms of Chaos, although further away from the collapsed gates the effects, whilst significant and often dangerously subtle, were less extreme or at least less foul. Despite this, the surviving Old Slann were far more concerned with a solid and stable form of raw warp potential, the stuff that would become called Wyrystone or Warpstone by the lesser races. This rock-like substance would take millennia to lose its mutagenic and reality-warping properties, and the impact of the collapsing warp gates had thrown pieces of the stuff, from boulders to dust, across the planet. The Old Slann knew Warpstone would be a lingering problem, one that they would not live to deal with and their descendents would be unable to. What the Old Slann needed was a long-lived, powerfully motivated and determined race of creatures. Fortunately for the Old Slann, the Zoats were there ready and waiting.

*Continued over>*

### So, Just Who Were the Old Ones?

This is very much the realm of individual GMs. Originally, the Old Slann were the shapers of the Warhammer World (formally named here with the Old Slann project code WW1983/HAP.BA) and its races, but as the Warhammer game developed the Old Ones took over and the Slann became their subordinates. I've mostly gone with this idea, but I view the Old Slann (those of the First

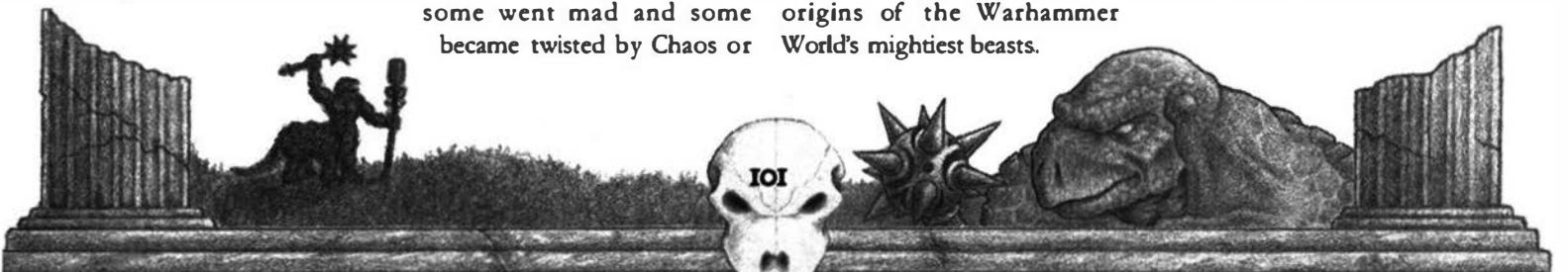
Spawning) more as junior partners or employees than as servants. I also view the skinny frogmen Slann of earlier editions of *Warhammer Fantasy Battle* as descendents of the Old Slann, but born outside the traditional spawning pools that gave rise to the current bloated Slann Mage Priests.

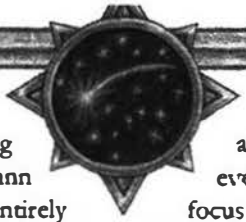
So, just who were the Old Ones and why were they wiped out by the collapse of the warp gates? My answer begins with the idea that the Old Ones were not entirely destroyed. Every member of the Old One race living on the planet was psykically linked to the warp gates in some incomprehensible tekno-psykic fashion. When the gates collapsed, the Old Ones were struck by a massive wave of uncontrolled warp energy, no matter whereabouts on the planet they were. The shock killed the majority of them, but some went mad and some became twisted by Chaos or

Law. All of them lost their memories, *completely* forgetting who and what they were, forcing them to set out on a new road, forging new personalities and goals. The effects were passed to their offspring. Only a few of the first Old Ones still live, but most are asleep. However, some of their descendents live on.

Here's the idea: the Old Ones and their descendents are the Dragons. For me, this explains the Old Ones' affinity for lizard races (including the Zoats) and the willingness of some Dragons to interact with the Elves, a race those Dragons felt they recognised for reasons they could never quite remember. It also gives the Dragons a place in the world, rather than leaving them as something a fantasy game has to include by default.

Does anyone in the Warhammer World know what the Dragons are? My view is no. Even before the warp gates collapsed, the Old Ones rarely showed themselves, preferring to use the less intimidating Old Slann as their public face. The Elves knew that great lizards flew through the skies of the world, seeing them regularly, but they never knew those Dragons were their patrons. Only after the Old Ones lost their memories did Dragons and the Elf meet one another face to face. Even the Slann Mage Priests of the Second and subsequent Spawnings are unaware, never having been privileged with the information. However, the crumbling remains of Old Slann temples might hint at the origins of the Warhammer World's mightiest beasts.





The Zoats were charged with the millennia-long task of ridding the planet of Warpstone. The Old Slann were not so naïve as to think this was an entirely feasible task, but they set it anyway; they had nothing to lose and the planet had everything to gain. Of course, the Zoats accepted. They were part of this world now and had nowhere else to go, so from their perspective cleansing it of a clear and definite threat made perfect sense to them. It also satisfied their need for purpose, but would not prevent them from enjoying what the world had to offer.

Finding scattered Warpstone and rendering it harmless would not be easy, and a team of surviving Old Slann technicians worked hard to find a solution. In the end, they came up with a remarkably simple but extremely powerful device: a heavy, thick-walled cylinder of black stone, bound with silver, carved with symbols. The cylinder had a hole running down the centre, allowing it to be carried or fitted to the end of a six- or seven-foot long pole. Essentially, this was a modified force weapon, a device that utilised the magical (to the Old Slann and Zoats, psychic) ability of the user. In the absence of the Tyranid slave hormone, about sixty-five percent of Zoats demonstrated psychic ability. This meant many could use the device, which had two primary functions: determining the location of the nearest and most powerful Warpstone deposit, and neutralising Warpstone's mutagenic properties (see *Mace Cylinders* for discussion of their use and effects). One cylinder was hurriedly manufactured for every contactable Zoa (several thousand, but widely spread across the planet). Although not every Zoa could use one it was anticipated that some future offspring would, in which case they could be passed on. Additionally, the Old Slann infected all the Zoats with a virus that integrated genetic material into the Zoats' genomes, offering some resistance to the effects of Warpstone, meaning they could physically handle the dangerous stone and not come to significant harm.

Thus ordered and armed, the Zoats took their leave of the Old Slann. On foot or using the last remaining and rapidly failing transportation devices of the Old Slann the Zoats spread across the planet. It was deemed the Realms of Chaos surrounding the collapsed warp gates were

effectively lost, but as the winds, natural and Chaotic, had carried Warpstone almost everywhere, it was hard to decide where to focus their efforts. In the end, it was decided they would distribute themselves fairly evenly over the salvageable areas of the planet and allow themselves to be guided by the mace cylinders. The Zoats became wanderers, travelling singly, as mated pairs or small family groups.

### The Treefolk and the Mura-Durr

As has been said, the howling Winds of Chaos that engulfed the world following the collapse of the warp gates had a massive effect on the world, transforming both living and non-living matter into many different vile and distorted forms of life. However, given the nature of absolute Chaos it could also result in far gentler transformations. Beauty, generosity and goodness also emerged among the transformed, especially in lands further from the shattered gates. Creatures such as Unicorns and Pegasi are but two examples; the Treefolk are another.

The Elves have long known that the friendship between Zoats and Treefolk is one of very long standing. What they are not aware of is that the Zoats were responsible for nurturing the race. The ancestors of today's Treefolk were ordinary trees transformed into intelligent and aware creatures by Jade warp potential as it blew through their leaves and saturated the earth they grew from. The first generation of Treefolk were sedentary, but from their seeds grew a second generation of trees, which, when they were old enough, pulled their roots up from the soil and walked. This second generation had many meetings with the Zoats.

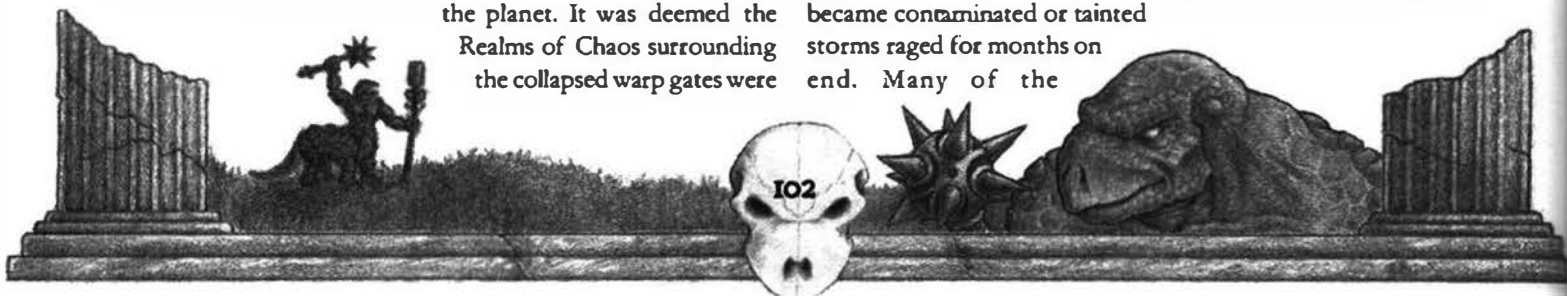
The Zoats had always liked trees, whether as things of beauty or something good to scratch and itch on. Trees who talked and who could become travelling companions were a pleasant revelation to them. What was more, the Jade Winds had done something to the trees' flowers, meaning that at the right time of year the Treefolk could understand the Zoa pheromones that form part of Zoa communication. Thanks to this, the Zoats taught the Treefolk much about the world and its past. Although Treefolk had an instinctive

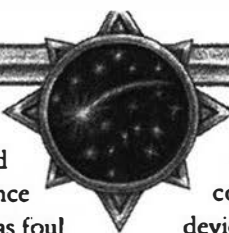
understanding of nature and ecology, the Zoats gave them even deeper insights. The longevity of both races meant friendships and journeys together could last centuries.

However, warp potential in its rawest form was still abroad in the world. The sedentary first generation of Treefolk were especially vulnerable, unable to simply walk away when ground became contaminated or tainted storms raged for months on end. Many of the



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original generation were horribly corrupted, becoming evil twisted entities, jealous of all that could walk. Once corrupted, their seeds grew into Treefolk as foul and distorted as themselves, but these could pull themselves from the ground as the unainted generation of Treefolk had done, and went forth to spread bitterness and evil. The corrupted Treefolk, sedentary and walking alike, became known as the Mura-Durr in the language of the Elves. *The Ghoul Tree* on the cover of *Warpstone 22* is an example, as is *The Murder Tree* in *Legion 6*.

The Mura-Durr were powerful and dangerous. As soon as the Treefolk and Zoats became aware of their existence, they allied to destroy them. The Zoats' ability to detect Warpstone helped track many Mura-Durr. Battles with the walking Mura-Durr were fierce and brutal. Even the corrupted sedentary kind fought hard as they discovered the magic to control corrupted animals and call other creatures to them. Some Mura-Durr even found themselves worshipped and defended by newly emerging races, principally primitive men, goblinoids and Beastmen. Over time, most Mura-Durr were destroyed, but some survived and hid in the deepest forests, the remotest valleys, the most inaccessible mountain passes. Slain Mura-Durr were burnt to ash whenever possible, but inevitably some pieces of Mura-Durr wood survived to be scavenged by those who recognised the dark magic within it. Such pieces became relics for evil creatures or were transformed into magical items or even mundane objects such as doors and parts of buildings. Zoats have heard tales of a great house or temple constructed from Mura-Durr wood by Beastmen millennia ago that still stands today, but it has never been found.

As the centuries wore on, the oldest Treefolk discovered that their wood became less flexible and their pace slowed. They recognised it was time for them to become trees again and put down roots. Safe resting places were found, in much the same sorts of hidden places the few remaining Mura-Durr had gone, though where the Treefolk settled living things were vibrant and vital. Their Zoot friends promised always to protect trees and wild places, and keep them free, as best they could, of those who would burn and cut with axes. To this day, those Zoats who travelled for centuries with a Treefolk companion still make summer pilgrimages, when they can, to hidden places where old friends grow and blossom. And there are still younger Treefolk who walk the forests, although they are few in number.

### The Elves

The Elves were the chosen favourites of the Old Ones and Old Slann, or at least the High Elven sages and their ancient legends love to proclaim so. Perhaps surprisingly, the Zoats have had relatively little interaction with the Elves down the millennia. Mostly this has been due to the scattered nature of the Zoats and their focus on locating and neutralising Warpstone, but to some degree the Zoats have always felt the Elves to be a little too proud of themselves for being the inheritors of such a meagre portion of the Old

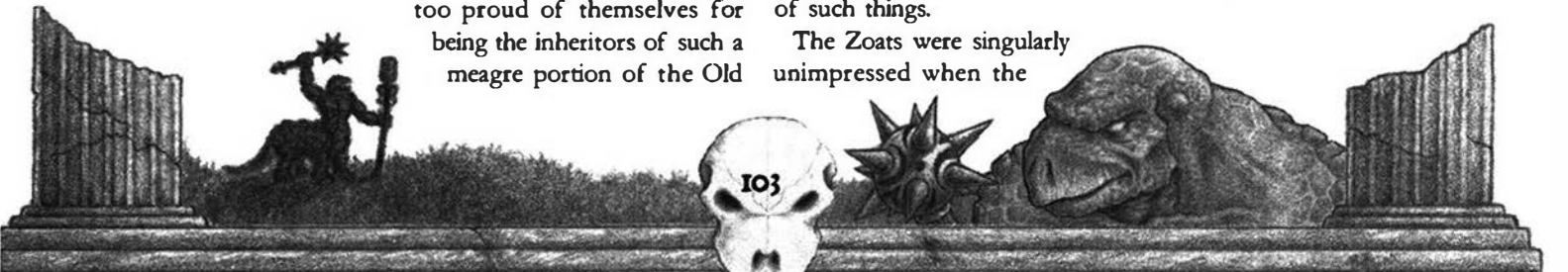
Ones' knowledge and power. There was no animosity as such; the Zoats were just content to leave the Elves to their own devices. For their part, the Elves were and remain unaware of the Zoats' position as respected employees of the Old Slann, assuming Zoats were just another of the Old One's reptilian servant races, albeit a senior one. Similarly, the Elves remain oblivious to the Zoats' extraterrestrial origins. The Zoats have never felt the need to correct them on either point.

### Zoats and *Warhammer 40,000*

Some people will be glad the Zoats of WFRP have been integrated with the Zoats and Tyranids of the original *Warhammer 40,000: Rogue Trader*, others will hate it. If you do hate it, fine, don't use those ideas; they are easy enough to ignore if you choose to. However, due to the themes of the article, the connection to the Old Slann and the Old Ones needs to be maintained. This is justified by the well-established link between the Old Ones/Slann and the various races of intelligent lizards. Depending on what you prefer, Zoats could be the result of the Old Slann genetically tinkering with lizards or a species of lizard that evolved intelligence all by itself, allying with the Old Slann prior to the collapse of the warp gates. Maybe Zoats share a common ancestor with Dragons Ogres. However you choose to view them, the Zoats are a link to the earliest history of the world, more so than the Elves (who remember less than they believe they do) and the Slann who have fallen so far. Even Dragons forget and the Dragons Ogres' memories are tainted. The Zoats live longer, remember better and understand more clearly than most other creatures on the planet, knowing more about the nature of warp space and Chaos, the warp gates and their collapse, and relic technology. This knowledge might become the focus of a campaign, but the Zoats are very cautious about sharing it with others and their confusing language makes it difficult for non-Zoats to comprehend.

However, contact between the races was not entirely unknown. The Elves fought great wars against the hordes of Chaos following the collapse of the warp gates, and some Zoats took it upon themselves to advise and participate in several battles. The Zoats have been amused to discover they have often been transformed into Dragons in several tales from the oldest times! Intriguingly, ancient rumours are whispered among a few more heretical High Elf scholars hinting that Aenarion was advised to seek out the shrine of Asuryan by a Zoot. There are similar suggestions that Caledor sought wisdom from a Zoot, even that this Zoot set the High Mage on the path that led to his discovering the cause of the Chaos invasion and his development of the Great Vortex. However, no Zoot has ever professed knowledge of such things.

The Zoats were singularly unimpressed when the







Phoenix King withdrew his armies from the lands that would become known as the Old World. However, a sizable number of Elf colonists refused to return to Ulthuan, and the Zoats hoped these Elves would become protectors of the land and even teachers to the emerging Humans, Halflings and Gnomes. Sadly, their hopes proved to be too optimistic. Those who would become the Wood Elves felt so betrayed by their kin that they retreated from the wider world into the depths of the forests, untrusting and suspicious of outsiders. In the decades following, the Zoats gave what help they could to the Wood Elves and attempted to persuade them otherwise, but with little success. However, Zoats remain on good terms with the Wood Elves, sharing a powerful respect and love for the forests, and have been content to leave the development of Wood Elf culture and history to the Wood Elves. For their part, the Wood Elves remember the Zoats assisted them as their society first formed and continued to do so even after the Elves had made it clear they were no longer interested in the outside world and those who dwelled there. For this reason, they will, if asked, assist Zoats in the fight against Chaos and Warpstone, and open their settlements to any Zoa who wished to hibernate within it. The Zoats recognise self-interest at work, but are pragmatic about it.

handful are emerging from the woods and interacting with Humans, if only for their own peculiar amusement. Some Zoats hope to make use of this emerging tendency.

Despite having been irritated by the Phoenix King's abandonment of the Old World, they recognise that it was the High Elves who helped turn the tide against Chaos when Teclis answered Magnus's call for aid, and assisted during the Storm of Chaos, while the Wood Elves largely sat behind their protective illusions in the deep woods. Again, the Zoats recognise self-interest at work, but wonder if the High Elves might be persuaded to play a greater role in assisting the younger races. Sadly, they concede, the High Elves' conflict with their Dark Elf cousins makes that possibility seem unlikely.

**Enemies**

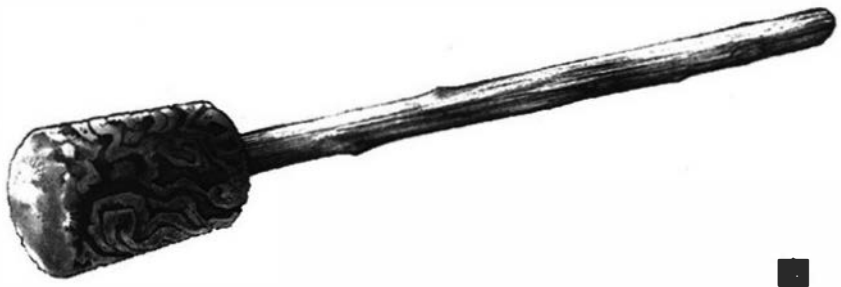
Given that the Zoats are dedicated to the task of ridding the planet of Warpstone, conflict with the servants of Chaos is inevitable. However, much of the conflict has been a rather haphazard guerilla war against a generalised and faceless enemy. Likewise, fights with the destructive goblinoid races amount to little more than a tiresome and never-ending process of weeding. Even the rather more focused war against the Mura-Durr was small in scale, and comparatively quickly revolved. However, in their lengthy history the Zoats have made three long-term implacable foes, one of which continues to challenge them at every twist and turn. The first and most significant, and no doubt most obvious, are the Skaven. The second are the Dragon Ogres. The third might be something of a surprise.

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It must be admitted, however, that in more recent times many Zoats have started to wonder just what games the Wood Elves of Athel Loren are playing with the Humans of Bretonnia, and have chosen to distance themselves from them. In contrast, while the Elves of the Lorelorn in the Empire remain largely insular, a

**The Zoa without a Mace**

Although all Zoats were charged with the task of ridding the world of the Warpstone, only those Zoats with psychic ability and possession of a mace cylinder can neutralise Warpstone. Those without access to a mace cylinder have to locate Warpstone through careful observation of the skies (watching for falling meteorites), environmental effects (the occurrence of mutant plant and animal life), or other unnatural occurrences (malign voices on the wind or rains of frogs). Building networks of contacts with friendly creatures (Wood Elves, Unicorns, Treemen, and servants of Rhya or Taal, for example) also provides useful information.



it is put somewhere it can do as little harm as possible. As most deposits are small, moving them is not too difficult, although finding a suitable hiding place is not so easy. Zoats avoid involving other races in this if they can, as few others have the ability to resist Warpstone's effects. Once the Warpstone is safely stored, it becomes a matter of finding and telling a Zoa with a mace cylinder to neutralise it, which can take time. This means that hidden Warpstone stores sometimes build up. Zoats have found that Warpstone stores can become magnets for Skaven, Beastmen and viler monsters. Even though such creatures may not be able to precisely locate or penetrate the hiding place, having them gather in one area is far from desirable.

A Zoa without a mace who finds Warpstone strives to ensure



### The Skaven

The Skaven thrive on Warpstone; Zoats seek to destroy Warpstone. There is absolutely no room for compromise, no room for dialogue; the two races are ideologically opposed to one another to a degree greater than the Dwarfs and Goblins. War was inevitable. Can there be anything more to say?

On balance, it's a war the Skaven are winning through sheer strength of numbers. The Zoats recognise they desperately need allies in this fight, if only to slow and occupy the Ratmen while they focus on dealing with Warpstone. There are other races – the Elves, Humans, Dwarfs – who may help them, but some Zoats suggest there is another potential ally: the Fimir. The Skaven and Fimir despise one another, having fought over territory more than once in the past. The dictum 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' is a good one, say some Zoats. Of course, the Zoats would have to offer something very special to the Fimir clans before they would stick their heads above the parapet for anyone else, but the Zoats may indeed have something very special to offer: the truth of Fimir origin, and the location of the Waterland (see *Warpstone* 25 for details on Fimir belief and *Legion* 6 in the downloads section at [www.Warpstone.org](http://www.Warpstone.org) for a possible Fimir origin).

### Dragon Ogres

The Zoats are powerful reptilian and centauroid creatures; so are the Dragon Ogres of the World's Edge Mountains. Both races remember when the warp gates collapsed and Chaos flooded in. Both races hibernate for years, decades even, resting from their worldly work. Both have made oaths to more powerful forces, the Zoats to the Old Ones and Old Slann, the Dragon Ogres to Dark Gods. Both keep those oaths and fulfil their obligations until death. The two races know well of one another's backgrounds, from times before and after the collapse of the warp gates. They know one another's origins and the choices each has made. One would expect a common understanding, but, for all their similarities, the two races possess a mutual hatred of one another.

Dragon Ogres are largely confined to the World's Edge Mountains, only rarely descending into the lands below. When they do they bring devastation in their wake: forests are ravaged by the Chaotic forces they support, wild animals slaughtered in the thousands to feed them, and even Treefolk have been split in twain by the lightning strikes from the terrible storms that seem to follow the Dragon Ogres wherever they go. When the Dragon Ogres descend, the Zoats try to be there to challenge them.

The origin of these races' feud is ancient and ultimately left to individual GMs, but the suggestion here is it arose from the choices the two races made long, long ago. From the point of view of the Zoats, the Dragon Ogres made an unforgivably selfish decision, bargaining with monstrous gods for immortality in return for a commitment to undertake acts of horrific violence and destruction. The Dragon Ogres see the Zoats as creatures who have continued in slavery even after the death of their masters, a choice they simply

cannot comprehend. And underneath their contempt of the Zoats, there lies self-pity and jealousy, for the Dragon Ogres also sacrificed their ability to produce children, whilst the Zoats remain fertile. The cruellest thing a Dragon Ogre can ever do is steal a Zoat's egg, and rear it as one of its own.

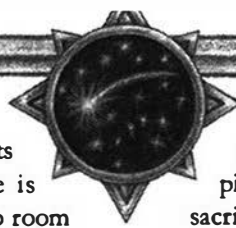
### I Talk to the Trees

The Treefolk are not the only humanoid tree beings in the Warhammer world. There are also the Treemen of the forest of Athel Loren in Bretonnia and the magical spirits known as Dryads, which can assume the form of trees, both natural and human-like. Certainly, the Treemen and Treefolk have much in common, but there are significant differences in age and temperament. The first Treefolk seeds germinated very shortly after the collapse of the warp gates, whereas the Treemen of Loren, and those of the other forests of the Old World, apparently arose much later by comparison. In terms of temperament, Treefolk are outgoing and interested in travelling and exploring; Treemen are more wary (it took several elven generations for them to come to trust and make formal contact with the Wood Elves) and prefer to stay within the confines of the forests in which they grew. Dryads are different in that they are magical spirits that inhabit and care for trees, rather than living, breathing trees. Nevertheless, the three groups recognise one another as kindred beings and are on friendly terms. As for the Zoats, they recognise the differences, but don't feel the need to make an issue out of it. If they do have a problem, it is with the Dryads, which can be tricksters and jokers, vaguely irritating to the more serious-minded Zoats. The Dryads are aware of this and are more than happy to tease the Zoats.

### The Slann

The first Zoats who came to the Warhammer World came with the Old Slann, those of the so-called First Spawning. It was to these Slann that the Zoats made their promise to rid the world of Warpstone, not those of the later Spawnings. The relationship between the Zoats and the later Spawnings was not good even before the warp gates collapsed and the Old Slann began to die off. The Zoats regarded the later Spawnings as relative children. After the Old Slann began to die and degenerate, the later Spawnings expected the Zoats to transfer their loyalty and obedience to them. The Zoats, however, quietly ignored them and disappeared off into the Lustrian jungles and elsewhere to carry out the final orders of the Old Slann.

To this day there is hostility between the two races. The Zoats regard the Slann Mage Priests as petulant children with too much power and not enough wisdom, who seek to implement plans they barely understand (most Zoats regard the continental shifts in -1500 I.C. as



botched jobs resulting in needless deaths in the Dwarf kingdoms). The Slann Mage Priests regard the Zoats as traitorous servants possessing knowledge they need to further the Great World Plan.

### Physical Appearance

*There, in the primal depths of the Athel Loren, we saw two Zoats. Those gentle but powerful reptilian centaurs were surely aware of our presence, but for the moment were prepared to ignore us as they reared up on their hind legs to take ripe fruit from the lower branches of an Illithan-Prenta tree.*

- From *Life in the Old World* (translated from the Elvish) by Wood Elf scholar Davith Athen-Bourahh

Even though the Tyranids took countless forms, the Zoats themselves were very, very different. Completely lacking the obscenely malleable forms of most Tyranids or other Tryanid-constructs, the Zoats were a fusion of the physically powerful herd animal and humanoid body-forms, superimposed with various reptile-like features.

The Zoats are bulky, centauroid lizards, six feet tall and eight feet long. The horizontal portions of their backs are plated in a manner reminiscent of the great turtles, and they have thick round legs similar to those of the legendary southern pachyderms. A thick tail, plated continuously from the back and tapering down to the ground, provides stability when the Zoaat rears up on its hind legs. Their vertical torsos have the height of Humans, with the musculature of the Dwarfs; their fingers have the strength and nimbleness of an Elf archer or harpist; females appear to be leaner in the upper shoulders than the males. Whilst the legs have the wrinkled, leathery look of the aforementioned pachyderms, the upper torso is covered with a smooth, tough layer of small scales.

Their colours are variable, but predominantly shades of dark brown through maroon to purple; this may be age-related, as the chipped and weathered scales along the edges of the armoured hindquarters are often tinged with purple, whilst those closer to the central line of the hindquarters are darker brown. However, some Zoats are said to be green, with the aforementioned range of colours limited to their armoured back and rear.

A Zoaat's head is possibly the most striking of its features, broad and ovoid, making one think of both snake and turtle. Their skulls are clearly strong, but sizable enough to accommodate a large brain. Eye-brow ridges give them a wiser countenance than mere lizards. What is more, large eyes and wide, lipless mouths – together with the way they sometimes hold their heads – give Zoats a wry, amused expression; speaking to a Zoaat makes you feel as though you are a child talking to an indulgent adult. They also sway their heads from side to side, seemingly unconsciously, in the manner of some snakes. The scales on their faces are larger and more pronounced than those covering their torsos, enhancing their reptilian features. They have no ears, but a circular

'scale' is present on either side of their heads, and this may cover a hearing organ.

However, they do have nostrils.

### Personality and Temperament

Placid, calm, controlled: these characteristics sum up Zoats very well. When dealing with people they trust and respect they are kind and honourable beings. They also possess a great gentleness, happy to carry Elf children on their backs when staying with the Wood Elves, or taking the time to stop and smell a forest flower because it is alive and beautiful, always remembering that it is partly for these simple things they honour the final orders of the Old Slann.

The dedication to those orders highlights the stubbornness and bloody-minded determination of the Zoats. Even after millennia the task is nowhere near complete, but the Zoats *still* keep going, on and on, moving from one Warpstone deposit to the next, fighting the Skaven at every turn, never resentful of the choice they made. Their stubborn dedication rivals even the grudge-bearing of the Dwarfs. This drive passes from one generation to the next with no apparent lessening in strength. When a Zoaat says it will do something, it *will* seek to do it and will not ever stop trying unless it becomes clear that its efforts and/or success will result in more harm than good. However, the Zoats are cautious when asked to take on additional obligations, not wanting to obscure their primary mission.

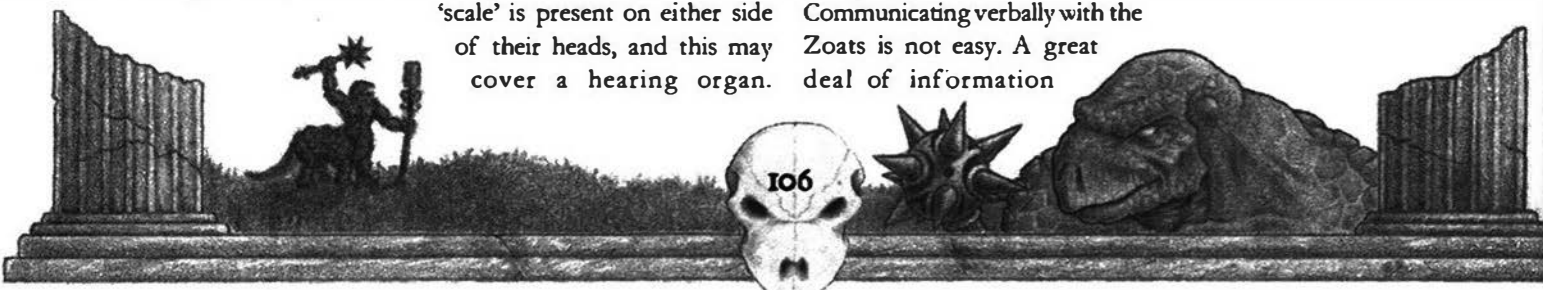
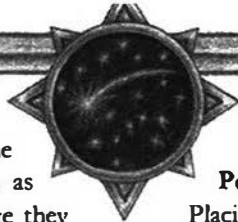
Though they endeavour to avoid strangers, the Zoats' innate decency prompts them to protect the vulnerable from the threat of malign forces (discretely or otherwise). However, they have little time for the cruel and needlessly destructive. Woodsmen, charcoal burners and hunters are tolerated, even a family who clears several acres of wood to build a farm to grow crops and raise cattle, but forests torn down in the name of mercantile interests or to open land for a grand estate to swell a nobleman's ego are actions that rouse a Zoaat's anger.

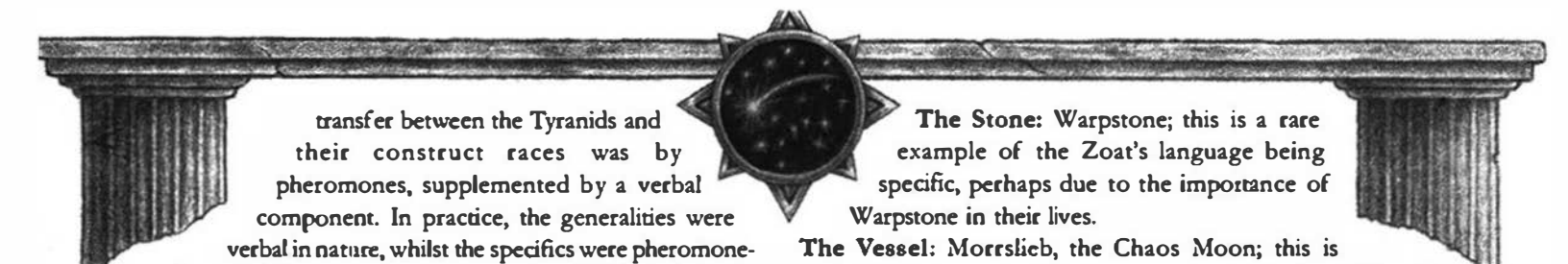
Oh, yes: the Zoats feel anger, but they focus it into a lethal icy point. The Zoats have been scouts, planetary engineers, even gardeners, but they are, and always have been, powerful warriors as well: a Zoaat can hold its own against a Dragon Ogre. When Zoats go into battle, singly or together, their cold, controlled fury almost chills the air. It is a frightening thing to witness, even more so if one has come to see Zoats as nothing more than gentle forest-lovers.

Zoats try to see the beauty in all natural things, and this includes buildings and cities – building a house to bring up one's children is as natural for an Elf or Human as it is for a bird building a nest. Planting a crop or building fences to contain cattle is as natural as a spider building a web. Zoats are far from being anti-technology and display considerable interest in craftsmanship and devices. They simply object when technology and development is used in a mindless, uncaring fashion to the detriment of the rest of the natural world.

### Language

Communicating verbally with the Zoats is not easy. A great deal of information





transfer between the Tyranids and their construct races was by pheromones, supplemented by a verbal component. In practice, the generalities were verbal in nature, whilst the specifics were pheromone-based. This means that any non-Tyranid (who obviously lack the appropriate sensory organs) in conversation with a Zoat has to spend much of the time trying to work out precisely what it is referring to. Zoats use a lot of improper nouns and very few adjectives or adverbs regardless of the language they are speaking. It is said by some Wood Elves that Zoats are never bothered by insects, and may even be able to control them; perhaps this is a pheromone-based phenomenon.

### A Zoat Primer

Below is a list of some of the more straightforward words Zoats use, just to give an indication of the problems associated with talking to them. Although Zoats can speak a number of languages used by other races, they tend to be equally obtuse in all of them. Elves have an easier time understanding Zoats because Elves are intelligent, long-lived and there is a history of contact between the races, but not because Zoats speak more comprehensibly in the Elven tongues. Only certain Treefolk in bloom can really understand the Zoats' language, and even they cannot pick up on all the nuances.

**Zoat:** A Zoat of whom the speaker has heard, but not personally met; a Zoat that the speaker has met; a Zoat with whom the speaker has mated, resulting in a child; the individual speaking or whole Zoat race.

**The Makers:** The Tyranids; but also the Old Ones or Old Slann who also practiced genetic engineering.

**Mission:** Any task or activity a Zoat has accepted, whether that be ridding the world of Warpstone or going down to the river to fetch a pail of water.

**Effect:** A spell or a psychic effect; actively applying a scientific principal or other action, or the result thereof.

**Friend(s):** The Old Slann; Wood Elves; Treefolk; Treemen; Dryads; almost any group or individual the Zoat has reason to like, respect and trust.

**Enemy:** Skaven; Chaos Warrior; Mura-Durr; hordes of screaming Dragon Ogres; a forester who cuts down indiscriminately.

**Food:** Anything edible.

**Place:** Any place or location, from a forest to a waterfall to a sacred altar.

**Psychic:** Magic or magical.

**Psyker:** A Wizard or a Zoat with psychic ability; someone who can manipulate warp potential to create effects.

**Warp:** Chaos; magic; Warpstone; warp potential, warp space; the Winds of Magic; any of the Colours of Magic.

**Contaminated:** Exposed to, containing or covered by Warpstone or bacteria or natural poison or hazardous/unpleasant chemicals.

**The Stone:** Warpstone; this is a rare example of the Zoat's language being specific, perhaps due to the importance of Warpstone in their lives.

**The Vessel:** Morrslieb, the Chaos Moon; this is another rare example of Zoat language being specific, although they also use it when referring to a ship.

Some examples of Zoat speech and the translations:

"Food effect complete" (*I've made the tea*)

"Enemy effect contaminates place" (*Those bastard Skaven are hosing down the forest with Warpfire!*)

"Silence or effect" (*If you don't shut up right now I'm going to repeatedly hit you with my mace!*)

"Food contamination effect" (*This soup has been poisoned*)

"Food contamination effect" (*I do apologise, but I've been eating a lot of beans recently*)

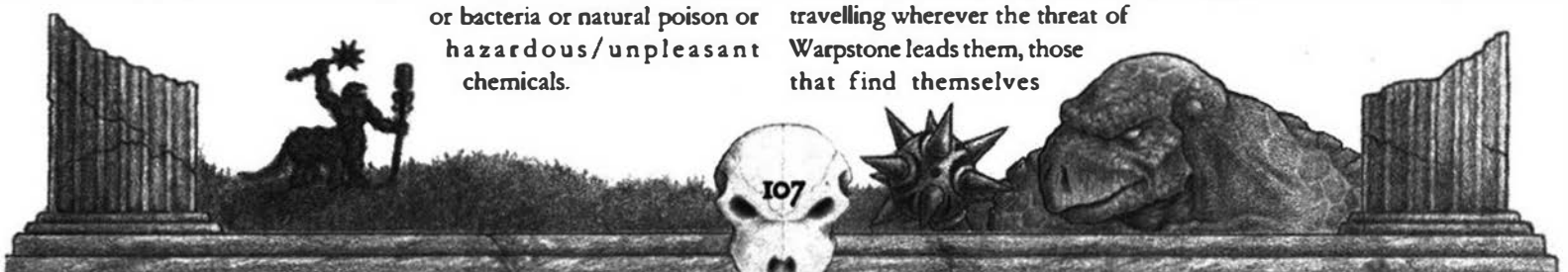
### Aging, Hibernation and Memory

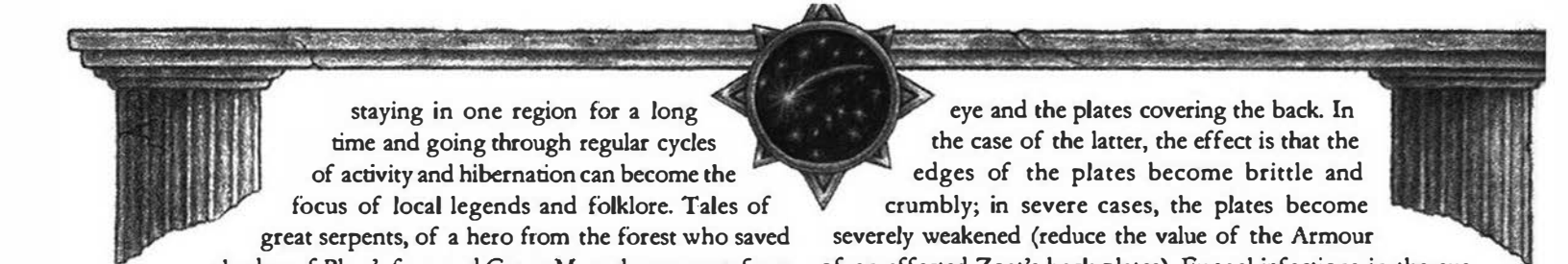
Along with the sleeping Dragons, immortal Dragon Ogres and the Meargh of the Fimir, the Zoats are among the longest-living creatures in the Warhammer World. Two to three thousand years is the life-expectancy of most. In millennia gone by, this might have been even longer, but the cumulative exposure to Warpstone (even with their genetic defences against it) is not without some negative effect on their metabolism.

Apart from their origins as an artificial species, something that may help the Zoats live for such a long time is the lengthy hibernation they periodically undergo, much as the Dragons do. Hibernation can be as long as a hundred years or more, but is usually closer to fifty. Frequency of hibernation is extremely variable, however. Some may sleep every 500 years, others every hundred. Exposure to particularly nasty Warpstone deposits or vety severe injuries may also force Zoats to rest and recover.

Like any other hibernating creature, Zoats seek out places that are hidden and secure - although those Zoats possessing mace cylinders can set the devices as alarms (see Mace Cylinders), they still prefer to avoid the risk of being discovered in hibernation. Hidden caves or cavities behind ancient waterfalls are traditional places of rest, but a hibernating Zoat does not necessarily look for comfort. For example, a Zoat can work its bulk through a crack in an ancient oak tree with a massive, hollow trunk, and sleep reared up on its hind legs. To most, simply getting into such a place would seem an impossibility, and incredibly uncomfortable, but Zoats demonstrate remarkable patience and flexibility. Most likely, both traits are a product of Tryranid bio-engineering. Other options are available to hibernating Zoats: the Wood Elf communities throughout the Old World are honoured to let a Zoat hibernate in their settlements, and gatherings of Treemen will happily form impenetrable groves around a sleeping Zoat.

Although Zoats are not usually settlers, more commonly travelling wherever the threat of Warpstone leads them, those that find themselves





staying in one region for a long time and going through regular cycles of activity and hibernation can become the focus of local legends and folklore. Tales of great serpents, of a hero from the forest who saved the day, of Rhya's favoured Green Man who emerges from the forest every century, of a creature feared even by Daemons, of a great leader sleeping in a sealed cave waiting for the day she is needed once more: all are possibilities.

Zoats have extraordinary memories: they remember almost everything they experience, another trait engineered into them as part of their original purpose as scouts. On meeting another of its kind, a Zoaat makes every effort to pass on as much of its knowledge and experience as it possibly can. Through combination of their clipped spoken language and complex pheromone communication, Zoats can share years' worth of detailed information in hours. Now, it cannot be said that every Zoaat is always able to pass on all of its knowledge before it dies, so a portion of any given Zoaat's personal life-experience is lost with them. Even so, the overall effect of their amazing memories, rapid communication systems and their very lengthy life spans is that the Zoaat race possesses accurate, detailed knowledge of the Warhammer World dating from the time of the Old Ones and Old Slann that rivals every other intelligent race combined. All Zoats who become parents make every effort possible to ensure that their children know in full detail their origins and their purpose in life. However, the Zoats are few in number so cannot possibly witness everything, will not share their knowledge with non-Zoats without quite extraordinary justification, and all the detail of their language lies within pheromones. In other words, if no Zoaat was present for a particular event, then none of them will know much about it. Even if they were they probably would not tell you, and even if they did, you would not understand most of it, anyway. A popular Wood Elf pun is based on the similarity of the word 'Zoaat' and the Eltharin word for 'frustration'.

### Diet and Health

The Zoats were engineered to survive in many different environments. Consequently, they are omnivorous, content to eat a wide variety of foodstuff: meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, insects, nuts, berries and mushrooms are all palatable to them. They can even survive on lichens, mosses and algal slimes. Their favourite food is denied to them, as it was produced for them by the Tyranids. This was called zoatibix, and was composed of a fibrous cereal mix formed into biscuits and smeared with a paste containing vitamins and minerals, sugars and a good dose of calcium. In the Warhammer World, Zoats are more than happy to have porridge with milk and honey as an alternative – an offering of such is a good way to befriend a hungry Zoaat.

Disease is a rare thing for Zoats, thanks to Tryanid and Old Slann genetic engineering, but the oldest members of the race are more susceptible to certain conditions. The two main ones are fungal infections of the

eye and the plates covering the back. In the case of the latter, the effect is that the edges of the plates become brittle and crumbly; in severe cases, the plates become severely weakened (reduce the value of the Armour of an affected Zoaat's back plates). Fungal infections in the eye begin with sticky, gooey tears and can end with the Zoaat going blind if it is not treated. However, a blind Zoaat is not necessarily an incapable Zoaat – their reptilian sensitivity to heat might develop to the extent that they can detect the body heat of other creatures.

### Reproduction and Population

There are male Zoats and female Zoats, and they reproduce in the manner of any other quadruped reptile. They understand the concepts of romance and love from their interactions with the Elves, but these things do not figure heavily in a Zoaat couple's relationship beyond a degree of affectionate practicality. Zoats are wanderers for most of their time, so when a male and female Zoaat encounter one another they usually mate in order to make sure their species is perpetuated and its mission can be continued.

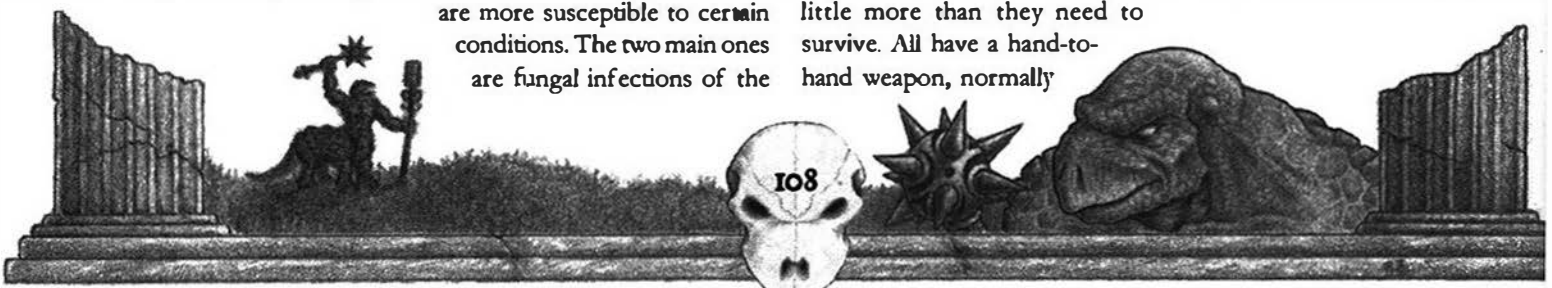
The female Zoaat normally lays up to half a dozen eggs. Both parents locate a secure, hidden place and construct a nest of plant material (essentially a compost heap) in which the eggs are placed to keep them at an appropriate temperature. Of these eggs, usually only one or two survive to hatch – Zoats suspect this is something to do with centuries of their race's exposure to Warpstone, in spite of the genetic protection given them by the Old Slann. If none hatch, the couple will try again until they produce a survivor.

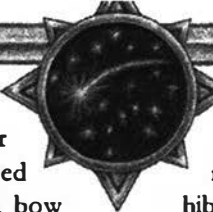
The parents stay together until they have imparted all their knowledge and experience to their offspring and deem them capable of going their own way and continuing their race's never ending mission. However, some couples choose to stay together for longer, perhaps permanently, as do some siblings. A few parents and offspring stay together in small family groups, only breaking up when one child meets another Zoaat he or she can go off and mate with and produce children of their own.

Even though Zoats can live a very long time and always make the effort to produce and rear children whenever a male and female meet, the nature of their solitary and dangerous mission means that a significant number of them are killed or die without producing offspring. Consequently, the Zoaat population today is slightly lower than it was at the time of the warp gate catastrophe (several thousand, spread widely across the planet). However, the age range is very wide and relatively evenly spread – an encounter with a Zoaat is as likely to be with a young Zoaat born when Magnus the Pious defeated Chaos in Kislev as it is with a Zoaat born during the time of Sigmar and the battle of Black Fire Pass.

### Trappings and Technology

Zoats are by nature eternal travellers, but practical ones carrying little more than they need to survive. All have a hand-to-hand weapon, normally





either a mace cylinder or similar great weapon such as a great mace or warhammer, and sometimes a ranged weapon, which could be a spear or a bow (normally long or Elf). The rest of a Zoaat's possessions are normally kept in a duffle bag worn over the shoulder. A handful of older Zoats wear harnesses on their upper torso to which they attach their various pieces of kit and equipment, an ancient throwback to their times as slaves of the Tyranids and employees of the Old Slann. What is carried varies from Zoaat to Zoaat, but the sorts of things considered useful include: a sturdy knife or dagger, a hand axe, twine, a waterskin, a bowl, fishing hooks and line, fire-making tools, a blanket, and food items. As a general rule, Zoats believe that as long as they have a sharp, sturdy knife then they can get or make anything else they need.

Although they no longer have access to the powerful tekno-artefacts of the Old Slann or their Tyranid masters, Zoats retain an instinctive interest in and understanding of technology. Given time, Zoats can work out how to use almost any example of technology found in the Warhammer World, and spot its flaws and dangers. The races of the Warhammer World remain somewhat backward in this regard by the Zoats' reckoning, even the Dwarfs, and the Zoats wonder why the various races' understanding and development of science has been so slow.

### Mace Cylinders

These weapons are plot devices, pure and simple. Their Warpstone detection and neutralisation capabilities are attuned to living Zoats with psychic ability, so PCs will never be able to use them (though that will not stop NPCs attempting to acquire them for study). In order to use one of these powers, a Zoaat sings a strange, haunting and very beautiful song for the duration of its use (usually about a minute). Do not worry about having detailed rules for them, as they are only as effective as GMs need them to be. If you need some guidelines, allow the Zoaat a Casting Roll, and use the result as a rough indicator of how accurate the song is in identifying the location of a Warpstone deposit or what quantity of Warpstone is neutralised by a single song. For large deposits of Warpstone, the GM can rule that it will take several treatments to neutralise the Warpstone, with the Zoaat having to rest in between. Again, use this as a plot device; for example, the PCs might have to protect a tired Zoaat and partially neutralised Warpstone from the attention of an evil Wizard and his Skaven allies, or they must transport the Warpstone to a secure location first.

Possession of a mace gives the bearer casting a spell a +2 bonus to the Casting Roll when performing any magic (this includes non-Zoats). They are also great weapons, magical, and do SB +1 to Daemons. Additionally, when wielded by a Zoaat the mace cylinders lack the *Slow* quality, but when used by non-Zoats they gain the *Tiring* quality.


Mace cylinders can be set so they act as the Lesser Magic spell *Magic Alarm*. No casting

roll is required and the range of the spell is increased from 2 yards to 20 yards. Zoats normally switch this effect on when they are hibernating.

Mace cylinders have one other ability, which may prove to be another useful plot device. The cylinders have an internal power supply that is, for game purposes, infinite (it taps directly into warp space). However, a Zoaat can choose to trigger a self-destruct mechanism in a cylinder, resulting in an extremely powerful explosion. The energy released is inimical to anything connected to the warp: Warpstone, Daemons, magical devices and effects, and even gods. An exploding mace cylinder has the potential to destroy a Greater Daemon outright, close a small warp gate or portal, and injure a Daemon Prince or even a god. Anything not linked in some way to the warp would be less severely affected. Of course, the mace cylinder would be completely destroyed in the process. Any Zoaat would be very reluctant to do such a thing without absolute certainty there was no other option, and would seek to ensure every other possible solution was fully explored first. Finding and persuading a Zoaat to sacrifice a mace cylinder in this way can be part of the resolution of a campaign.

### Legacy of the Old Ones

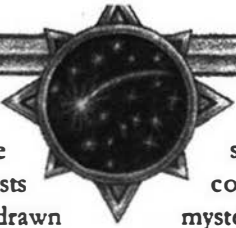
Some GMs may feel the urge to introduce some *Warhammer*



40,000 technology into their games, remnants of Old One and Old Slann culture. This is not really advisable, but if you do succumb keep it simple. In terms of weapons, avoid introducing anything more powerful than a bolt gun and don't go overboard on the rules. If a shot is successful just determine the location: a head or body shot kills outright, a limb shot destroys the limb completely; creatures bigger or more robust than the usual humanoid races should roll a d10 against the appropriate Critical Hit table. Ignore armour; it cannot hope to withstand forty-first century weaponry. If you plan to use the campaign idea *It's the End of the World as We Know It* then a more substantial set of rules for a broader range of technology may become necessary, in which case *Dark Heresy* could be drawn on for inspiration.

Do not forget that ancient technology can be magical in the eyes of those who cannot understand it. Strange humming daggers that cut through even Gromril like butter, mysterious paired talismans allowing two Zoats to speak to one another from afar, or masks allowing the wearer to breathe underwater or in poisonous gas or smoke would be good magic items for Zoats to carry. Any such item introduced to a game can be easily removed – it just stops working when the power cells are drained.

A dying Zoaat will seek to pass its mace cylinder onto a new owner. The mace cylinder can be set to send out a telepathic signal which psychically gifted Zoats can hear if they come within range (GM's call, but should be many,



many miles). However, setting this signal is a last resort, as it is possible for some non-Zoats (Wizards and Priests of all races) to detect the signal and be drawn to it. Even the Zoats are undecided whether it is better for the Zoats to lose a mace cylinder than to risk them falling into the wrong hands. However, prevailing opinion is that as the signal will continue until turned off by a Zoaat, the opportunity to recover wrongly acquired cylinders remains possible.

### Using the Zoats

As Zoats are wanderers spread across the planet, they can be encountered anywhere the GM desires, despite their affection and preference for forests. However, it is important to remember two things. Firstly, most journeys and activities undertaken by Zoats are focused on locating and neutralising Warpstone. Secondly, Zoats aim to be circumspect and secretive in their activities, drawing as little attention as possible. This means they are normally met in remote or rarely travelled places, such as mountains, the depths of forests or regions too inhospitable for most races. At the same time, Warpstone also finds its way into inhabited areas too, whether by chance or the actions of living creatures. Zoats need to deal with this Warpstone, too, meaning they must find ways of bringing the Warpstone to them if they wish to avoid attention. Consequently, PCs in settled and urban areas are likely to meet agents working for a Zoaat long before they get the chance to meet the Zoaat itself. NPC agents are likely to be drawn from amongst Wood Elves, Druids or devout and trusted followers of Rhya and perhaps Taal.

NPC agents offer GMs the chance to intrigue the PCs by creating scenarios where it is clear there is someone else directing the agents. Also, the fact that these NPC agents are interested in Warpstone should leave the PCs wondering if they are good guys or bad guys. Unless they read this article, most players will automatically assume anyone seeking Warpstone must be working for Skaven, the forces of Chaos or unethical Wizards.

Zoats are some of the few genuinely good guys in the Warhammer World and can be powerful allies for desperate PCs. However, their long experience and ability could easily overshadow that of the PCs, and the last thing you want is an NPC taking over. Instead, use a Zoaat as an occasional advisor and mentor to the PCs when they get stuck or to send them on missions and errands, rather than using them to assist PCs in the frontline. The only time you should have a Zoaat playing a major role alongside the PCs is during some particularly significant event, possibly the climax of a campaign when the PC group and the Zoaat each have specific parts to play.

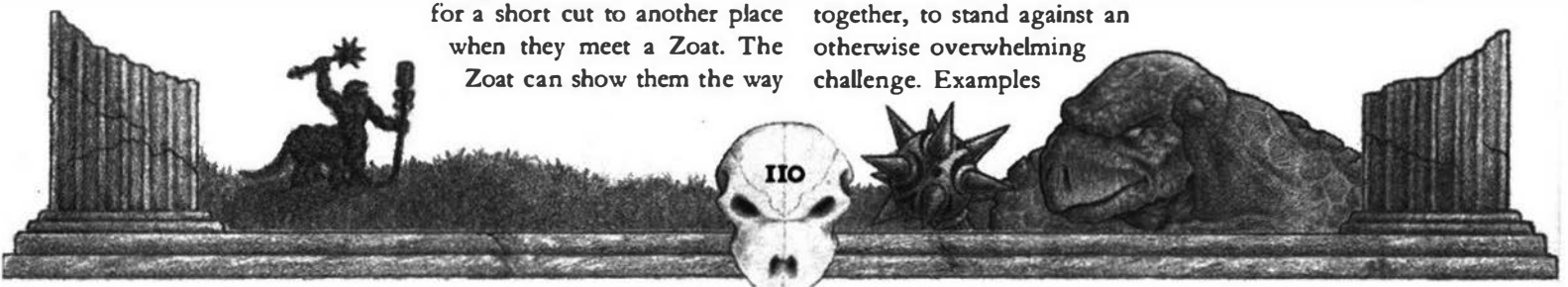
There are minor roles Zoats can play in a campaign or scenario without it taking over. A Zoaat guide is an obvious example. The PCs might be lost on the mountain's forested slopes, seeking out a Wood Elf settlement to bring important news, or just looking for a short cut to another place when they meet a Zoaat. The Zoaat can show them the way

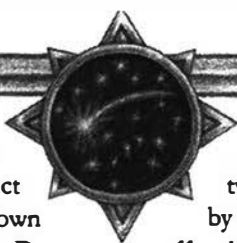
and then vanish. Similarly, a Zoaat's strength might be used: the PCs' wagon or coach has lost a wheel and a Zoaat mysteriously appears to help lift it while the PCs put a new one on; a Zoaat could help in the same way in repairing a boat with a hole in its hull. With the Zoats' innate understanding of and interest in technology and engineering, if the PCs are ever involved in engineering activities then a Zoaat might arrive to offer some assistance. Of course, all these situations require the PCs to be in a relatively remote location and be involved in activities a Zoaat would consider acceptable. Also, a Zoaat is unlikely reveal itself if it thinks it will provoke a hostile response (Zoats are, after all, unusual and could easily be mistaken for a hungry monster or a beast of Chaos). However, these encounters all provide simple introductions to the Zoaat race, which can be developed later as necessary. The confusing language of the Zoats gives you a perfect excuse not to respond to the PCs' questions in any detail.

Most of the above examples involve the Zoats coming to the PCs, rather than the other way around. However, GMs can always encourage PCs to go looking for them by dropping hints of something interesting and mysterious. Tales of bizarre creatures in the forest or dark horse-like figures seen atop the mountain ridge above town when Morrslieb is full are all likely to prompt PCs to go and look for the source of these rumours. Such stories may be heart-warming (little Wilhelm was never able to describe what pulled him from the river beyond saying "nice horsey-man") or full of foreboding details (a threatening growling voice hidden in the trees that cried "Go!" when folks went to investigate that strange green glow in the wood last summers). Any Zoaat pursued by curious PCs is likely to try to avoid contact, but if the PCs show themselves to be capable, intelligent and of good character, then the Zoaat may seek to test their abilities. Zoats need allies in their mission, and talented adventuring PCs are useful people.

Of course, encounters with Zoats need not be friendly. The nature of WFRP means that PCs, through rotten luck or deliberate action, can find themselves working for the wrong people or getting up to no good through their own volition. In the same way PCs might unknowingly work for a Zoaat as described earlier, they could similarly end up working for the Skaven or a mutant madman seeking Warpstone, making them a target for a Zoaat's anger. PCs who kill a Unicorn or Pegasus for spell ingredients or just by ghastly mistake will not endear themselves to any Zoaat; the former situation probably results in violence, the latter, after apologetic explanation, will require penance. Simple foolishness, such as a badly made fire pit in a tinder-dry forest during the height of summer, could also provoke a stern response.

Any given group of PCs is unlikely to ever know more than one Zoaat, although two siblings or mated pairs, with or without offspring, are reasonable possibilities. This should emphasise the thinly spread nature of the race. However, large numbers of Zoats will congregate, perhaps as a result of PCs bringing them together, to stand against an otherwise overwhelming challenge. Examples





include taking on a Skavenhold, to find and destroy a deadly magical artefact forged from Warpstone, defending a town or mountain pass from a Chaos horde led by Dragon Ogres, or protecting an ancient forest from an Imperial army bent on cutting it down to build war-machines. And who knows, perhaps the PCs get lost in the depths of a forest and stumble into a once-in-a-millennium gathering of every Zoot in the Old World!

Finally, long lived as they are, and with a mission that brings them into conflict with the forces of Chaos, the Zoats have accumulated many enemies and grudges against them. The Slann Mage Priests of the Second and later Spawnings are convinced the Zoats know secrets of the Old Ones or possess technology needed to implement the Great World Plan; a Slann Mage Priest with such knowledge has an advantage in the endless politics of Lustria. The Skaven hate the Zoats for stealing and spoiling their precious, precious Warpstone, and various corrupt Wizards have had magical schemes ruined by a Zoot confiscating his hard-gained Wyrdstone. Similarly, there are Dragon Ogres and other long-lived monsters which nurse physical scars and crushed pride thanks to the determination and resolve of a Zoot. Who will the PCs knowingly or unknowingly side with in these ancient feuds and plots?

### Scenario and Campaign Ideas

*"...he had seen quaint lumbering Zoats come shyly from the wood to drink... following to observe them... a nameless terror crept over him as he witnessed the mangled and distorted remnants of the Chaos-spawned who had dared drink from the Zoats' tepid pool..."*

- *The Stone-Quest of Unknown Kadarath*, by H.P. Lieberwerk

### Bring Me the Head of Mazdamundi

Zoats are concerned by the increasing power of some of the Slann Mage Priests, most notably Lord Mazdamundi who has deciphered some temple glyphs of the Old Ones and is able to cast some powerful spells as a result. They suspect the Mage Priest's ultimate goals go further than fulfilling the Great World Plan. Some advocate returning to Lustria *en masse* to deal with this problem, but are unsure of a viable strategy given the size of the Lizardman forces and limited number of Zoats. Attempting alliances with the native Amazons and even Pygmies has been discussed, as has trying to persuade the High Elves to act. Zoats are inclined to find a local solution (making for a one-off campaign using characters native or living close to Lustria), but may resort to using adventurous foreigners, either through direct contact or more cunning manipulations.

### Something Smells Funny

By pure chance, an Alchemist has created a strange substance that imitates the effect of the Tyranid slave-hormone. Like many chemicals that influence

behaviour, a little goes a long way, and two Zoats have been instinctively attracted by the compound. As they moved closer, its effect became stronger, leading to a situation where the Alchemist now has two powerful, but controllable Zoats at his command. What he plans to do with them is left to the GM. Depending on how the GM chooses to use the situation, a more pheromone-immune Zoot may become aware of the situation, but wary of getting too close for fear of succumbing. A band of PCs might be its best chance of rescuing its brethren. Alternatively, the PCs could become involved when a group of Wood Elves and/or Treefolk attempt to deal with the matter on this Zoot's behalf.

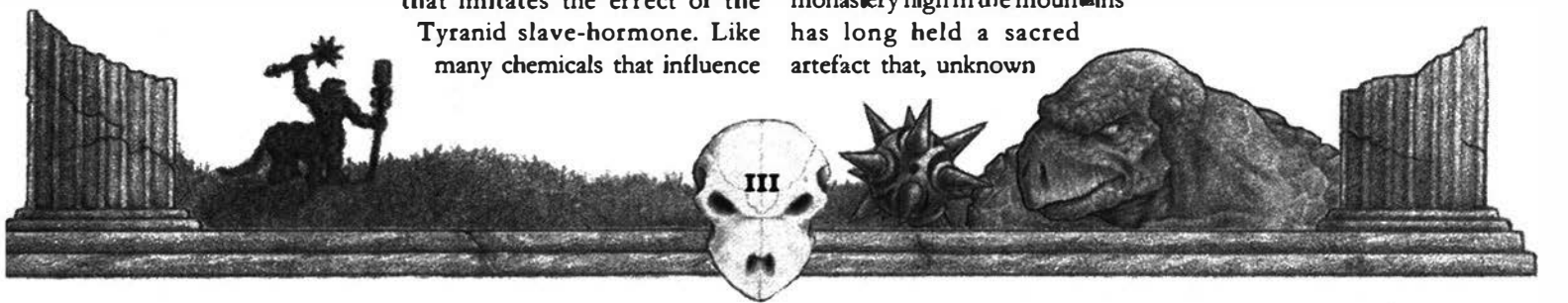
### The Enemy of my Friend is my Friend

The PCs are told by an NPC they have come to trust (perhaps an authority figure or mentor) that he or she has reason to believe they will soon be approached with an offer of work. Their NPC friend asks them to accept the offer from the mysterious patron in order to discover his identity and location. A day or so later, an agent of said patron appears and offers the PCs a job – steal a small box from a local Wizard and return it to the agent. Assuming they accept and succeed in the task, they may or may not discover the box contains a quantity of Warpstone. The identity of the patron will not be revealed for a while, and the PCs will be asked to undertake several such tasks, all involving the acquisition of Warpstone. Their NPC friend will encourage them to keep taking the jobs in the hope the patron will come to trust them enough to meet directly. Sooner or later, the PCs will either be asked to meet with the patron or will succeed in tracking the movements of the extremely cunning agent back to the patron. The patron is revealed to be a Zoot.

What happens next depends on the PCs' reactions to meeting the gentle and noble Zoot and the realisation that its actions are intended to rid the area of Warpstone. However, their trusted NPC friend will encourage them to reveal all. The twist to all this is that their trusted friend is actually working for the real bad guys whether they are Skaven, evil wizards or over-zealous witch-hunters. If they have passed on any information or are followed, then they have put the lives of the Zoot and his agent in danger.

### Find and Retrieve

Any number of scenarios can be based around a Zoot asking the PCs to go somewhere the Zoot cannot to get hold of a certain item. Said item will probably be a quantity of Warpstone, but it could be something else. For example, an Estalian explorer may have looted a Lustrian temple pyramid and come to Marienburg to sell the stolen Old Slann technology – the Zoot wants someone to get those items by fair means or foul and bring them to her before some ne'er-do-wells get their hands on them. Or, a monastery high in the mountains has long held a sacred artefact that, unknown





to the priests, is in fact a mace cylinder. A Zoot has recently heard the faint telepathic signal from the cylinder set by its original Zoot owner, and wants it retrieved.

(And what if the old High Priest was partly responsible for the death of the cylinder's owner? Will their Zoot patron want some sort of reparation?). Another possibility is regaining a stolen Zoot egg, which may have been stolen by Dragon Ogres to rear as their own, by hungry Harpies for a delicious fry-up, or an ardent collector of rare eggs.

### It's the End of the World as We Know It

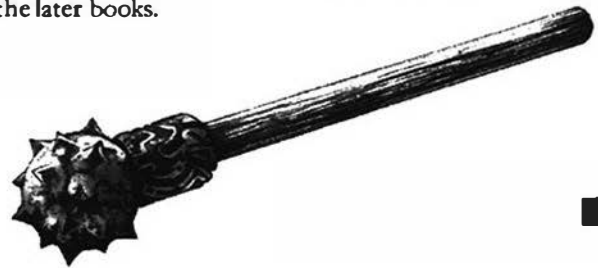
Zoot scouts still loyal to the Tyranids discover the Warhammer World and make planet-fall. The arrival of a scouting party serving the Makers will terrify the free Zoats... when they find out, that is. The free Zoats are scattered and the Tyranid Zoats are initially cautious in their examination of the planet, so there is no reason why paths should cross. However, chances are the Tyranid Zoats with access to powerful technology will become aware of their renegade brethren first. It's possible that outsiders – PCs or others – encounter some Tyranid Zoats behaving in distinctly un-Zoot-like ways. This will lead the PCs into a search for other Zoats in order to get some questions answered. Once the free Zoats know their relatives have arrived, the focus of the campaign will be to prevent the Tyranids receiving any information regarding the existence of the planet – and the free Zoats will make full use of the PCs.

The number of Tyranid Zoats depends on the type of campaign (investigation and small-scale guerrilla action or epic war and alliance-building), but either way, the free Zoats are too few in

number to challenge the Tyranid Zoats themselves. Also, the PCs and allies are going to be faced with high technology.

Chances are PCs will have to perform some quests to find Old One and Old Slann technology in order to even the odds, or else use existing gunpowder technology in inventive ways.

The PCs may be successful in their actions, but an obvious escalation of events is that the enslaved Zoats get a message to their masters and the Tyranids arrive to strip the world. Events on this scale are hardly traditional WFRP, but at the same time this would be a campaign offering as much roleplaying as combat, as the PCs become the focus of organising resistance and forming alliances between many different races and nations... perhaps even the powerful forces of Chaos? Anyone pursuing this angle should read David Brin's Uplift novels: *Sundiver*, *Startide Rising*, *The Uplift War* (the first Uplift trilogy), *Brightness Reef*, *Infinity's Shore*, *Heaven's Reach* (the second Uplift trilogy). The first two novels of the second trilogy feature a low-tech community defending itself against over-whelming technological superiority, but all the books are worth reading, and even though the books in the first trilogy can be read as singletons, they provide context for the later books.



### Magic and Psychic Ability

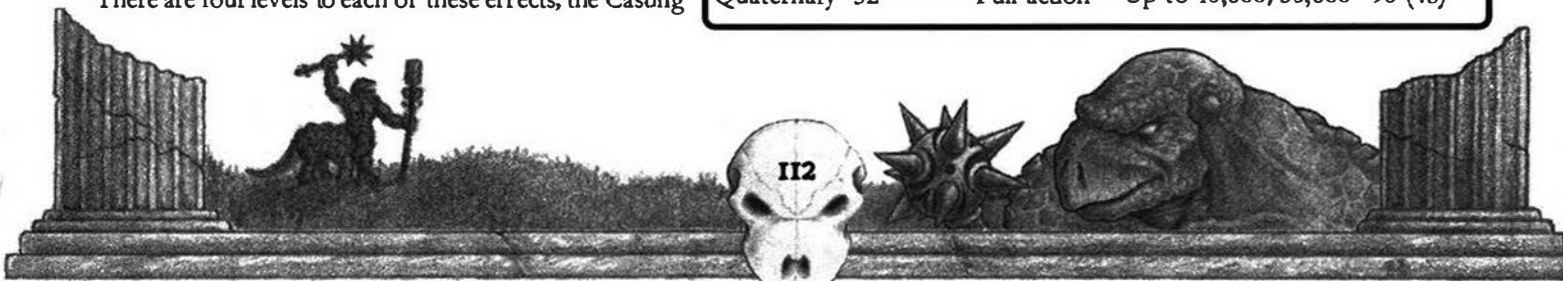
Free of the restraining influence of the Tyranid slave hormone, about 65% of Zoats possess the ability to perform magic, or, to use their own term, create psychic effects. Zoot psykers (as they describe themselves) cannot benefit from the use of spell ingredients, although use of the Channelling skill or possession of a mace cylinder will aid the production of an effect. Zoats are subject to Tzeentch's Curse, but it manifests as direct physical damage: 1d10 for a Minor Manifestation, 2d10 for a Major Manifestation, and 3D10 for a Catastrophic Manifestation, minus the sum of the Zoot's Toughness Bonus and Magic Characteristic, for a minimum of one. GMs who wish their Zoats to perform magic more in keeping with WFRP2 than W40K:RT should allow them to use spells from the Lore of Life and possibly Lore of Beasts; the Lore of Spirit from the *Old World Bestiary* may also be suitable.

**Enhancement Effects:** Zoot psykers can perform Psychic effects that mimic the Petty Magic (Divine) spells *Blessing of Speed*, *Blessing of Fortitude*, and *Blessing of Might*. There are four levels to each of these effects; the Casting

Number of and the bonus given by the effect is multiplied by the level of the effect. Primary and Secondary effects require a half action, Tertiary and Quaternary Effects require a full action. The duration of all effects remains the same.

**Telekinesis Effects:** This group of effects concerns the movement of matter, which Zoats find extremely useful for moving Warpstone deposits. There are four levels of effect, the weakest being equivalent to the Lesser Magic spell, *Move*. The progressive increases in power are given in the table below. The two higher level effects are extremely powerful and should be used more for drama. Persuading a Zoot to move something requiring a Quaternary Telekinesis effect can be a campaign goal.

Effect Level	Casting Number	Casting Time	Encumbrance (lifting/closing or knocking over)	Move Distance
Primary	4	Half action	Up to 10/50	12 (6)
Secondary	8	Half action	Up to 100/500	24 (12)
Tertiary	16	Full action	Up to 1,000/5,000	48 (24)
Quaternary	32	Full action	Up to 10,000/50,000	96 (48)



## ZOAT

The following is suggested for a Zoat of some experience. Remember that only 65% of Zoats have any magical ability, so magic-related Skills and Talents are not always applicable.

Note every Zoat will possess a mace cylinder, though almost all carry a mace-like weapon.

WS	BS	S	T	Ag	Int	WP	Fel
59	35	54	54	47	89	89	43
A	W	SB	TB	M	Mag	IP	FP
2	27	5	5	7	0-4	0	0

**Skills:** Academic Knowledge (Engineering), Academic Knowledge (History), Academic Knowledge (Science), Channelling, Charm Animal, Common Knowledge (Elves), Concealment +30% (in woods and forests only), Follow Trail, Magical Sense, Navigation, Outdoor Survival, Perception, Search,



Silent Move +30% (in woods and forests only), Shadowing +30% (in woods and forests only), Speak Arcane Language (an ancient version of Arcane Elf), Swim

**Talents:** Arcane Lore (see **Magic and Psychic Ability**), Contortionist, Fearless, Meditation, Natural Weapons (Trampling Feet), Night Vision, Petty Magic (see **Magic and Psychic Ability**), Rover, Seasoned Traveller, Specialist Weapon Group (all; Zoats have an instinctive understanding of weapon technology), Strike Mighty Blow, Sturdy, Strong-minded, Wrestling

### Special Rules:

*Trample:* This is a full action Charge Attack giving the Zoats' Natural Weapons the *impact* quality. It can only be used against creatures smaller than a Zoat reared up on its hind legs (under ten feet tall).

**Armour:** Light Armour (Scaly Skin, Armoured Hindquarters)

**Armour Points:** Head 1, Arms 1, Fore Body 1, Hind Body 3, Legs 1

**Weapons:** Great Mace, Long Bow, Dagger

